

STAGE 1: SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

**PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 6 (3) OF THE HABITATS DIRECTIVE 92/43/EEC
ON PLANS & PROJECTS SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTING NATURA 2000 SITES.**

Plan or Project:

AMENDED DRAFT CAVAN COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2014 – 2020)

On behalf of:

CAVAN COUNTY COUNCIL

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STAGE ONE: SCREENING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA)

This Screening for Appropriate Assessment was prepared by Ecologists Ireland Consultants Ltd on behalf of Cavan County Council. It provides information on the potential for the proposed Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 (Hereafter referred to as the Draft County Development Plan) to impact on designated sites of conservation importance within a European context.

This document is a draft version of the Screening for Appropriate Assessment and is submitted for consideration alongside the Draft County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 and serves as a documented record of the process and objective criteria used to determine whether the plan poses any risks of having significant effects on Natura 2000 sites in view of their conservation objectives.

In accordance with the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, Cavan County Council is required to develop a County Development Plan and incorporate within that a Core Strategy. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to formulate a plan to meet the housing land use requirements within the County for the period of the County Development Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 – 2020.

In addition to incorporating a Core Strategy the Draft County Development Plan will also:

- Update the policies and objectives of the Council in accordance with the National Development Plan 2014 - 2020, National Spatial Strategy 2002 - 2020, Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 – 2022; National Policy; including national policy guidance issued under section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, as amended, the Water Framework Directive and respective River Basin District Management Plans; European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Water) Regulations 2009; and, the European Communities (Birds and Habitats) Regulations 2011. The planning authority has a duty to:
- Determine whether the proposal is directly connected with or necessary to site management for conservation; and if not,
- Determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the site either individually or in combination with other plans or projects; and if so,
- Make an appropriate assessment of the implications (of the proposal) for the site in view of the Natura 2000's conservation objectives.

1.2 Legislative Background to Appropriate Assessment

European Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive) requires competent authorities to carry out an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of plans and projects that, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects are likely to have a significant effect on European designated sites.

The preparation of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan has regard to Article 6 of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21st May 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended). Hereafter referred to the Habitats Directive. This is transposed to Irish legislation under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010.

The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 lists priority habitats and species that are of European and International importance and require protection. This protection is afforded through the designation of areas that represent significant populations of listed species within a European context (Natura 2000 sites). Areas designated for bird species are classed as Special Protection Areas (SPA), and areas designated for other protected species and habitats are classed as Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Species that occur in SPAs (Annex I of Birds Directive) or SACs (Habitats listed on Annex I and/or Annex II Species listed on the Habitats Directive) in which they are designated features have full European protection. Species listed on Annex IV of the Habitats Directive are strictly protected wherever they occur in the country, whether inside or outside a Natura 2000 site. Habitats that are equivalent to those listed, but not within SACs are still classed as priority habitats of international and national importance and under Article 27 (4(b)), the planning authority has a duty to avoid the pollution or deterioration of Annex I habitats.

The Habitats Directive specifies scientific criteria on the basis on which Natura 2000 sites must be selected and sets out various procedures and obligations in relation to the conservation objectives of those sites. Articles 6(3) and 6 (4) of the Habitats Directive set out the requirement for an assessment of proposed plans and projects likely to significantly affect Natura 2000 sites.

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects for likely impacts (referred to as a Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment) and to carry out further detailed assessment if required (referred to as a Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment):

Article 6(3): "Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or alone in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of its conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to a 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"

The fore mentioned paragraph 4 allows for proposed plans and projects to be approved in certain conditions, as follows:

Article 6(4): *“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 a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of any compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of over-riding public interest.”*

1.3 Stages in the Appropriate Assessment Process

The process of assessing the Draft Cavan County Development Plan is a structured exercise with a series of steps. The stages proposed in the European Commission guidance are:

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

Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment — 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 — processes which examine alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan while avoiding adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site;

Stage Four: Where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain — an assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

This report provides a Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment and is intended to address all issues regarding the Draft County Cavan Development Plan 2014 - 2020 and the potential impacts on all Natura 2000 sites within 15km of County Cavan and allow Cavan County Council as the “Competent Authority” to comply with Article 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.

