

# **Appropriate Assessment Screening Report**

in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) And 6(4) of the Eu Habitats Directive

of the

## **Draft Ballymote Local Area Plan 2012-2018**

January 2012



# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	1
1.1 The Habitats Directive	1
1.2 Stages of Appropriate Assessment	1
<b>2. Draft Ballymote Local Area Plan</b>	2
2.1 Background	2
2.2 Location and population	2
2.3 Purpose and structure	4
2.5 Main changes in the Draft LAP 2012-2018	4
<b>3. Stage 1 Screening</b>	6
3.1 Natura 2000 sites in and within 15 km of the Plan area	5
3.2 Natura 2000 conservation measures in the County Development Plan 2011-2017	9
3.3 Is the LAP necessary to the management of Natura 2000 sites?	9
3.4 Cumulative effects	9
3.5 Assessment of likely effects (direct, indirect or secondary)	9
3.6 Likely changes to Natura 2000 sites	16
3.7 Likely impacts on Natura 2000 sites	17
3.8 Indicators of significance	17
3.9 Likely significant impacts	17
<b>4. Conclusion</b>	18
<b>Appendix 1</b>	
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	21
<b>Appendix 2</b>	
Effluent discharge results for 2010 and 2011	29

**List of figures and tables**

Figure 2.A	Location of Ballymote in the wider County Sligo context	3
Table 2.B	Demographic change 2002-2011	3
Figure 2.C	Zoning Map detail	5
Figure 2.D	Zoning Map with buffer zone	5
Table 3.A	Natura 2000 Sites considered in the report	6
Figure 3.B	SACs within 15 km of Ballymote	7
Figure 3.C	SPAs within 15 km of Ballymote	8
Table 4.A	Finding of no significant effects report matrix	18

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The Habitats Directive

This is the report on the Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening of the proposed Draft Ballymote Local Area Plan 2012-2018. The report has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC). The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states that:

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

Furthermore, Article 6(4) states:

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

In Ireland, Natura 2000 comprises sites that are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and/or Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC) –referred to as the Habitats Directive – by the DEHLG due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The sites are candidate sites because they are currently under consideration by the Commission of the European Union.

Special Protection Areas have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) – referred to as the Birds Directive – by the DEHLG due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the European Union.

## 1.2 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The Appropriate Assessment process comprises up to four stages:

**Stage One: Screening.** The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either 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 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) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect.

## **2. Draft Ballymote Local Area Plan**

### **2.1 Background**

Ballymote Local Area Plan 2005-2011 was adopted by Sligo County Council on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005. The Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 (CDP) now specifies that the Ballymote Local Area Plan is to be reviewed by 2014.

The LAP will be prepared in accordance with the procedure set out in Sections 18–20 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010.

The CDP earmarks Ballymote as a Key Support Town, in order to build on its strengths and existing scale of development. As recommended in the CDP, the strategy for Ballymote will be to consolidate the town through the provision of an appropriate range of services including social infrastructure, retail, office, commercial and enterprise facilities to enable it to serve its residents and those in the rural catchment in an appropriate manner.

### **2.2 Location and population**

Ballymote is located 24 km (15 miles) to the south of Sligo City, in the south-east of the County. The entire area lies within the administrative jurisdiction of Sligo County Council and incorporates the townlands of Camross, Stoneparks, Carrowcauley, Rathnakelliga, Keenaghan, Maghera, Carrownanty and Ballymote itself. The Bricklieve Mountains are to be found 6 km to the south-east of Ballymote, with the hill of Kesh Corann providing a picturesque backdrop to the town. Numerous caves have been found in the limestone of this hill, revealing evidence of human presence dating from the Neolithic and early Christian times. The topography of the town is undulating, with most of the built-up area lying at a height of 6–80 m above sea level. The north-east of the town rises to a height of 120 m.

**Fig. 2.A Location of Ballymote in the wider County Sligo context**

**Sligo City  
and Environs**

**Ballymote**

At the time of the preparation of the Ballymote LAP 2005–2011, the most recent demographic figures available were those from Census 2002. The results of Census 2011 are not yet published, but 2006 information is now available.

**Table 2.B Demographic change 2002-2011**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Population 2002</b>	<b>Population 2006</b>	<b>% change '02-'06</b>	<b>Population 2011</b>	<b>% change '06-'11</b>
County Sligo	58,200	60,894	+4.6	65,270*	+7.2
Ballymote ED	1,405	1,717	+22.2	2,076*	+20.9
Ballymote Town	981	1,229	+25.3	Not available	Not available

\*Preliminary Census figures only

In accordance with the Core Strategy of the CDP, the recommended population level for Ballymote is 1,700 persons. Through the appropriate allocation of land for additional residential development, together with associated policies and objectives, the Draft Ballymote LAP will ensure consistency with this recommended population level. It is important to note that the current census population figures for Ballymote Town are not yet available but that this issue will be reviewed in 2013 when the figures should be available.

## 2.3 Purpose and structure

The Draft Ballymote LAP is intended to serve the following main purposes:

- to provide for orderly, balanced development in the interests of the common good;
- to indicate detailed requirements regarding the provision of community facilities and amenities;
- to set specific standards for the design of developments and structures;
- to ensure that all sectors of society are properly considered and catered for;
- to provide a degree of certainty and security.

The Draft Ballymote LAP is structured under the following main headings:

<b>Chapter 1</b>	Plan context
<b>Chapter 2</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
<b>Chapter 3</b>	Core Strategy
<b>Chapter 4</b>	Economic development
<b>Chapter 5</b>	Housing
<b>Chapter 6</b>	Community facilities
<b>Chapter 7</b>	Heritage
<b>Chapter 8</b>	Mobility and transport
<b>Chapter 9</b>	Infrastructure
<b>Chapter 10</b>	Environmental quality
<b>Chapter 11</b>	Urban design

**Note:** All the policies and objectives contained in Sections 3 to 12 of the CDP are applicable to all settlements in County Sligo including Ballymote. These policies and objectives have already been assessed for effects on the Natura 2000 network in preparing the CDP 2011-2017, details of which are available at [www.sligococo.ie/cdp/](http://www.sligococo.ie/cdp/).

## 2.4 Main changes in the Draft LAP 2012-2018

The proposed Draft LAP is similar to the existing LAP 2005-2011 in many respects.

