

# SEA SCREENING REPORT

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FOR THE  
**CHARLESTOWN-BELLAGHY LOCAL AREA PLAN**  
**2009-2015**

**for: Mayo County Council**

Áras an Chontae  
The Mall  
Castlebar  
County Mayo

*and*

**Sligo County Council**

County Hall  
Riverside  
Sligo

**by: CAAS (Environmental Services)**

4th Floor, 7 Red Cow Lane  
Smithfield  
Dublin 7



**SEPTEMBER 2009**

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## List of Abbreviations

cSAC	candidate Special Area of Conservation
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DEHLG	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
RPA	Register of Protected Areas
RPS	Record of Protected Structures
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SI No.	Statutory Instrument Number
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WRBD	Western River Basin District

## Glossary

### Biotic Index Values (Q Values)

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

### Environmental Problems

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

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

### Environmental Vectors

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

### Mitigate

To make or become less severe or harsh.

## **Mitigation Measures**

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

## **Protected Structure**

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

## **Recorded Monument**

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

## **Screening**

Screening is the evaluation of the requirement for SEA of a plan or programme. SEA is required if it is determined that the implementation of the relevant plan or programme would be likely to have significant environmental effects. Screening is carried out in consultation with the appropriate bodies.

## **Strategic Actions, Policies, Plans and Programmes**

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

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

Environmental assessment is a procedure that ensures that the environmental implications of decisions are taken into account before decisions are made. Environmental Impact Assessment, or *EIA*, is generally used for describing the process of environmental assessment which is limited to individual projects such as waste incinerators, housing developments or roads while Strategic Environmental Assessment, or *SEA*, is the term which has been given to the environmental assessment of plans, and other strategic actions, which help determine what kind of individual projects take place.

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

## Section 1 Summary

Mayo and Sligo County Councils propose to adopt a Local Area Plan for Charlestown-Bellaghy.

Having assessed the potential environmental effects of implementing the Plan, and having consulted with the prescribed environmental authorities, the Planning Authorities have

determined that the proposed Local Area Plan is not likely to have significant effects on the environment. Therefore, full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is not required.

The SEA screening process and the reasons for this decision are set out in the following pages.

## Section 2 SEA Introduction and Background

### 2.1 Introduction

Mayo County Council and Sligo County Council (referred to hereafter as the Councils) have prepared a Local Area Plan (LAP) for the settlement of Charlestown-Bellaghy. Charlestown-Bellaghy and the surrounding area, including the county boundary is shown on Figure 2.1.

The LAP is for an area which is broadly similar to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) town area shown on Figure 3.1. The CSO town area had a population of 859 persons in the most recent Census (CSO, 2006).

The LAP provides for a new population in line with County Development Plan growth estimates. The new population provided for by the Plan ranges from 424 to 524 persons.

Under the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations, screening is required for the Charlestown-Bellaghy LAP. Screening is the process for deciding whether a particular plan, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus be required to undergo SEA.