1.4 Scope of the AA for Draft County Cavan Development Plan.

The scope of the AA considers the following information:

Description of Draft Development Plan

- Extent and influence of the Draft Development Plan including spatial context of Natura 2000 sites in County Cavan and within 15km of the county boundary;
- Projected settlement strategy, rezoning and revisions to local area plans; and,
- Zoning policies and objectives relevant to the Natura 2000 network.

Potential Impacts on Natura 2000 sites with respect to their prescribed Conservation Objectives:

- The impact of the Draft Development Plan 2014 - 2020 on the defining structure and function of Natura 2000 sites;
- Likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of proposed zoning policies and objectives on designated features of Natura 2000 sites;

Mitigation

- Details of policies within the Core Strategy of the Draft Development Plan that guide the protection and conservation of qualifying features within Natura 2000 sites and the wider ecological network of sites supporting Natura 2000 site integrity;
- Details of the measures that could be employed to avoid the risk of impacts.

Cumulative effects

- A consideration of in-combination impacts on the Natura 2000 Network of all existing and draft County Development Plans within 15km of County Cavan.

1.5 Main Sources of Formal Guidance

- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities;
- European Community Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) – The Habitats Directive;
- European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011;
- European Commission Environment DG (2001). Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
- Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers: Ecology Series No. 7;
- Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers: Ecology Series No. 10; and,
- Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers: Ecology Series No. 11.

1.6 Main Sources of Consultation

- The Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the Draft County Development Plan was carried out concurrently and with consideration of overlapping issues pertinent to the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Draft County Development Plan with consultation and direction provided by the Executive Planner at Cavan County Council (Eve Harrison);
- Consultation with Heritage Council: Heritage Officers for County Cavan (Ann-Marie Ward); Longford (Mairead Ni Chonghaile); and, Co. Meath (Dr. Loreto Guinan).
- Consultation with National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS): Director of Conservation for County Cavan, Monaghan & Longford (Michael Hackett) and Conservation Officers (John Matthews (Cavan West)); David McDonagh (Cavan East)). NPWS Officers from bordering counties also provided detailed summaries of threats to individual Natura 2000 sites; Fiona Wheeldon (Leitrim); Susan Moles (Longford); Maurice Eakin (Director of Conservation for County Louth, Meath & Dublin); Annette Lynch (Meath); and, also specialist advice on Upland habitats in County Cavan was provided by Caitriona Douglas of NPWS.

1.7 Key Statutory Instruments Relevant to the Assessment Process

- The Water Framework Directive (WFD) 2000/60/EC
- European Communities Environmental Objectives on (Surface Waters) Regulations (2009) (S.I. No. 272 of 2009);
- European Communities Environmental Objectives Groundwater Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010).
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC

2.0 DESCRIPTION & FEATURES OF PLAN

2.1 Review of the County Cavan Development Plan 2014 - 2012

The Plan establishes a framework for the co-ordinated and sustainable economic, social, cultural and environmental development of County Cavan. The Plan details the policies and objectives of Cavan County Council's vision for the spatial and sectoral development of Cavan over the period from 2014 – 2020. The Plan also serves as a point of reference for statutory authorities, planners, developers and the general public on how development proposals are likely to be assessed.

The Plan comprises 11 chapters followed by general policies and objectives for all Town and Village Plans. The introductory chapter details the role, content and context of the Plan. Chapter 2 details the Settlement Strategy for the County, analysing how demographics and populations have changed during the life time of the previous Plan, and projecting population growth within a settlement hierarchy. Chapters 3 – 11 outline the development strategy for County Cavan on a thematic basis with each chapter outlining strategic themes, policies and objectives.

2.2 Development Plan Screening Process

There is no restriction on when the screening of any plan or project likely to significantly effect Natura 2000 sites can take place. The screening is intended to provide a review of the plan and if the plan triggers the requirement for more detailed level of assessment (Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment) and which Natura 2000 sites will be affected. This screening process is undertaken during the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan (2014 – 2020) and serves to highlight particular impacts of policies and objectives on Natura 2000 sites and provides scope for amending policies that would have a direct conflict with the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites.

2.3 Proximity of Settlement Framework to Natura 2000 sites.

Table 1 summarises the requirements of the Settlement Framework and zoning policies in the Draft County Cavan Development Plan 2014 – 2020 and the proximity (relevance) to designated sites within the Natura 2000 Network.