However, whilst the proposed LAP will include a similar extent of land zoned for development (approximately 160 hectares), a lower amount of housing land will be available for development during the plan period. This reduction is the most significant aspect of the proposed LAP when compared to the LAP 2005-2011.

The reason behind this significant reduction in lands available for new housing development is to ensure consistency with the Core Strategy of the CDP. The Core Strategy of the CDP outlines that only a maximum of 21 hectares are to be zoned for housing in Ballymote, in order to ensure compliance with the Regional Planning Guidelines.

Some of the peripheral sites zoned for residential development in the LAP 2005-2011 are to be included in a Strategic Land Reserve (SLR). Proposals for housing development within the SLR will not be considered during the plan period.

One site, which is liable to flooding, will be included in the buffer zone, which is to be established around the development limit of Ballymote. The purpose of this buffer zone is to help consolidate the town by preventing sprawl and uncontrolled infill development along the approach roads, within a 0.7–1.3 km distance from the contiguous built-up area.

The illustrations below show the proposed zoning map and the extent of the buffer zone.

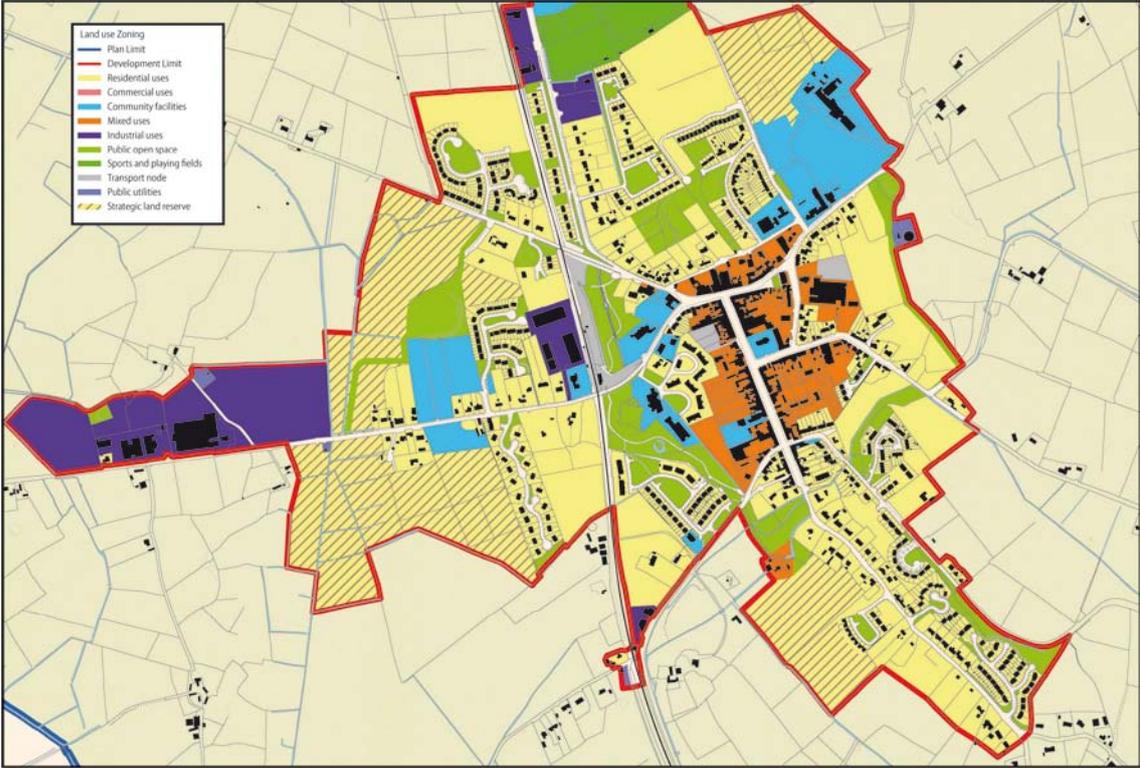
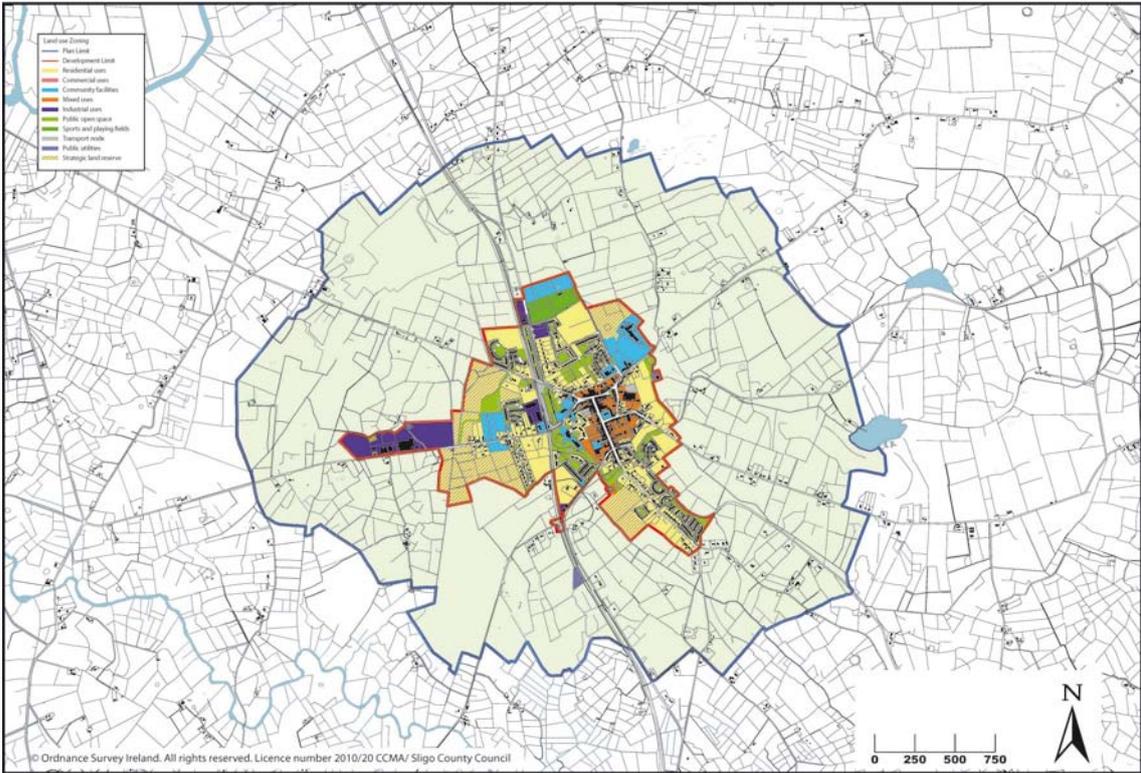