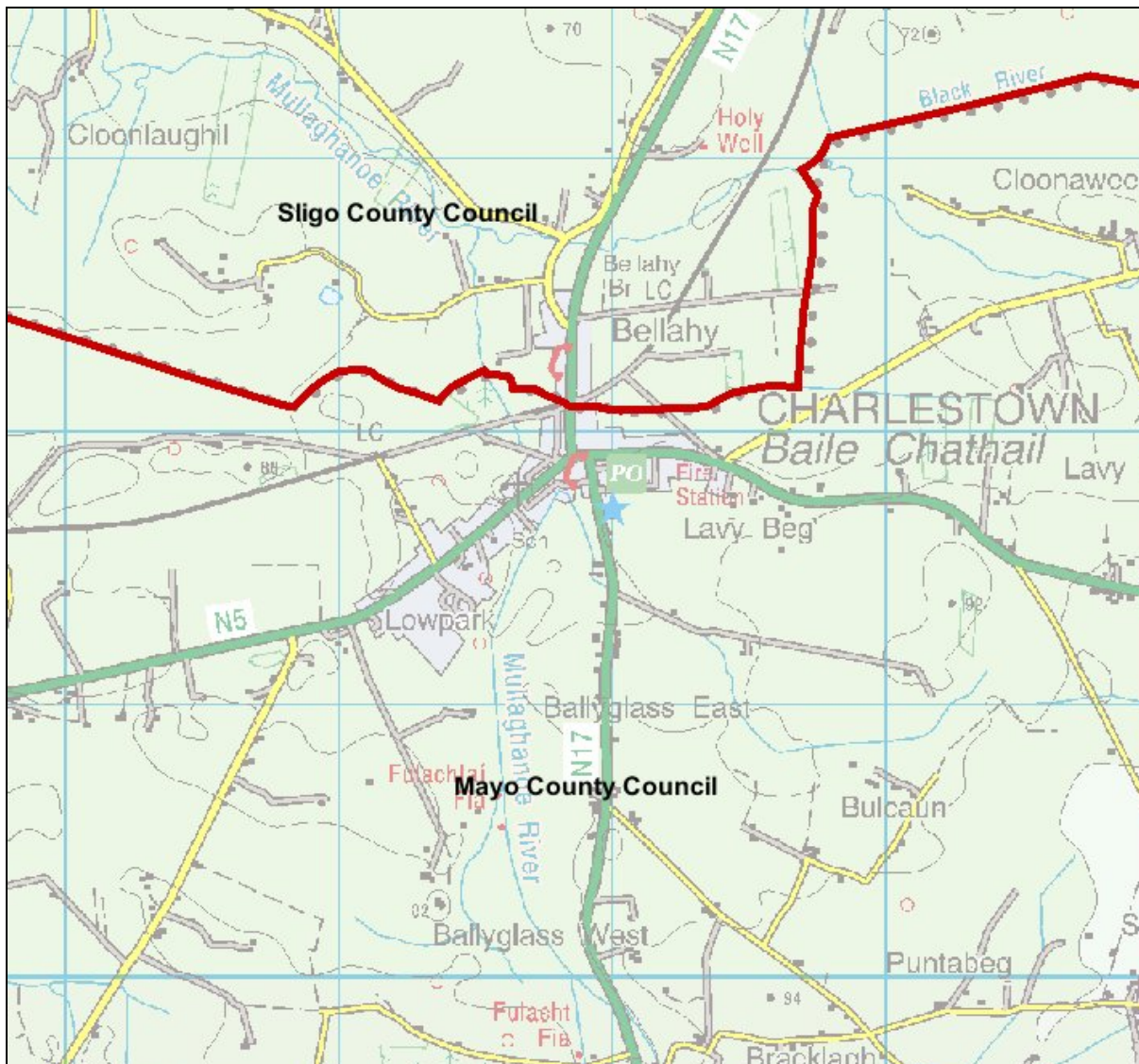


Figure 2.1 Charlestown-Bellaghy Map

## 2.2 Terms of Reference

This is the SEA Screening Report for a LAP for Charlestown/Bellaghy. The purpose of the report is to evaluate the requirement for SEA of the LAP. SEA is required if it is determined that the implementation of the LAP would be likely to have significant environmental effects.

## 2.3 Legislative Context

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27 June 2001, on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive) introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including land use planning. The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 [SI No. 435 of 2004], and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 [SI No. 436 of 2004]. Both sets of regulations became operational on 21 July 2004.

Under Article 8 of the SEA Regulations (SI No. 436 of 2004), screening is required for Local Area Plans for areas in which the population is less than 10,000 persons. Schedule 2 A of the SEA Regulations '*Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment*' must be taken into account during the screening process.

## 2.4 Consultations

A draft of this Screening Report determined that implementation of a LAP for Charlestown-Bellaghy would not be likely to have significant environmental effects (having regard to Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations).

The Councils then issued a formal notice to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources providing them with an opportunity to comment on whether or not they consider significant effects on the environment would be likely to

arise. The draft Screening Report accompanied the notice.

The EPA replied that the Councils' position with regard to the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Plan was noted. They provided a Guidance document, which was taken into account in the preparation of the Plan.

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources on behalf of the Engineering Division, whose functions were transferred to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, stated that they had no comments to make.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Built Heritage section stated that "A decision as to whether to conduct an SEA is a matter for the local authority" and provided detailed comments on SEA procedures and scoping.

## 2.5 Screening Decision

Following the four week period from the date of the notice, the Councils determined that the LAP would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations and any submission or observation received in response to the notice.

The Screening Report has since been updated taking account of any submission or observation received in response to the notice to become this Screening Report, copies of which will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the Councils during office hours and will be sent to the relevant environmental authorities.

Based on the completion of Schedule A in Section 3 below, the Councils consider that SEA is not necessary as the Plan is not considered likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Although full SEA is not required, the mitigation measures identified in Section 3 have been incorporated into the plan as policies and objectives. These will avoid potential significant adverse effects due to implementation of the plan.

## Section 3 Determining whether SEA is required

### 3.1 Introduction

The following pages contain a completed reproduction of Schedule 2A 'Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have

*significant effects on the environment* of the SEA Regulations.

These criteria have been taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise.

### 3.2 Schedule A: Part 1

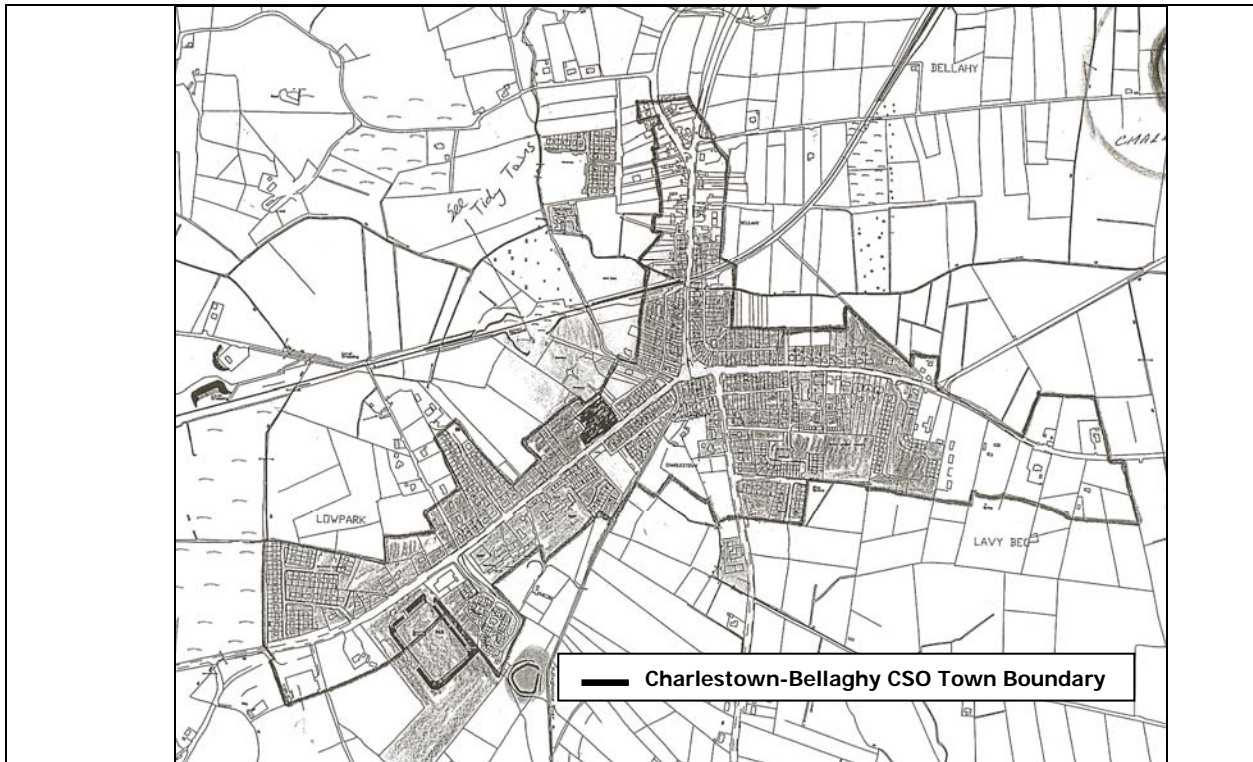
#### The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to:

- 1. the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources**

It is intended that the Charlestown -Bellaghy LAP, when implemented, will provide a positive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Charlestown-Bellaghy for a duration of six years, from adoption in 2009 until 2015, unless amended. It will consist of a written statement - which will indicate land use and other development standards together with various local objectives - and maps - which will provide a graphical representation of the LAP proposals.

The Charlestown-Bellaghy LAP will be nested in a hierarchy of land use forward planning strategic actions including the National Spatial Strategy 2000 - 2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region, the Mayo County Development Plan 2008-2014 and the Sligo County Development Plan 2005-2011. The LAP must be consistent with the policies and objectives of these strategic actions. In turn, any programmes or projects which may take place in Charlestown-Bellaghy will have to be consistent with the LAP, when implemented. The LAP will provide for an increase in population on top of an existing population of 859. The new population to be provided for by the Plan ranges from 424 to 524 persons. The population growth will be facilitated by both brownfield and greenfield development within the Plan area.





**Figure 3.1 Charlestown-Bellaghy CSO Town Area**

**2. the degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy**

The Charlestown-Bellaghy LAP is situated at the bottom of the statutory land use strategic action hierarchy and therefore is not likely to influence other statutory plans.

Non-statutory action area plans may be made in the future for certain areas within the LAP area and would have to be consistent with the policies and objectives of the LAP.

**3. the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development**

The Charlestown-Bellaghy LAP is to provide a positive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Charlestown-Bellaghy. The LAP is subject to a number of high level international, national, regional and county environmental protection policies and objectives. The LAP will be consistent with these policies and objectives and implement them at the local level in Charlestown-Bellaghy.

In order to help ensure there are no significant adverse impacts on the environment as a result of implementing the Charlestown-Bellaghy LAP, the following mitigation measures have been integrated into the Plan:

***A. Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna***

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction,

operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects)<sup>1</sup>.

When required, projects arising from this Plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive<sup>2</sup>.

Planning Applications shall: identify any losses to ecological corridors (including hedgerows and masonry stone walls) which would result if the application in question was granted; and, demonstrate how such losses would be fully offset through the replacement of the relevant corridors with corridors composed of similar species or materials. Such replacement shall be required before any losses to the existing corridors occur<sup>3</sup>.

Where opportunity exists between local high value biodiversity areas, applicants shall be encouraged to enhance existing networks or create new networks between these areas.

### ***B. Water Protection***

It is the Councils' policy to implement relevant EU and Irish Legislation pertaining to the environment and to implement the relevant provisions of Water Pollution Legislation.

It is the Councils' policy to comply with the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive in order to fulfil obligations relating to the status of waters within the Western River Basin District. The Councils shall address the significant water management issues identified in the Water Matters Consultation publications for the Western River Basin District.

When adopted, the relevant policies and objectives of the Western River Basin Management Plan and associated Programme of Measures shall be integrated into the Plan through amendment or otherwise.

Any planning applications within 15 metres of the banks of salmonid waters, or surface waters feeding into salmonid waters, shall demonstrate that development would not impact upon salmonid species or the habitats which sustain them.

Within the lifetime of the Charlestown-Bellaghy LAP both Councils shall aim to complete a study on the Mullaghanoe River and its tributaries including: an examination of the current state of the river including an identification of any pollution sources, and; measures to mitigate against any pollution in the river.

### ***C. Waste Water***

It is the Councils' policy to ensure that the provision of water and wastewater treatment facilities is undertaken in accordance with EU policies and Directives, relevant national legislation and national/regional policies.

In order for permission to be granted for new developments, there must be sufficient capacity available to appropriately treat the waste water arising from such developments. In addition, in order for planning permission to be granted for new developments planning applications must demonstrate that the new developments will be connected to the waste water treatment plant collection network.

<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.

<sup>2</sup> It is noted that the Plan will be subject to Appropriate Assessment screening.