ArcView software using Ordnance Survey maps and NPWS shapefiles were used to identify the boundaries of Natura 2000 Sites in County Cavan and within 15km of the County boundary. The location of Special Protection Areas and Special Protection Areas are shown in Figures 1. and, Figure 2. respectively.

Table 1: Settlement Framework and Proximity to Natura 2000 sites.

Settlement Hierarchy	Core Strategy & Local Area Plan Objectives	Proximity to Natura 2000 Site
Bailieborough	It is one of County Cavan's major towns and functions as a housing, retail, service and employment provider for the surrounding community. Bailieborough town continues to demonstrate strong population growth with a 28.7% increase from 2006 – 2011. The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 26 hectares of land suitable for residential development. This is to cater for the current and future population up to 2020.	Lough Sheelin SPA, 22.9km west south-west; Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, 29km to the west north-west; and, Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 30km to the west north-west.
Ballyjamesduff	Development pressure and significant population together with some topographical constraints has resulted in the town sprawling out from the centre towards the east, north east and south. Further development to be contained as a priority within and adjacent to the town core boundary. The population of Ballyjamesduff town has increased by 52% over the period 2006 – 2011. The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 26 hectares of land suitable for residential development.	Lough Sheelin SPA, 6.1km to the south-west; River Boyne & River Blackwater SAC and SPA, 12.3km to the south-east; and, Lough Oughter SPA, 19.9km to the north-west.
Cootehill	There has been some development of the back lands of main street properties which has opened up the possibility for further development of this town core. The town has seen significant growth and development with some very large housing developments and a number of business, industrial and enterprise units. The population of Cootehill has increased by 12% over the period 2006 – 2011. The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 26 hectares of land suitable for residential development.	Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, 14.7km to the west; Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC, 15.5km to the north-west; and, Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 20.2km to the west.
Kingscourt	There is significant capacity for development in the backlands of main street properties but it is essential that this is conducted in a sensitive manner which does not detract from the traditional form of this town. The town has experienced a significant growth of 33.1% between 2006 and 2011. The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 26 hectares of land suitable for residential development.	Lough Sheelin SPA, 32km east south-east; Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, 38.9km to the west north-west; and, Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 39.8km to the west north-west.

<p>Virginia</p>	<p>In more recent times residential development has sprung up on all sides of the traditional Town Core. The town's physical development is restricted to the South by Lough Ramor and to the North by the proposed Virginia by-pass corridor. This has pushed development to the east and west of the core along the N3 route. The development of back lands will be key to the continued progress of this town. The town has experienced continued growth of 31.6% between the years 2006 – 2011 however; this rate of increase is much reduced compared to growth of 58.6% during the period 2002 to 2006. Given the towns strategic location further growth is expected. The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 26 hectares of land suitable for residential development.</p>	<p>River Boyne & River Blackwater SAC and SPA, 4.5km to the south; and, Lough Sheelin, 12.2km to the west.</p>
<p>Ballyconnell</p>	<p>Trade and activity with Northern Ireland has developed and tourist activities have also expanded, helped by the construction of the Shannon-erne Waterway. New residential developments including apartment blocks along the river, large housing estates and commercial and retail developments have brought a new vitality to the Town. Ballyconnell continues to experience strong population growth with a population increase of 42% over the period 2006 – 2011. The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 15 hectares of land suitable for residential development.</p>	<p>Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, within 1km east of Ballyconnell; Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 8.7km to the south-east; and, Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands SAC, 12.8km to the west.</p>
<p>Belturbet</p>	<p>Since 2006 the population in Belturbet has undergone a slight decline of -3%. There is a potential capacity for further retail and service development in the core area of the town mainly through the re-use of derelict and unused buildings. The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 15 hectares of land suitable for residential development.</p>	<p>The River Erne flows through the town and is included within the designation for Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, considered within immediate proximity to Belturbet; and, Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 3.4km to the south.</p>
<p>Mullagh</p>	<p>Mullagh has experienced significant development and population growth (67.5% between the years 2006 – 2011), in some part, due to its strategic location adjacent to the Greater Dublin Area. This rapid growth has not allowed the town itself to develop in a similar fashion and it is likely that many inhabitants work outside the town. The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 15 hectares of land suitable for residential development.</p>	<p>River Boyne & River Blackwater SAC and SPA, 6.3km to the south; Lough Bane & Lough Glass SAC, 18.9km to the south-west; White Lough, Ben Loughs & Lough Doo SAC, 20.7km to the south-east.</p>