Fig. 2.C Zoning Map detail (above) and 2.D Zoning Map with buffer zone (below)



### 3. Stage 1 screening

#### 3.1 Natura 2000 sites in and within 15 km of the Plan area

Following guidance from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, any Natura 2000 sites within the Plan area and an area extending 15 km around it are considered. There are no Natura 2000 sites within the Plan area, but those within 15 km are listed and illustrated below. Consideration was also given to Natura 2000 sites outside the 15 km area that may be affected by the objectives and policies contained within the Draft LAP.

**Table 3.A Natura 2000 Sites considered in this report**

<b>Natura 2000 sites within 15km of Plan area</b>			
<b>Special Area of Conservation (SACs)</b>	<b>Site Code</b>	<b>Special Protection Areas (SPAs)</b>	<b>Site Code</b>
Ballysadare Bay	000622	Ballysadare Bay	004129
Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes	000636	Lough Gara	004048
Ox Mountains Bogs	002006	Lough Arrow	004050
Turloughmore	000637		
Flughany Bog	000497		
Bricklieve Mountains and Kesh Corran	001656		
Unshin River	001898		
River Moy	002298		
Dooastle Turlough	000492		
Cloonakillna Lough	001899		
Union Wood	000638		
Lough Arrow	001673		
<b>Natura 2000 sites outside the 15 km area</b>			
<b>Special Area of Conservation (SACs)</b>	<b>Site Code</b>	<b>Special Protection Areas (SPAs)</b>	<b>Site Code</b>
<b>Lough Hoe Bog</b>	000633	<b>N/A</b>	

See **Appendix 1** for detailed description of each of the above sites.





### **3.2 Natura 2000 conservation measures in the County Development Plan 2011-2017**

The existing CDP 2011-2017 contains numerous measures which will directly and/or indirectly contribute to the conservation of Natura 2000 sites, all of which will continue to apply and take precedence over any provisions contained within the Ballymote LAP. These will assist in the implementation of the requirements of the Habitats Directive. Sections 4-5 and the Appendix of the AA Screening Report prepared in relation to the CDP 2011-2017 set out all of the relevant policies, objectives and other measures. Details are available at [www.sligococo.ie/cdp](http://www.sligococo.ie/cdp)

### **3.3 Is the LAP necessary to the management of Natura 2000 sites?**

The proposed Ballymote LAP is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites. However, taken together with the existing CDP 2011-2017 as outlined above, it does include, inter alia, measures to protect, conserve and manage the area's natural heritage in a prudent and sustainable manner, including Natura 2000 sites, and to seek its enhancement where appropriate and feasible.

### **3.4 Cumulative effects**

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the National Development Plan 2007-2013, Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 set the planning framework for the proposed Ballymote LAP 2012-2018. The effects of the higher level Plans are considered insofar as they inform the LAP. Both the RPGs and the CDP have been subjected to AA screening, with a finding of no significant effects in each case.

There will be no statutory plans subsidiary to this LAP. The other LAPs within the County area are for Strandhill and Enniscrone, both of which are at a significant distance from Ballymote (approximately 25 km and 40 km respectively). None of these LAPs are linked to Ballymote by reason of resource requirements and/or emissions.

In light of the above it is considered that no cumulative effects will arise from direct, indirect or secondary impacts as a result of the implementation of the Ballymote LAP.

Projects will be subject to separate assessment procedures in accordance with all applicable Directives and Regulations.

### **3.5 Assessment of likely effects (direct, indirect or secondary) on Natura 2000 sites**

#### **a) size and scale, area and land-take**

The proposed LAP does not involve any land take within Natura 2000 sites. The lands within the Plan limit (i.e. within the blue line) extend to roughly 1000 hectares. The vast majority of this area is designated as 'buffer zone' wherein development will be strictly controlled and limited mainly to agricultural and associated development.

The Plan area within the development limit (i.e. within the red line), within which development will be contained, measures about 160 hectares. Circa 75 hectares are already developed and approximately 30

hectares have been included in the Strategic Land Reserve. A total of 19 hectares have been zoned for open space / recreation and will not involve significant levels of development.

Essentially the LAP involves the potential development of 35 hectares of land, of which almost 21 hectares have been reserved for residential development.

Regardless of the extent of land zoned for development and the associated potential population increase, the County Development Plan policies and objectives have been designed to ensure that the population of Ballymote will be consistent with the recommended level of 1700 residents by 2017. There is currently a moratorium on multi-unit residential development in Ballymote. The relevant policies of the CDP in this regard are as follows:

**SP-S-2** *Encourage growth in the Gateway and Key Support Towns by applying a moratorium on multiple housing developments in the settlements listed in Schedule 3 until the year 2013, when a review should be undertaken based on new Census figures.*

*The moratorium shall apply exclusively to multiple housing schemes and should not affect infill development, renovations, replacements and subdivisions of existing units.*

*Applications for multiple residential development will not normally be permitted, except where they replace previously permitted development (live permissions only) consisting of the same or a higher number of units.*

*The moratorium shall exclude applications for social and special-needs housing.*

**SP-S-4** *Encourage population growth in the Key Support Towns of Ballymote, Enniscrone and Tobercurry to the levels set out in the Housing Strategy 2011-2017 (shown in Table 3.S.)*

**SP-S-7** *In order to ensure that development takes place in accordance with the Settlement Structure and Housing Strategy, cumulated permitted residential development, if occupied, should not lead to more than 10% excess in the allocated population for each settlement during the lifetime of this plan.*

Given the limited scale and area of the proposed LAP, the relevant CDP policies outlined above and the fact that the Plan does not involve any land take within Natura 2000 sites, it is considered that there will be no significant direct, indirect or secondary impacts on such sites.