<sup>3</sup> It is noted that previously completed Ecological Habitat Mapping (where available), has informed the Plan's Land Use Strategy.

The feasibility of connecting of unsewered, areas including individual properties/ premises, serviced by septic tanks to existing and planned sewer networks shall be examined.

#### ***D. Drinking Water***

Conformity with the relevant recommendations set out in *The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland – A Report for the Years 2006-2007* (Office of Environment Enforcement- EPA, 2007) shall be achieved.

Existing and new populations under the Development Plan shall be served with clean and wholesome drinking water.

Compliance shall be achieved with the 48 parameters set out under the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007.

#### ***E. Flooding***

Development in areas at risk of flooding, particularly floodplains, shall be avoided by not permitting development in flood risk areas unless: it is fully justified that there are wider sustainability grounds for appropriate development; unless the flood risk can be managed to an acceptable level without increasing flood risk elsewhere; and, where possible, it reduces flood risk overall.

Flood risk assessments shall accompany planning applications as relevant and these assessments shall be incorporated into the process of making decisions on planning applications and planning appeals.

The Councils shall fulfill their responsibilities under the Flood Risk Directive 2007/60/EC assist and cooperate with the Office of Public Works in developing Catchment-based Flood Risk Management Plans. Any relevant recommendations and outputs arising from Flood Risk Management Plans will be required to be incorporated into the LAP.

It is Council policy to ensure that development proposals incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) as relevant.

#### ***F. Greenhouse Gas Emissions***

It is the Councils' Policy to minimise emissions to the air of greenhouse gases in order to contribute to a reduction and avoidance of human induced climate change in accordance with the Kyoto agreement. The Councils support and are committed to the National Climate Change Strategy, and to facilitate measures that seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. In this regard, the Councils will support any initiatives taken to provide for more sustainable forms of energy use.

#### ***G. Archaeological Heritage***

Landuses shall not give rise to significant losses of the integrity, quality or context of archaeological material - except as may be conditioned or directed by the appropriate heritage agencies. This shall be achieved by the application of appropriate design standards and criteria.

It shall be ensured that pre-development archaeological testing, surveying, monitoring and recording are carried out where appropriate.

#### ***H. Architectural Heritage***

It is the Councils' policy, where appropriate to exercise the powers conferred by sections 59-80 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 to ensure the conservation of Protected

Structures. In all but exceptional cases, the Councils will seek the rehabilitation, renovation and re-use of existing old structures, where appropriate, over the demolition of same and new-build on-site.

In order to protect, strengthen and improve the presentation and the general character of Charlestown-Bellaghy, alterations and interventions to Protected Structures shall be executed to the highest conservation standards, and shall not detract from their significance or value.

New developments shall contribute to improving their surrounding neighbourhood, and not result in any significant loss in the integrity, quality or character of the area, where appropriate. Planning applications for developments in sensitive areas shall be accompanied by an assessment undertaken by an accredited conservation architect, where appropriate, detailing the impacts of the relevant development upon the special interest and character of the surrounding architectural heritage. The relevant County Council shall be consulted at an early stage in this regard in order to determine whether there is a need for such an assessment or for specific mitigation measures.

The Record of Protected Structures shall be extended on a phased basis in order to incorporate recommendations from the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

To examine the opportunity of designating, within the lifetime of this Plan, part of the town centre within Charlestown as an Architectural Conservation Area.

It is an objective of Mayo County Council and Sligo County Council to investigate other buildings and structures for inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures.

To protect all structures included in the Record of Protected Structures in line with the prevailing legislation.

To strongly resist any development works which would result in the demolition of a Protected Structure unless a conclusive case based on technical evidence can be presented in line with the requirements of the Planning and Development Acts.

To ensure that all works on Protected Structures are carried out in line with the prevailing best practise guidelines.

To continue to identify and protect qualifying structures under the Planning and Development Acts as included on the Record of Protected Structures contained in this LAP (see Appendix 3) and the Mayo and Sligo County Development Plans.

### ***1. Landscape***

Planning Applications that have the potential to impact the integrity of sensitive landscape areas shall be required to be accompanied by an assessment of the potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development - demonstrating that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape.

## **4. environmental problems relevant to the plan**

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

Environmental problems identified in Charlestown Bellaghy are as follows:

### ***(i) Status of the Mullaghanoe River***

The Mullaghanoe River is categorised as being *at significant risk* of meeting of

failing to achieve the Water Framework Directive's objectives by 2015. This categorisation has been arrived at by the WRBD on the basis of:

- EPA diffuse sources model
- Channelisation
- Point source - Waste water treatment plants
- Q value
- Q or point/diffuse
- Risk Diffuse
- Risk Morphology
- Risk Point Source
- Risk Result Overall

*(ii) Waste Water Treatment Capacity*

Waste water generated by Charlestown-Bellaghy passes through a treatment plant which has a capacity of 1,200 population equivalent. While there is available capacity in the plant, there is only enough to deal with short-medium term development. The Collection System in Charlestown/Bellaghy is a combination system in some places however the planned upgrades to the Plant and Collection system would separate these. Outfall from the waste water treatment plant flows directly into the SAC. A proposal to upgrade the plant is currently being planned as part of a Design Build and Operate bundle which includes upgrades in Belmullet and Foxford. This upgrade is expected to be operational in 2-3 years (Sanitary Section, Mayo County Council).