Ballinagh	<p>The Settlement Framework identified Small towns as being on Tier four of the Settlement Hierarchy. Small towns have a population of fewer than 1,000 with some basic retailing and a mix of social, educational and other services. Zoning objectives have not been identified for these small towns. It is important that the retail and service function of each small town and village remains within the traditional town core and residential development close to it. This will create the compact urban form that is the most sustainable. The Settlement Framework as identified an overall target growth for Tier Four and Tier Five Settlements (Villages), as 975 persons up to 2020.</p>	Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 4.4km north-west; Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, 4.7km north-west; and, Lough Sheelin SPA, 13.5km south-east.
Ballyhaise		Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC within 1km to the north-east; Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 4.2km to the west.
Shercock		Killyconny Bog SAC, 22.3km south south-west.
Killeshandra		Considered to be within immediate proximity to Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, and Lough Oughter Complex SPA.
Arva		Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, 7.2km north-east; and, Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 8.7km to the north-east.
Kilnaleck		Lough Sheelin SPA, 3.2km to the south; and, Lough Kinale & Derragh Lough SPA, 7.1km south of Kilnaleck.
Swanlinbar	<p>Zoning objectives have not been identified for these small towns and villages. Tier five, Villages have a population of under 300 and have a smaller mix of retail, services, social and educational services.</p>	Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands SAC, 1.5km to the west.
Blacklion		Corratirrim SAC, 1.1km to the south; Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands SAC, 5.6km to the south; and Boleybrack Mountain SAC, 7.5km south-west.
Loch Gowna		Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC, 11.4km north; Lough Oughter Complex SPA, 11.7km north; Lough Sheelin SPA, 13.7km south-east; and, Lough Kinale & Derragh Lough SPA, 13.8km south-east.

2.4 Proposed Development Plan Policies and Objectives.

The following relevant information contained within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 provides the strategic direction and policy against which proposed developments are based. A material consideration in that strategy and respective policy platform is the regulatory and legal instruments protecting designated sites with a specific focus on the key conservation objectives of those sites. For the purposes of transparency, all policies and objectives in the County Development Plan are listed below. All policies and objectives that relate to changes in land use or natural resources for specific consideration within the Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment are marked in bold and are set in context to Natura 2000 sites and respective qualifying features in Tables 2 – 5 (below).

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Chapter 1 describes context, content and aims of the plan. No policies or objectives within the Draft Plan relevant to potential threats to Natura 2000 sites are detailed in this section.

Chapter 2 – Settlement Framework

The Settlement Framework aims to set a vision and overall strategy for the spatial development of the County and a framework for the development of the policies and objectives in subsequent sections of the plan. Relevant items listed in the Core Strategy:

CSP1. To ensure that the future spatial development of County Cavan is in accordance with higher level plans including the National Development Plan, National Spatial Strategy, Border Regional Planning Guidelines, as well as, national policy guidance issued under section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, as amended, the River Basin Management Plans, Surface Water Regulations and the Habitats Directive.

CSP2. To prioritise development within the Hub town of Cavan.

CSP3. To guide development of towns in a sequential manner, outwards from the core area to maximise the use of existing and future infrastructure provision, promote sustainable development and make better use of underutilised land.

CSP4. To ensure that, within the Development Boundaries of Tier four, five and six settlements, applications for development will be assessed in the context of the population targets identified in the settlement framework. No further residential development shall be permitted until such time as unfinished estates and live planning permissions have been completed.

CSP5. To take into account, in the assessment of development proposals, Article 6(3) (4) and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the Surface Water Regulations 2009 and the relevant measures of the River Basin Management Plans 2009 – 2015.

CSP6. To promote the integration of land use and transportation policies, to prioritise cycling and walking, as sustainable modes of travel and strengthen public transport provision.

CSP7. To restrict or prevent development in areas at risk of flooding in accordance with the Planning and Flood Risk Guidelines 2009.

CSP8. To have regard to the DECLG guidelines “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines” (2009) in relation to the scale and design of residential development appropriate to settlements within the hierarchy.

CSP9. To provide for rural residential development in accordance with the Rural Settlement Policy.

CSP10. To prepare and implement a Retail Strategy for the County within one year of the adoption of the County Development Plan.