## **b) distance from Natura 2000 sites**

The nearest Natura 2000 site is located to the north-west of the plan area, with Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC being approximately 1.5 km from the Plan limit and approximately 2.5 km from the development limit. To the south-east, the Bricklieve Mountains and Kesh Corran SAC are at a distance of approximately 3 km from the Plan limit and 4 km from the development limit.

## **c) resource requirements, emissions and waste**

The two main issues in this regard relate to water supply and wastewater disposal.

### **Water supply**

Drinking water to serve the Ballymote LAP area comes from the Lough Talt regional scheme, which is located within Lough Hoe Bog SAC at a distance of approximately 25 kilometres from Ballymote. Threats to the integrity of this site include arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table.

Sligo County Council requires a Water Abstraction Order for Lough Talt and it is anticipated that this process (which will include an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the requirements of the

Habitats Directive) will be progressed in 2012. This process will therefore address the impact of water abstraction on the Lough Hoe Bog SAC within the lifetime of the Ballymote LAP.

The Lough Talt scheme is currently listed on the EPA's Remedial Action List. Improved treatment is required for compliance with the EU (Drinking Water) Regulations (No.2) 2007. The Lough Talt scheme has been included in the Water Services Investment Programme 2010-2012 and is currently being advanced through the relevant statutory planning and procurement procedures (including compliance with the Habitats Directive).

It is anticipated that a new water treatment plant will be operational on the scheme during 2014. It is considered that the new water treatment plant, together with the proposed Water Abstraction Order, will ensure there is a sufficient potable water supply to meet commercial, industrial, residential and agricultural needs during the LAP period.

It is important to note that Sligo County Council is in the process of assessing water demands for the Lough Talt scheme. An important part of this assessment involves considering the impact of water conservation measures on demands and initial assessment would indicate that total average demand and requirements will actually decrease during the LAP period as a result of reductions in UFW (unaccounted for water).

It is acknowledged that there will be an intervening period prior to the completion of the water treatment plant and the Water Abstraction Order process. However, having regard to the moratorium on multi-unit residential development (as outlined earlier in this report), and the reductions in UFW, it is unlikely that there will be an increased water demand during this period. Demand from other forms of development (i.e. industrial, community facilities etc) is unlikely to be significant but cannot be ruled out. In any case it is considered that this issue is adequately dealt with by existing CDP provisions as outlined below.

#### *County Development Plan provisions*

Regardless of water supply and quality, the County Development Plan policies and objectives have been designed in a way which ensures that development must take place in tandem with the availability of water (i.e. sufficient quantity and appropriate quality), subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive. In effect, any proposal for development in Ballymote will be assessed with regard to water demand and the subsequent impact of this demand on the Lough Hoe Bog SAC.

Sections 9.1 and 7.1.1 of the LAP point to the main provisions of the County Development Plan which will address the issue of water supply whilst also ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

- P-WS-1***     *Ensure an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of good quality water for domestic, commercial and industrial use, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.*
- O-WS-2***     *Complete the planning and construction of the new water treatment plant at Lough Talt subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.*
- 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 prepared or assessed on the basis of this development plan, the planning authority must comply fully with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (as transposed into Irish Law by the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No.3) Regulations 2011) 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.*

### **Water supply conclusion**

Having regard to the provisions in place to address the Lough Talt scheme during the plan period (i.e. the new water treatment works and Water Abstraction Order) which will be subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive, together with the provisions of the current CDP and the anticipated reduction in water supply demand, it is considered that water supply requirements arising out of the implementation of the Ballymote LAP will not have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 network.

### **Wastewater**

The Ballymote Sewerage Scheme is included in the Water Services Investment Programme 2010-2012 under schemes at planning stage. According to the EPA, Ballymote Wastewater Treatment Plant “*failed to meet the overall requirements of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations 2001*” in 2010. Discussions and proposals are on-going regarding the upgrading of the existing wastewater treatment plant. Details of the design capacity are yet to be finalised but will be based on the Draft Ballymote LAP and particularly the extent of land zoned for development and the likelihood of its development during the plan period. On the basis of calculations to date, it is estimated that requirements during the plan period will rise from a current demand of approximately 2,500 PE to a demand of 3,139 PE by 2018. The wastewater treatment plant upgrade will be designed to meet this minimum demand.

The Ballymote Wastewater Treatment Plant discharges to an adjoining stream which feeds into the Owenmore River. The Owenmore merges with the Unshin River, forming the Ballysadare River which flows into Ballysadare Bay.

The Owenmore River flows into the Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC which is 8 km downstream of the primary discharge and 6 km downstream from the discharge stream’s confluence with the Owenmore River. The Unshin River SAC and Ballysadare Bay SAC/SPA are located further downstream from Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC.

#### *Wastewater capacity*

The design capacity of the existing treatment plant is 3,000 PE and it is estimated that there is an existing loading of approximately 2,500 PE. There is therefore residual capacity in the wastewater treatment plant at present to cater for new developments. However, this capacity will be subject to ongoing review in accordance with the requirements of the EPA wastewater discharge licence.

The Ballymote sewage system is a combined network of both foul and storm water. Data based on flows arriving at the Plant show that there is a significant ingress of surface water into the Ballymote collection system. Most recent calculations suggest that storm water could account for up to 60% of flow rates.

The Wastewater Discharge Licence highlights that there is currently no provision for a storm tank at the Plant. The Licence in fact stipulates that Sligo County Council upgrade the Storm Water Overflows to comply with the criteria outlined in the DECLG “Procedures and Criteria in relation to Storm Water Overflows, 1995”. This work must be completed by 31 December 2015 at the latest. This will necessitate the construction of a storm water holding tank at the plant, or the removal of storm water from the network. The best practice solution will be to remove as much storm water from the network as possible

and to then construct a smaller holding tank at the Plant. In accordance with the terms of the discharge license, this situation will be resolved during the plan period, thereby significantly increasing the existing capacity of the network and treatment plant.

In relation to capacity, it should be noted that, as outlined earlier in this report, there is a moratorium on multi-unit residential development in Ballymote. It is therefore unlikely that there will be a significantly increased wastewater loading during this period. Demand for other forms of development (i.e. industrial, community facilities etc) are also unlikely to be significant but cannot be ruled out.