Integration of the mitigation measures detailed under Part 1- 3 above into the LAP will help to ensure that the LAP does not make existing environmental problems worse and that the LAP contributes to the solving of these problems.

A brief description of the *current state of the environment* in Charlestown-Bellaghy is provided on the following pages under a number of headings.

**A. Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna/Soil**

***Designated Ecology***

The Mullaghanoe River flows through the town centre in a south to north direction. Approximately 1 km to the north of the town centre the Black River flows into the Mullaghanoe River which flows in a north westerly direction for approximately 10 km before it meets with the River Moy. Both the Mullaghanoe River and the Black River are part of the River Moy candidate Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002298). The cSAC site takes in terrestrial habitats to the north and south of the town however at the centre of the town the site reduces in size to include generally only the water body of the Mullaghanoe (see Figure 3.2). It is noted that the waterbody is channelled as it passes through the town and its banks have been paved and built upon.





**Figure 3.2 Section of River Moy cSAC**

***Land Cover***

CORINE 2000 land cover data for Charlestown-Bellaghy (see Figure 3.3) indicates that the town (indicated by the red colour) is generally surrounded by agricultural pastures (yellow) and peat bogs (purple) within County Mayo and by land principally occupied by agriculture with areas of natural vegetation (tan) within County Sligo.

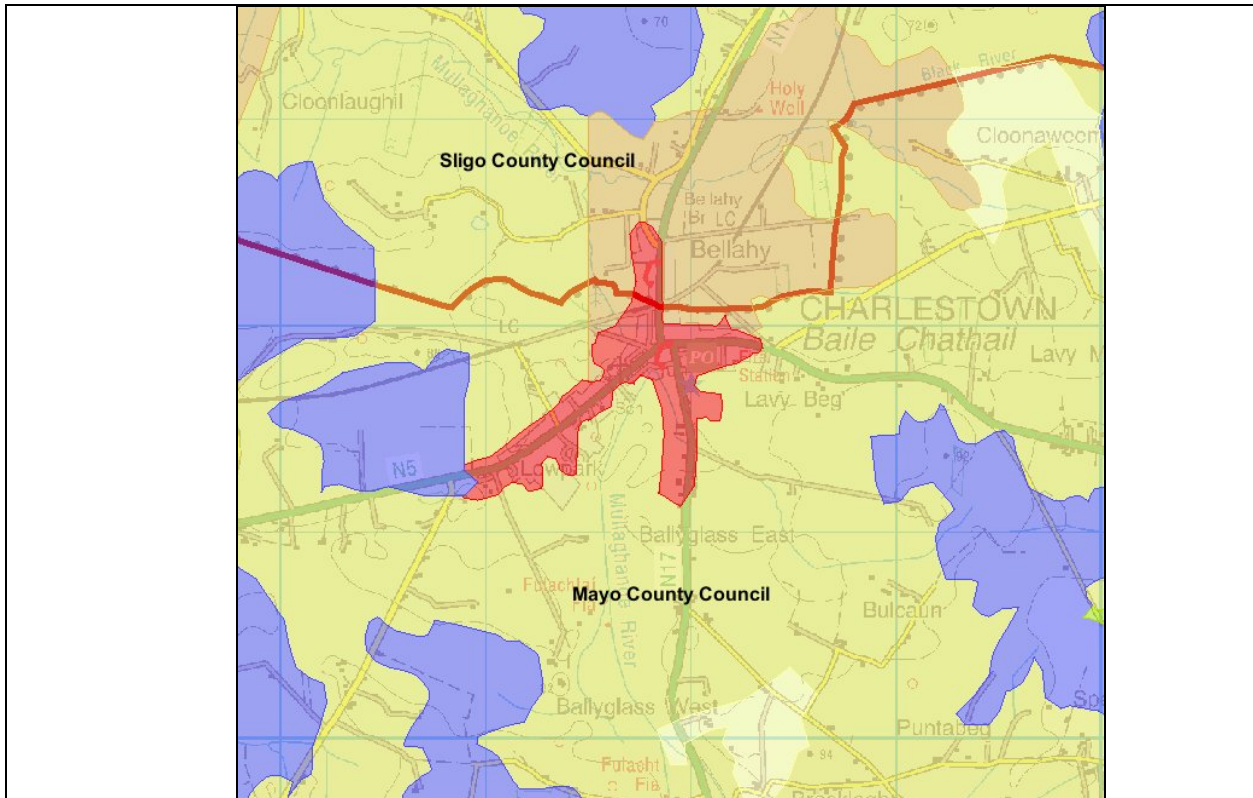


Figure 3.3 CORINE 2000 Data

### ***Soil***

Charlestown-Bellaghy is surrounded to the north by lac soils and Raised Bog which has been cutaway/cutover and it is surrounded to the south by gleys.

### **B. Water**

#### ***Introduction***

The principal legislation governing water quality in Ireland is the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (SI No. 722 of 2003) which transposes the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). The Water Framework Directive (WFD) requires that all member states implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all waters - surface, ground, estuarine and coastal - and protect, enhance and restore all waters with the aim of achieving good status by 2015.

For the purpose of implementing the WFD, Ireland has been divided into eight river basin districts or areas of land that are drained by a large river or number of rivers and the adjacent estuarine/coastal areas. Charlestown-Bellaghy is located in the Western River Basin District (WRBD) and within the River Moy Catchment.