CSP11. To support the ‘Economic Development Strategy’, currently under review.

CSP12. To promote rural economic development by promoting the tourist value of rural areas and facilitating the growth of appropriate rural enterprise, agricultural developments and developments associated with agriculture.

CSP13. To protect the natural heritage, landscape character and cultural heritage of all parts of the county.

CSP14. The priority areas for new shopping and commercial office development will be within the defined Town Core of Towns and Villages.

CSP15. Proposals for the generation of energy from renewable sources will be supported, provided that the wider environmental benefits are not outweighed by any detrimental impacts of the proposed development (including any electricity transmission facilities needed) on the landscape, public safety, and the local environment.

CSP16. Recognise the strategic importance of the national road network within the County which links Towns and villages to each other and to Cavan Town and that contribute to the role of large and medium size towns to support Cavan Town and act as drivers of growth.

CSP17. To support the role of tourism in Cavan and to encourage the development of a high quality and diverse tourism product throughout the County, in a manner consistent with the principles of sustainable development and proper planning.

CSP18. To restrict the development of new build holiday home developments.

CSP19. Where the Planning Authority deems that a Town or Village does not have the infrastructural capacity to absorb additional development, no development shall be permitted until the infrastructural deficit has been addressed; this includes deficits in water supply, sewerage treatment systems, roads structure and social or community facilities.

Chapter 3 – Economic Development

EDP1 To implement at county level provisions set out in Harvest 2020 subject to environmental carrying capacity constraints.

EDP2 To facilitate and encourage the sustainable development of agricultural enterprises, agri-tourism projects and farm diversification and other suitable proposals that supports the development of alternative rural enterprises.

EDP3 To promote sustainable agricultural development whilst ensuring that development does not have an undue negative impact on the visual amenity of the countryside.

EDP4 To support the development of on-farm tourism enterprises including the provision of tourism facilities such as the renovation of farm buildings for tourism purposes, and the development of walking, cycling, angling, pony trekking and bird watching, subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

EDO1 To promote the continued development and expansion of the Agri-Food Sector.

EDO2 To encourage and facilitate agricultural diversification into agri-businesses such as organic foods, rural/agri-tourism farmhouse accommodation, pet-farms & horse trekking centres and small to medium sized enterprises subject to the retention of the holding for primarily agricultural use and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

EDO3 To support the horticulture and nursing stock industry as a means of diversifying agriculture and contributing to the maintenance of population in the rural area.

EDO4 To ensure that all agricultural activities comply with legislation on water quality, such as the Phosphorous Regulations, Water Framework Directive and Nitrates Directive.

EDO5 To encourage the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural practices, to ensure that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside and that watercourses, wildlife, habitats and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution.

EDO6 To recognise and support the role of farmers as custodians of the natural resources of the countryside and of rural landscapes which are valuable to present and future generations. Ensure that development does not have an undue negative impact on the visual or scenic amenity of the Countryside. Protect soil, groundwater, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, rural amenities and scenic views from adverse environmental impacts as a result of agricultural practices.

EDO7 To support agricultural development as a contributory means of maintaining the population in the rural area and sustaining the rural economy, whilst maintaining and enhancing the standing of the rural environment and through application of the Water Framework and Habitats Directive.

EDO8 Ensure that there is sufficient and suitable lands reserved for new enterprise development at key locations throughout the county.

EDO9 Encourage the development of appropriate new industrial development in serviced towns and villages where existing infrastructural facilities, services, and communication systems are available at a reasonable cost.

EDO10 Require all new applications for Industry, Enterprise and Employment uses to include;

- *Detailed description of the process being undertaken and the number of people likely to be employed at the various stages of development.*
- ***Detailed analysis of the nature, volume and rate of discharges of all effluents, wastes and atmospheric emissions emanating from the industry and detailed proposals for their treatment, discharge and disposal.***
- *Detailed design drawings using appropriate design and materials, security fencing and signage.*
- *Adequate space to be made available for on-site storage of materials and refuse, on-site circulation, loading and unloading of goods (including fuels) in areas clear of public roads, and preferably behind the building line.*
- *Car park spaces must be clearly delineated.*
- *Landscaping plans should be submitted and should include a planting strip especially on road frontages.*
- *Full details of the public road serving the site and the impact of any increased traffic volume.*
- *Proposals for waste storage prior to collection or recycling.*
- ***Proposals for the disposal of construction and demolition waste.***

EDP5 Encourage the sustainable development of Rural Enterprises within the County.