Having regard to the proposed capacity improvements (as a result of the upgrading of the treatment plant and separation of foul and storm water as outlined above), it is considered that adequate wastewater infrastructure will be in place to cater for anticipated demands during the plan period.

### *Wastewater discharge*

In relation to effluent discharge data and compliance with the various parameters set out in the Wastewater Discharge License, it should be noted that the plant is operating quite well at present. Whilst the plant exceeded some of the parameters in 2010 it did not exceed any in 2011, although it was close to exceeding some of its limits particularly in relation to total Phosphate and total Nitrogen (see Appendix 2 for details). These issues (total Phosphate and total Nitrogen) will be addressed as part of the proposed upgrading of the system and plant. An inspector of the EPA completed an audit of the plant on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011 and sampling carried out was found to comply with the conditions of the Wastewater Discharge License.

As part of the discharge license application process, an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was prepared by Nicholas O'Dwyer Consulting Engineers on behalf of Sligo County Council in relation to the impact of the discharge from the WWTP on Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC.

The report concluded as follows:

- the hydrological separation distance of 8 km provides significant dilution and dispersal of wastewater;
- no cumulative impacts will occur;
- whilst assimilative capacity calculations indicate that orthophosphate concentration is above the limit allowed in the Surface Water Regulations, this is the case in the river as a whole, prior to any additional input from the WWTP;
- as described in the Western River Basin District Management Plan, numerous measures are to be put in place across the region to address many and varied factors which will improve water quality;
- though the habitats for which the SAC is protected are susceptible to inputs of nutrients, in particular phosphorus, the levels found in the Owenmore are attributable to numerous sources, not just the WWTP in isolation;
- there are no significant impacts on the qualifying interests or integrity of the SAC arising from the WWTP in isolation. The river has no assimilative capacity for orthophosphate prior to the discharge of the WWTP and therefore the elevated levels of orthophosphate in the river system catchment should be dealt with in conjunction with phosphorus removal measures at the WWTP.

The inspector's report on this application considered that the discharge license would provide a high level of protection to the designated sites which will be attainable having assessed the assimilative capacity of the receiving waters for biological Oxygen demand (BOD), orthophosphate, total Ammonia and total suspended solids. It will ensure that all discharges from the agglomeration will be provided with an

appropriate level of treatment. By ensuring that all wastewater is treated to a high standard, the license will act to improve the quality of the receiving water environment.

The Owenmore Water Management Unit Action Plan states that the section of river to which the Ballymote WWTP discharges is of Poor Status. However, it should be noted that this status applies both upstream and downstream of the WWTP. This 'poor status' continues to apply downstream for a short distance after its confluence with the Owenmore River (approximately 2 km from the WWTP) as far as the confluence with the Clooneen River. Thereafter, between this confluence and Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC (a distance of approximately 6 km), the status of both the river and lakes themselves improve to 'moderate'. Further downstream the latter section of the river flowing through Collooney is at 'good' status.

The Water Management Unit Action Plan notes that over 93% of total Phosphorus (TP) generated in the WMU is diffuse in nature, with agriculture accounting for over 75% of diffuse TP. The Action Plan states that the WWTP requires capital works, implementation of an appropriate performance management system and investigation of Combined Stormwater Outflow (CSO).

Having regard to the ongoing monitoring information outlined above, the varying status of the receiving waters both upstream and downstream of the WWTP, and the diffuse nature of pollution sources, it is considered that the WWTP is not a significant contributing factor to any impact on the Natura 2000 network associated with water quality.

#### *County Development Plan provisions*

Notwithstanding existing and proposed wastewater capacity/quality conditions, the County Development Plan policies and objectives have been designed in a way which ensures that development must take place in tandem with the availability of adequate wastewater treatment capacity and subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive. In effect, any proposal for development in Ballymote will be assessed with regard to available wastewater treatment capacity and the subsequent impact of any additional loading on Natura 2000 sites downstream of the treatment plant (the nearest and most relevant being Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC).

Sections 9.2 and 7.1.1 of the LAP point to the main provisions of the County Development Plan which will address the issue of wastewater treatment whilst also ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

- P-WW-2** *Ensure that developers provide effective drainage systems with separate foul and surface water networks.*
- P-WW-5** *Strive to provide adequate wastewater treatment capacity to facilitate development in County Sligo. The provision of such infrastructure will only be pursued where the planning authority is satisfied that it is necessary and in accordance with the requirements of the Core Strategy and the Settlement Structure of the County.*
- P-WW-7** *Ensure that public wastewater treatment infrastructure is in place, with adequate capacity, prior to developments being occupied.*
- 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-17** *Development proposing to connect to the public wastewater treatment system shall not be permitted unless the planning authority is satisfied that adequate capacity is available. Exceptions to this policy will be considered in cases where works on upgrading the*

wastewater facilities have commenced and will be completed within a reasonable timeframe. In such cases, appropriate conditions shall be applied to planning permissions to ensure that the proposed development and the upgrading works are suitably phased.

- O-WW-4** Complete the planning stage for upgrade works to Collooney and Ballymote WWTPs, subject to necessary approvals and compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.
- 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 prepared or assessed on the basis of this development plan, the planning authority must comply fully with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (as transposed into Irish Law by the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No.3) Regulations 2011) 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.

#### **Wastewater conclusions**

Having regard to the provisions in place to address the deficiencies within the Ballymote wastewater treatment system and plant during the plan period (i.e. the separation of foul and stormwater network together with the upgrading of the existing WWTP) which will be subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive, together with the provisions of the current CDP, and having considered the above information regarding wastewater discharge, the assimilative capacity and ongoing monitoring of the receiving waters, it is considered that the wastewater emissions associated with the implementation of the LAP will not have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 network.

#### **d) transportation requirements**

In promoting the development of Ballymote as a Key Support Town, account was taken of its location along a strategic transport link: the Dublin–Sligo railway line. This link could be expanded through the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor, which connects with the Dublin-Sligo line at Collooney.

Section 9.3 of the LAP points to the main provisions of the County Development Plan which will address this issue whilst also ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

- SP-MOB-6** Promote the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor from Athenry to Sligo, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

Otherwise it is considered that transportation policies and objectives will be generally of minor scale and confined to the Plan area (i.e. at a significant distance from Natura 2000 sites).