Each water body in the WRBD has been assessed and classified, on the basis of human activity, whether it is at risk or not at risk of failing to achieve the WFD's objectives by 2015. The classifications are:

- (1a) *At Significant Risk* - water body is at risk of failing to meet good status in 2015
- (1b) *Probably at Significant Risk* - water body is thought to be at risk of failing to meet good status in 2015 pending further investigation
- (2a) *Not at Significant Risk* - the water body is expected to meet good status in 2015.
- (2b) *Probably Not at Significant Risk* - water body is expected to meet good status in 2015, pending further investigation

Water bodies placed in the *(1a) At Significant Risk* category will need improvement to achieve the required status. A Characterisation Report was published by the WRBD Project Office in 2005 includes the various risk assessments.

In addition to the above the WFD requires that a Register of Protected Areas (RPA) is compiled for a number water bodies or part of water bodies which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife.

A Draft River Basin Management Plan is currently undergoing a period of public consultation. The results of this consultation will be used in order to update the Management Plan before it is adopted in mid-2009. The Management Plan will provide specific policies for individual river basins in order to implement the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

### **Surface Water**

The River Moy is located, at its closest, approximately 7 km to the west of the town. The river supports a number of salmonid species and is fed by the Mullaghanoe River, which flows through Charlestown-Bellaghy, and its tributaries which include the Black River.

The Mullaghanoe River is categorised within the *Article 5 Characterisation Summary Report* (Western River Basin District (WRBD) 2005) as being *at significant risk* of meeting of failing to achieve the Water Framework Directive's objectives by 2015. This categorisation has been arrived at by the WRBD on the basis of:

- EPA diffuse sources model
- Channelisation
- Point source - Waste water treatment plants
- Q value
- Q or point/diffuse
- Risk Diffuse
- Risk Morphology
- Risk Point Source
- Risk Result Overall

The Mullaghanoe River is listed on the WRBD's RPA for Habitats.

The Black River – located to the north of the town – is a tributary of the Mullaghanoe River and is classified as being (1b) Probably At Significant Risk - the river is probably at risk of failing to meet good status in 2015.

The most recent water quality monitoring data from the EPA contained in *Water Quality in Ireland 2004 – 2006* (EPA, 2008) identifies that the entire channel length (13.5km) of the Mullaghanoe River is classified as being Class A Unpolluted.

The Lavy Beg stretch of the Mullaghanoe River downstream of Charlestown is of Moderate to Poor water quality status. Contributory factors to the status of this stretch of the river include municipal discharges at Charlestown and extensive forestry and moderately intensive agriculture in the catchment upstream of Charlestown.

The main channel of the Mullaghanoe downstream of Charlestown is of Good water quality status along almost its entire length to its confluence with the Main channel of the Moy River cSAC.

Station 0190 (0.2km downstream of the Charlestown/Lavy Beg branch) attained a Q-Value of 4 in 2004, while station 0300 (Bridge 1km upstream of the Moy River SAC) also attained a Q-Value of 4 indicating that municipal discharge from Charlestown via the Lavy Beg stretch is



localised in extent, and with only a minor influence on water quality of the River Moy SAC.

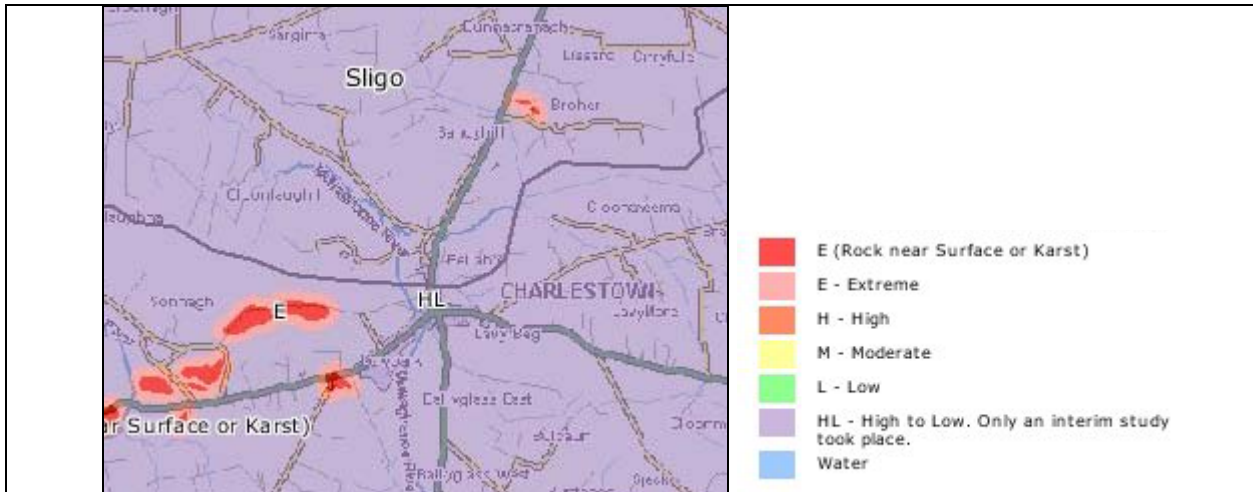
However, slight and intermittent pollution, in addition to non-compliance with the EC (Quality of Salmonid waters) Regulations 2007 has been reported by the EPA (2007) in the Mullaghanoe River (Mayo County Council).