EDO11 All applications for enterprise development in rural areas must be accompanied by an assessment of impacts on the environment, residential amenities and the rural character of the area and contain details pertaining to safe access and egress.

EDO12 Where established authorised rural based enterprises seek to expand beyond their existing capacity and, in the opinion of the planning authority, the expansion proposed, would seriously affect the rural nature or amenity of the rural areas and surrounding countryside, they will be encouraged to locate in serviced zoned lands.

EDO13 To promote the growth of rural enterprises whilst ensuring the protection of the environment and our natural assets. Individual projects shall be accessed on a case by case basis in line with best practice and in compliance with all sections of this plan, in particular activities that are resource dependent, including energy production, extractive industry, small scale industry and tourism in accordance with the environmental carrying capacity of the site.

EDO14 To promote the diversification of the rural economy and the growth of rural indigenous industry such as farming, forestry, tourism, while safeguarding the environment and role of the rural area as an asset.

EDO15 To facilitate the development of broadband telecommunications as an enabler of rural enterprise.

EDO16 To facilitate the re-use of disused industrial buildings for alternative uses including enterprise and employment.

EDO17 To consider development in rural areas which present substantial employment opportunities having due regard to;

- *The principles of proper planning and sustainability.*
- *Contribution of proposed development to County's economy.*
- ***Full assessment of any potential environmental effects.***
- *Economic viability of alternative sites.*
- *National planning policy.*

EDO18 Applications for developments involving working from home will include details on the:

- *The nature and extent of the work.*
- *The effects on the amenities of adjoining occupiers, particularly in relation to hours of work, noise and general disturbance.*
- *Anticipated levels of traffic generated by the proposed development.*
- *Arrangements for the storage of refuse and collection of waste.*

EDO19 Consideration will also be given to the sustainability of the intended use and whether a town centre location would be more appropriate.

EDO20 Permissions for change of use shall be limited in duration; the period of such use will be determined by the applicant. In some cases, a temporary permission for three years will be granted to enable the Planning Authority

to monitor the impact of the development on the area.

EDP6 To ensure the protection of our built and natural heritage including Protected Structures, National Monuments and other areas or sites of archaeological importance, the NATURA 2000 network, NHA's and pNHA's, the Global Geopark and any other sites and areas which are of biodiversity or amenity value.

EDP7 To ensure the protection of landscapes with important amenity and tourist value including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest.

EDP8 The Council will seek to conserve and protect areas adjacent to existing quarries with high mineral/extractive potential for use as building/road making material for the future.

EDP9 To require an EIS, as part of a planning application, where the thresholds outlined in Schedule 5 of the 'Planning and Development Regulations 2000', as amended are met. The Planning Authority will also exercise its powers under Section 103-subsection (1) to require an EIS for sub-threshold development where it is considered that the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment or heritage. Where a development proposal is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, an Appropriate Assessment will be required. Appropriate mitigation measures and details of re-instatement after use must be included.

To require that development is phased and that each phase is rehabilitated to the highest possible standards before the next phase is commenced. The applicant has to submit a detailed restoration programme on the manner and timing of restoration to ensure that the site is left in a satisfactory state for such beneficial amenity and recreation use as is agreed with the Council, with an input from an ecologist. This shall be carried out within 12 months of cessation. Old disused quarries, sand and gravel pits should be restored and landscaped. All buildings, plant, roads and paved areas should be removed unless otherwise agreed. In assessing an application for development the record of past restoration by the developer will be taken into account. Submit, with proposals, a detailed and progressive restoration/rehabilitation plan for after/reuse of the site, phased where possible and with input from an ecologist.

EDO21 Ensure that all proposed and existing quarry and extractive proposals have regard to 'Quarry and Ancillary Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2004'.

EDO22 Carefully examine applications for extractive industries in areas designated as or adjacent to c/SACs, c/SPAs, p/NHAs, Water Framework Directive, Protected Areas and other designations.

EDO23 The Council will require that extractive industry proposals do not adversely impact upon the water environment, including surface water and groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated wetlands.

EDO24 The Council recognise the need to protect valuable un-worked deposits for future extractive use, where they do not pose a significant threat upon visual amenities. Proposed developments within the vicinity of extractive industries will have to demonstrate how their proposal would not significantly impact upon the natural resource or the ability to extract it.