Accordingly it is considered that the transportation policies of the Draft LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.

#### **e) duration, operation etc.**

The Draft LAP will be adopted in 2012 and will remain in effect until 2018. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, arising from the duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc, (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will be permitted on the basis of this Plan.

### **3.6 Describe any likely changes to the sites arising as a result of:**

#### **a) reduction of habitat area**

The proposed LAP does not involve any land take within Natura 2000 sites. Notwithstanding this, the Planning Authority will continue to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of Natura 2000 sites in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the proposed LAP and the CDP 2011-2017.

#### **b) disturbance to key species**

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the LAP area. As noted earlier in this report the LAP is linked to the Lough Hoe Bog SAC by reason of water supply requirements. Reasons for the designation of this site include the presence of *Vertigo geyeri*, a land snail, which is listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive but which has not been recorded in recent years. In this regard there are concerns that the drops in water levels on the site may be an influencing factor. However, as outlined earlier in this report, it is not anticipated that there will be additional water demands during the LAP period and therefore this issue will not arise. This matter will also be comprehensively addressed through the AA process associated with the Water Abstraction Order.

Notwithstanding this the Planning Authority will continue to take appropriate steps to avoid the disturbance of key species in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the proposed LAP and the CDP 2011-2017.

#### **c) habitat or species fragmentation**

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the LAP area. However, the Planning Authority will continue to take appropriate steps to avoid habitat or species fragmentation in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the proposed LAP and the CDP 2011-2017.

#### **d) reduction in species density**

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the LAP area. However, the Planning Authority will continue to take appropriate steps to avoid reduction in species density in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the proposed LAP and the CDP 2011-2017.

#### **e) changes in key indicators of conservation value**

As outlined earlier in this report it is considered that key indicators of conservation value relate to issues of water quality and water quantity. These indicators will continue to be monitored by the local authority in accordance with statutory requirements and established practice.

Notwithstanding this, the Planning Authority will continue to take appropriate steps to maintain conservation value in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the proposed LAP and the CDP 2011-2017.

#### **f) climate change**

The principle of sustainable development is a key factor in the design of the LAP, particularly in relation to transportation policies and flood risk management. The Planning Authority will continue to take appropriate steps to address climate change in accordance with national policy together with the policies and objectives outlined in the proposed LAP and the CDP 2011-2017.

### **3.7 Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 sites in terms of:**

#### **a) interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site**

The proposed LAP will not impact on the relationships that define the structure of Natura 2000 sites.

#### **b) interference with the key relationships that define the function of the site**

The proposed LAP will not impact on the relationships that define the function of Natura 2000 sites.

### **3.8 Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects in terms of loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance and changes to key elements of the site**

As outlined earlier in this report it is considered that key indicators of conservation value relate to issues of water quality and water quantity.

In relation to water quality it is considered that a key indicator of significance would be the deterioration in the quality of water (as a result of emissions associated with the LAP) to such an extent as to have a significant effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. As discussed earlier in this report, this is particularly relevant to the impact of wastewater treatment plant emissions on Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC. It is not anticipated that there will be significant changes in this regard as a result of the implementation of the LAP. Indicators in this respect will continue to be monitored by the local authority in accordance with statutory requirements and established practice.

Notwithstanding this, the Planning Authority will continue to take appropriate steps to maintain conservation value in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the proposed LAP and the CDP 2011-2017.

In relation to water quantity it is considered that a key indicator of significance would be fluctuation in water levels (as a result of resource requirements associated with the LAP) to such an extent as to have a significant effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. As discussed earlier in this report, this is particularly relevant to the impact of the Lough Talt water supply on the Lough Hoe Bog SAC. It is not anticipated that there will be significant changes in this regard as a result of the LAP. Indicators in this respect will continue to be monitored by the local authority in accordance with statutory requirements and established practice.

Notwithstanding this, the Planning Authority will continue to take appropriate steps to maintain conservation value in accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in the proposed LAP and the CDP 2011-2017.

### **3.9 Describe those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known**

As outlined above, continued monitoring will be carried out regarding the scale and magnitude of impacts as a result of water supply requirements and wastewater emissions. It is considered that, taken together with planned improvements, anticipated demands, and the policies of the existing CDP, the implementation of the proposed LAP will not affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

## 4. Conclusion

**Table 4.A Finding of no significant effects report matrix**

<b>Name of project/plan</b>	Ballymote Local Area Plan 2012-2018
<b>Name and location of Natura 2000 site(s)</b>	The proposed LAP does not relate to any one specific site. Natura 2000 sites considered in this report are listed in Table 3.A.
<b>Description of the project/plan</b>	See section 2 of this Report.
<b>Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?</b>	The proposed Ballymote LAP is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites. However, taken together with the existing CDP 2011-2017, it does include, inter alia, measures to protect, conserve and manage the area's natural heritage in a prudent and sustainable manner, including Natura 2000 sites, and to seek its enhancement where appropriate and feasible.
<b>Are there other projects/plans that together with the project/plan being assessed could affect the site?</b>	The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the National Development Plan 2007-2013, Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022, and the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 set the planning framework for the proposed Ballymote LAP 2012-2018. The effects of the higher level Plans are considered insofar as they inform the LAP. There will be no plans subsidiary to the LAP. Projects will be subject to separate assessment procedures in accordance with all applicable Directives and Regulations.