**Figure 3.4 Surface Water Bodies**

#### ***Groundwater***

Charlestown is located above a locally important bedrock aquifer which is moderately productive only in local zones and contains a groundwater body covering an area 371.37 km<sup>2</sup>. This groundwater body (identified by the WRBD as the 'Kilkelly Charlestown' body) is classified as being (2a) *Not at Significant Risk* - the water body is expected to meet good status in 2015 and is identified on the WRBD's RPA for Groundwater Drinking Water. Geological Survey of Ireland rates groundwaters with regard to vulnerability - the ease with which groundwater may be contaminated by human activities. For the most part only an interim study has taken place in and around the Charlestown-Bellaghy, the results of which rate the groundwater as being within a range of between high and low vulnerability. Areas of extreme vulnerability have been identified to the north and east of Charlestown-Bellaghy (see Figure 3.5).



**Figure 3.5 Ground Water Vulnerability**

**C. Waste Water Treatment**

Waste water generated by Charlestown-Bellaghy passes through a treatment plant which has a capacity of 1,200 population equivalent. While there is available capacity in the plant, there is only enough to deal with short-medium term development. The Collection System in Charlestown/Bellaghy is a combination system in some places however the planned upgrades to the Plant and Collection system would separate these. Outfall from the waste water treatment plant flows directly into the SAC. A proposal to upgrade the plant is currently being planned as part of a Design Build and Operate bundle which includes upgrades in Belmullet and Foxford. This upgrade is expected to be operational in 2-3 years (Sanitary Section, Mayo County Council).

**D. Archaeological Heritage**

There are 11 entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) within the Charlestown-Bellaghy area as shown on the National Monuments Service’s archaeology.ie database.

SMR No	Classification	Townland
MA063-003	Ringfort - Rath possible	LOWPARK
MA063-004001	Ringfort - Rath possible	LOWPARK
MA063-004002	Children’s Burial Ground	LOWPARK
MA063-005	Enclosure	LOWPARK
MA063-005001	Souterrain	LOWPARK
MA063-005002	Children’s Burial Ground	LOWPARK
MA063-006	Enclosure	LOWPARK
MA063-064	Burnt Spread	LOWPARK
MA063-065	Burnt Spread	LOWPARK
SL042-029	Bastioned Fort	BELLAHY
SL042-029001	Church possible	BELLAHY



**Figure 3.6 Entries to the Record of Monuments and Places**

**E. Architectural Heritage**

There are two entries to the Record of Protected Structures which accompanies the Mayo County Development Plan in Charlestown-Bellaghy: Charlestown Roman Catholic Church (Ref.

163), and; Henry House, a semi detached townhouse, (Ref. 230).

#### **F. Landscape**

See Section 7.

#### **G. Air**

There is no ambient air quality monitoring carried out in or around the town and air quality is not considered to be a problem in the town.

#### **H. IPPC Licensed Facilities**

There are no IPPC Licensed Facilities or Waste Licensed Facilities within a 10 km radial distance of Charlestown-Bellaghy; the nearest IPPC Licensed Facility is Basta Parsons Limited, located more than 10 km to the north of Tobercurry, County Sligo.

#### **5. the relevance of the plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection)**

The Charlestown-Bellaghy LAP relates to the land use sector and does not directly relate to other sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications or tourism.

However, the LAP will be consistent with all EU and national legislation on the environment relating to these sectors. For example, with regard to the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the Councils will, as required: coordinate the policies and objectives of the LAP so as to maintain the good status of water bodies which are currently unpolluted, and; improve polluted water bodies to good status by 2015.

### **3.3 Schedule A: Part 2**

**Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:**

#### **1. the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects**

No significant effects likely given that mitigation measures have been integrated into the LAP

#### **2. the cumulative nature of the effects**

No significant effects likely given that mitigation measures have been integrated into the LAP

#### **3. the transboundary nature of the effects**

No significant effects likely.

#### **4. the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)**

No significant effects likely given that mitigation measures are integrated into the LAP.

#### **5. the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)**

No significant effects likely given that mitigation measures have been integrated into the LAP

## 6. the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

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

No significant effects likely given that mitigation measures have been integrated into the LAP

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

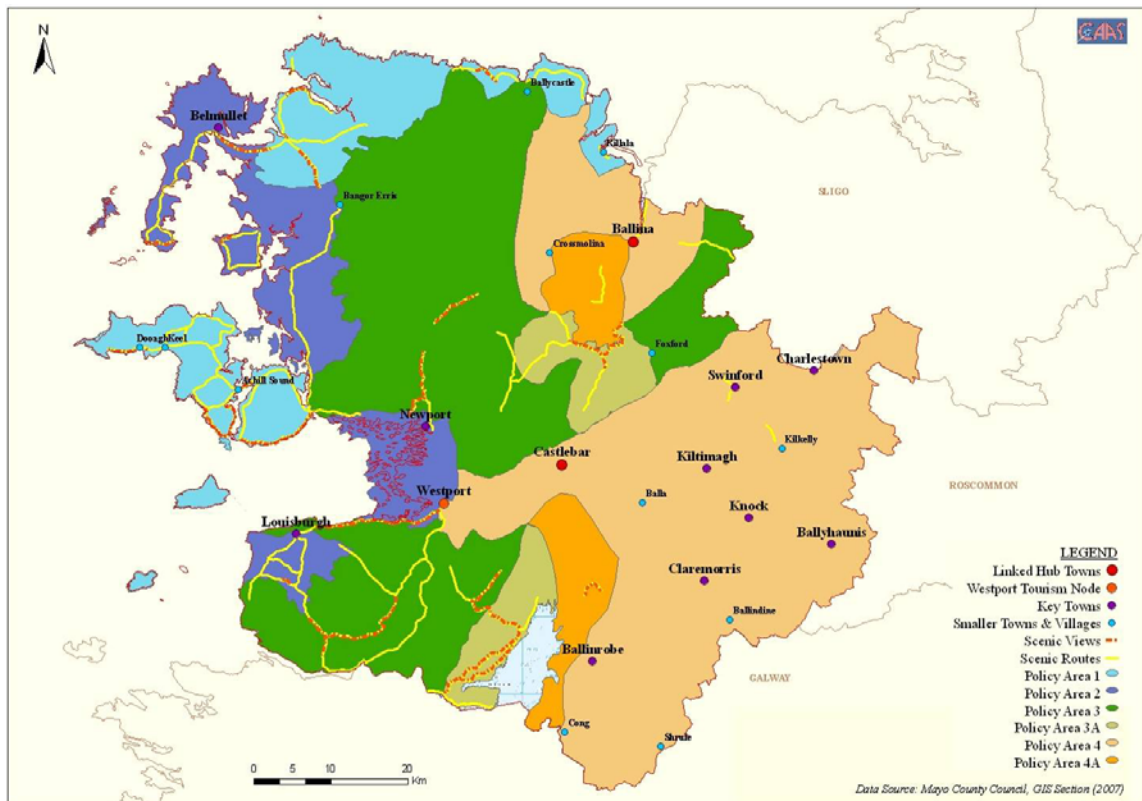
No significant effects likely given that mitigation measures have been integrated into the LAP

### c) intensive land-use.

No significant effects likely given that mitigation measures have been integrated into the LAP

## 7. the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status

Charlestown-Bellaghy is located in County Mayo's eastern Landscapes Policy Area (Policy Area Number 4). This Policy Area is the most robust in County Mayo and is least sensitive to change. No Scenic Views or Scenic Routes are located within or adjacent to the Charlestown-Bellaghy area within County Mayo.



**Figure 3.7 County Mayo Landscape Policy Areas**

The area of Charlestown-Bellaghy in County Sligo is identified within a *Robust* landscape area in County Sligo's Scenic Evaluation Study. This landscape area has the highest capacity to absorb new development in the County.

The area surrounding Charlestown-Bellaghy in County Sligo is identified as being a *Sensitive Rural Landscape*. Sensitive Rural Landscapes are areas that tend to be open in character, with intrinsic scenic quality and a low capacity to absorb new development.



No scenic routes are identified within or adjacent to the Charlestown-Bellaghy area in County Sligo.

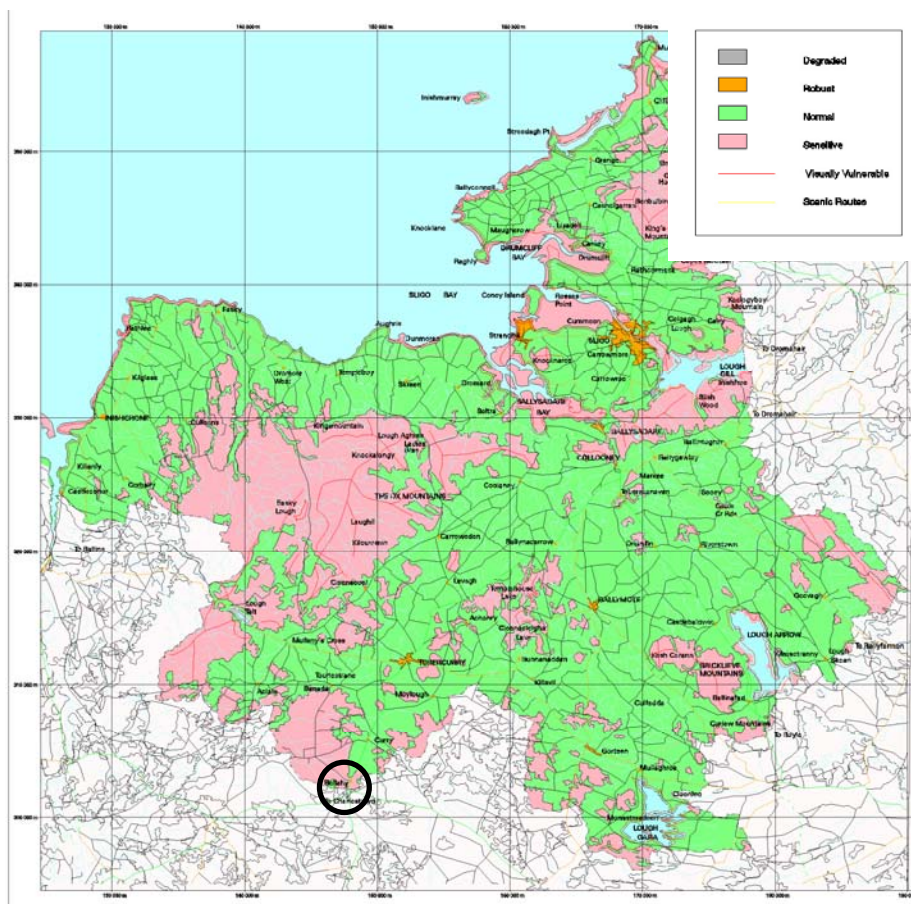


Figure 3.8 County Sligo Landscape Evaluation