### The assessment of significance of the effects

<b>Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect Natura 2000 sites</b>	The LAP area does not involve any land-take within Natura 2000 sites and in fact its location is at a significant remove from any such sites. Potential impacts arise in relation to resource requirements (water supply from Lough Talt) and emissions (WWTP discharge) as outlined in section 3.5 (c) of this Report.
<b>Explain why these effects are not considered significant</b>	<p>The potential impacts which arise in relation to resource requirements (water supply from Lough Talt) are not considered significant (as outlined earlier in this report) for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) having regard to the CDP moratorium on multi-unit residential development and assessment of water supply demands, it is considered that water demands will not increase during the plan period;</li> <li>b) proposals are in place for the upgrading/improvement of the Lough Talt scheme via the Water Abstraction Order and water treatment works, both of which will be subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive;</li> <li>c) given that specific statements, policies and objectives have been formulated within the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 to allow the Councils to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of Natura 2000 sites.</li> </ul>

	<p>The possible impacts which arise in relation to emissions (WWTP discharge) are not considered significant (as outlined earlier in this report) for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) having regard to the CDP moratorium on multi-unit residential development it is considered that significant increases in wastewater emissions will not arise;</li> <li>b) given the significant distance between the WWTP and the Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC, the assimilative capacity of receiving waters, the diffuse nature of pollution sources and the varying status of waters within the Owenmore Water Management Unit, it is not considered that WWTP emissions are a significant contributing factor;</li> <li>c) the proposed upgrading/improvements to the wastewater treatment network and plant will accommodate anticipated demands and will be subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive;</li> <li>d) given that specific statements, policies and objectives have been formulated within the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 to allow the Councils to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of Natura 2000 sites.</li> </ul>
<b>List of Agencies consulted</b>	A pre-draft consultation meeting was held with Mr William Cormacan of the NPWS. Siobhan Ryan, Heritage Officer with Sligo County Council, was also consulted.
<b>Response to consultation</b>	No formal written responses were received. Both consultations mainly highlighted the need to address the issues arising from the Lough Talt water supply (Lough Hoe Bog SAC) and wastewater discharges (Templehouse and Cloonacleigha Lakes SAC).

### Data collection to carry out the assessment

<b>Who carried out the assessment?</b>	<b>Sources of data</b>	<b>Level of assessment completed</b>	<b>Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?</b>
Stephen Ward, A/SEP Sligo County Council Tel. 071 9111245 sward AT sligococo.ie	National Parks and Wildlife Services Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 Draft Ballymote Local Area Plan 2012-2018 Sligo County Council Water Services Section EPA website AA Screening Report for Ballymote WWDL, prepared by Nicholas O'Dwyer, Consulting Engineers	Stage 1 – Screening	The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report is accessible on Sligo County Council's website alongside the Draft Ballymote Local Area Plan 2012-2018.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed Ballymote Local Area Plan 2012-2018 will not give rise to significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.

The trigger for a Stage Two AA (see section 1.2 of this Report) would be a finding that the proposed plan was likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site.

This Screening Report evaluates the draft Plan to determine if it needs to be the subject of a Stage Two AA. It finds that the draft 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) will not give rise to significant effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

Therefore, it is concluded that the Plan does not require any further assessment to demonstrate compliance with the Habitats Directive.

## Appendix 1. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

Table A.1 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

Site code Site name	Qualifying interests	Conservation objectives	Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)
<b>IE 000622</b> <b>Ballysadare Bay</b>	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) 2190 Humid dune slacks 1365 <i>Phoca Vitulina</i> Common Seal 1014 <i>Vertigo angustior</i> Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail	To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Estuaries; Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Embryonic shifting dunes; Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes); Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes); Humid dune slacks.  To maintain the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Vertigo angustior</i> , <i>Phoca vitulina</i> .	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/under grazing Bracken and scrub encroachment Tourism related development Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping Burning Quarrying/removal of sand Aquaculture
<b>IE 000636</b> <b>Templehouse and Cloonacleigh a Loughs</b>	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	To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp.; Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-</i>	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 code Site name	Qualifying interests	Conservation objectives	Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)
	natural regeneration 6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinia 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> )	<i>Batrachion</i> 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

<b>IE 000638</b> <b>Union Wood</b>	91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in British Isles	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 British Isles.	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
<b>IE 001898</b> <b>Unshin River</b>	3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> 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> ) 1106 <i>Salmo salar</i> Atlantic Salmon 1355 <i>Lutra lutra</i> European Otter	To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation; Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> ).	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

		To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Salmo salar</i> ; <i>Lutra lutra</i> .	Loading from effluents(WWTP) Recreation/amenity use Developments – marinas Introduction of alien invasive species Illegal Dumping
<b>IE 002006</b> <b>Ox Mountains Bogs</b>	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 Rhynchosporion 1013 <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> Geyer's Whorl Snail	To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Blanket bog; Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion; Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> ); Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ; Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds  To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: <i>Vertigo geyeri</i>  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.	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
<b>IE 000637</b> <b>Turloughmore</b>	3180 Turloughs	To maintain the Annex I habitat for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable	Agricultural improvements /Reclamation Drainage/Changes in local hydrology

<b>(Sligo)</b>		<p>conservation status: Turloughs.</p> <p>To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.</p> <p>To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	<p>water quality/pollution (including groundwater)</p> <p>Agricultural abandonment</p> <p>Overgrazing/Undergrazing</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Bracken and scrub encroachment</p> <p>Impacts to local geology/geomorphology eg quarrying/rock blasting</p>
<b>IE 000497</b> <b>Flughany Bog</b>	<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 Rhynchosporion</p>	<p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Active raised bogs; Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion.</p> <p>To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.</p> <p>To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	<p>Overgrazing</p> <p>Afforestation</p> <p>Private and industrial peat extraction</p> <p>Horticultural peat extraction</p> <p>Illegal dumping</p> <p>Spread of invasive species</p> <p>Drainage</p> <p>Neglect</p> <p>Development</p>
<b>IE 001656</b> <b>Bricklieve Mountains and Keshcorran</b>	<p>8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>)</p> <p>6510 Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)</p> <p>6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>) ('important orchid</p>	<p>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 Brometalia</i>); Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>); Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea</i></p>	<p>Agricultural improvements/Reclamation</p> <p>Agricultural abandonment</p> <p>Overgrazing/undergrazing</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Quarrying</p>

	<p>sites)</p> <p>1065 Euphydryas aurinia Marsh Fritillary</p>	<p>rotundifolii).</p> <p>To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Euphydryas aurinia.</p> <p>To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.</p> <p>To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	<p>Bracken and scrub encroachment</p>
<p><b>IE 002298</b></p> <p><b>River Moy</b></p>	<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 Rhynchosporion</p> <p>91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in British Isles</p> <p>91E0 Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)</p> <p>1106 Salmo salar Atlantic Salmon</p> <p>1095 Petromyzon marinus Sea Lamprey</p> <p>1096 Lampetra planeri Brook Lamprey</p> <p>1355 Lutra lutra European Otter</p> <p>1092 Austroptamobius pallipes</p>	<p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Active raised bogs; Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion; Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles; Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)</p> <p>To maintain the Annex II species for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Austroptamobius pallipes; Petromyzon marinus; Lampetra planeri; Salmo salar; Lutra lutra</p>	<p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution</p> <p>Changes in water flow rates</p> <p>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water table</p> <p>Siltation</p> <p>Loss of fringe vegetation</p> <p>Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Loading from effluents(WWTP)</p> <p>Recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Developments - marinas</p>

	Freshwater White-clawed Crayfish	<p>To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site</p> <p>To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	
<b>IE 000492</b> <b>Doocastle Turlough</b>	3180 Turloughs	<p>To maintain the Annex I habitats for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status</p> <p>To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.</p> <p>To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	<p>Changes in hydroperiod, water depth, flooding frequency, area or timing (arterial drainage)</p> <p>Nutrient enrichment N and particularly P (both dissolved and particulate) of groundwater (diffuse and point-source nutrient pollution)</p> <p>pH naturally in the range 3-6</p> <p>Karst flow typology relevant. Wide variation in natural trophic status of turloughs. Activities in turlough basins may be a risk to groundwater status.</p> <p>Climate change</p> <p>Eutrophication</p> <p>Overgrazing by sheep</p> <p>Overgrazing by cattle</p> <p>Undergrazing</p> <p>Quarrying</p> <p>Other human induced changes in hydraulic conditions (Groundwater abstraction).</p> <p>Dispersed habitation.</p>
<b>IE 001899</b> <b>Cloonakillna Lough</b>	<p>Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation [3150]</p> <p>Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]</p>	<p>To maintain the favourable conservation status of the Qualifying Interests of the SAC, or the Special Conservation Interests of the SPA (<i>Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]</i>).</p> <p>To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.</p> <p>To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	<p>Peat or turf cutting, arterial drainage, local drainage, agricultural reclamation, overgrazing, afforestation, alien species, urbanisation, dispersed habitation, tourism, leisure and fishing, hydraulic changes, development, timber felling.</p>
<b>IE 001673</b> <b>Lough Arrow</b>	3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp.	<p>To maintain the Annex I habitat for which the cSAC has been selected at favourable conservation status: Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp.</p>	<p>Decrease in water quality/Increased pollution</p> <p>Changes in water flow rates</p> <p>Arterial drainage/water abstraction/lowering of the regional water</p>

		<p>To maintain the extent, species richness and biodiversity of the entire site.</p> <p>To establish effective liaison and co-operation with landowners, legal users and relevant authorities.</p>	<p>table</p> <p>Siltation</p> <p>Loss of fringe vegetation</p> <p>Changes in seasonal water levels/fluctuations</p> <p>Direct loss of habitat to development</p> <p>Loading from effluents(WWTP)</p> <p>Recreation/amenity use</p> <p>Developments - marinas</p>
<p><b>IE 000633</b> <b>Lough Hoe Bog</b></p>	<p>7130 Active blanket bog 3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) White-clawed Crayfish Vertigo geyeri</p>	<p>To maintain and, where possible, enhance the extent and quality of the priority habitat, active blanket bog (40% of the site). To maintain and, where possible, enhance the extent and quality of other habitats occurring within the site. To maintain and, where possible increase the populations of the Annex II species; White-clawed Crayfish, the Land Snail Vertigo geyeri and the Red Data Book species Arctic Charr. To maintain effective liaison between NPW, relevant authorities and interested parties on the management of the site.</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>

**Table A.2 Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**

Site code Site name	Qualifying interests	Conservation objectives	Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)
IE 004129	Site is selected for: Light-bellied brent goose,	To maintain the special conservation interests for this SPA at	Direct and indirect impacts to the habitats of the bird

<b>Site code Site name</b>	<b>Qualifying interests</b>	<b>Conservation objectives</b>	<b>Threats to site integrity (not exhaustive)</b>
<b>Ballysadare Bay</b>	bar-tailed godwit  Additional Special Conservation Interests: Grey plover, dunlin, redshank, wetland & waterbirds	favourable conservation status: Light-bellied brent goose, bar-tailed godwit, grey plover, dunlin, redshank, wetland & waterbirds.	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
<b>IE 004048 Lough Gara</b>	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
<b>IE 004050 Lough Arrow</b>	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

## Appendix 2 – Effluent discharge results for 2010 and 2011

(source: Draft Report on Ballymote Sewerage Scheme prepared by the Water Services Section of Sligo County Council, January 2012)

### 2010

	COD mg/l	T.S.S. mg/l	BODS mg/l	Ortho-P mg/l as P04-P	Total-P mg/l as P	Total Nitrogen mg/l as N
<b>Ballymote WWDL ELVs (mg/l)</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>
Jan	12	13	6	0.37	2.00	20.64
Feb	41	31	16	0.89	1.38	14.32
Mar	118	51	52	1.88	3.31	35.08
Apr	148	63	35	1.92	2.67	31.75
May	40	9	7	2.35	2.82	12.72
June	22	3	2	0.93	1.07	8.13
July	29	31	19	1.28	1.95	16.05
Aug	29	11	6	0.02	0.28	10.38
Sep	20	6	3	0.2	0.23	10.89
Oct	2	2	2	0.58	0.68	12.92
Nov	10	7	3	0.40	0.75	8.74
Dec	54	20	20	1.69	2.09	12.45

Limits for the Plant as per WWDL Register Number D0094-01. Value exceeds limit for the Plant

2011

	COD mg/l	T.S.S. mg/l	BODS mg/l	Ortho-P mg/l as P04-P	Total-P mg/l as P	Total Nitrogen mg/l as N
<b>Ballymote WWDL ELVs (mg/l)</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Jan</b>	43	25	13	0.82	1	9.47
<b>Feb</b>	85	44	15	0.46	1.16	7.46
<b>Mar</b>	8	4	3	0.16	0.31	12.97
<b>Apr</b>	<2	<2	<2	1.17	1.23	12.79
<b>May</b>	<2	<2	<2	0.94	0.94	12.19
<b>June</b>	7	<2	3	1.55	1.7	13.21
<b>July</b>	4	<2	<2	0.9	1	11.91
<b>Aug</b>	10	6	4	1.78	1.95	12.63
<b>Sep</b>	11	<2	2	1.36	1.45	12.23

Limits for the Plant as per WWDL Register Number D0094-01. Value exceeds limit for the Plant