EIO5 Ensure that existing rights of way are maintained in assessment of planning applications for quarrying activities.

EDO25 Applications for new developments shall identify any existing rights of way and established walking routes which may be impacted or are adjacent to the development site. These shall be kept free from development and maintained as a Right of Way/Walking Route.

EDO26 Applications for new or extensions to existing quarries and mines shall submit a detailed landscape and visual assessment which shall identify the area of visual influence and include details of impacts on amenity areas designated in this plan.

EDP10 To encourage the development of a well-managed sustainable forestry sector, which is planted, managed and harvested in accordance with the Forest Service Guidelines for Landscape, Forest Harvesting and Environmental, Archaeology, Biodiversity and Water Quality.

EDP11 To encourage forestry and forestry related development, as a means of diversifying from traditional farming activity.

EDP12 To promote forestry development of appropriate scale and character whilst ensuring that the development does not have a negative visual impact on the countryside or cause pollution or degradation to wildlife habitats, natural waters or areas of ecological importance.

EDP13 To encourage the provision of public access to forests for walking routes, recreational areas and other similar facilities.

EDP14 To retain existing right of way through forest lands.

EDO27 To promote and support the Forest Service in the preparation and adoption of the Indicative Forestry Strategy for County Cavan in order to plan sustainable forestry development.

EDO28 To investigate, with Coillte, the potential to provide forest and countryside walks on lands in state ownership in County Cavan and in the promotion of a high level of environmental quality/protection.

EDO29 To promote the planting of native deciduous trees and mixed forestry.

EDO30 To resist forestry proposals which would unduly impact on protected views, sensitive upland areas, lands of wildlife interest and in the upper reaches of salmonid rivers which would affect biodiversity.

EDO31 That existing Rights of Way and established walking routes are identified prior to any new planting and are maintained as Rights of Way/Walking Route.

EDO32 To ensure forestry and forestry type development adheres to the 'Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines', issued by the Forest Service; Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

EDP15 To support the continued expansion sustainable development of Cavan Town as the primary retail and service centre in the County and in recognition of its hub status within the Border Region. To promote, strengthen and protect the retail function of all the towns and villages of the county especially the large and medium sized towns.

EDP16 Aim to ensure that the retail needs of the County's residents are met within the county.

EDP17 To encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict buildings, within town and village cores, for retail uses.

EDP18 To ensure that a Retail Strategy is prepared for the County and for Cavan Town and Environs as a priority.

EDO33 To review the Retail Strategy for County Cavan during the life of the plan 2014-2020 and to prepare and up-to-date Retail Strategy for Cavan County and Cavan Town and Environs.

EDO34 To encourage high standards and innovative design in terms of architecture, materials and layout in order to make a positive contribution to the streetscape of towns and villages in the county.

RO3 To adhere to the "Retail Planning; Guidelines for Planning Authorities", DECLG, 2012 in the assessment of all new retail developments.

EDO35 All applications for new retail developments must clearly demonstrate how they are in compliance with the 'Retail Planning; Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DECLG, 2012' and its companion document 'Retail Design Manual, particularly how they have taken the sequential approach to retail development into account when choosing a site.

EDO36 Retail Warehouse developments shall have a floor space not less than 700 square meters in out of centre locations and none shall exceed a gross floor space of 6,000 square metres.

EDO37 Retail units provided as part of developments for service stations shall not exceed a floor space of 100 square meters.

EDO38 To give consideration to the development of tourism related retail developments in towns or villages and, in exceptional cases, at existing established tourist attractions. The retail facility shall be suitably designed, sited and of a scale that does not detract from the tourism feature and shall be subject to compliance with normal planning and environment considerations and the Development Management Standards of this Plan. Applications for such developments shall;

- Identify the feature/s or attraction/s which they would cater for.*
- Demonstrate how the proposed retail development would enhance the tourist value of the feature/s or attraction/s.*
- Demonstrate and examine clear benefits to the local community.*
- Be of a tourist nature only, applications for retail developments which are not directly associated with tourism shall not be permitted.*

EDO39 To ensure that retail development is confined to town and village cores within Tier Four and Five Towns and that it is strictly controlled in Tier Two and Three towns whereby the presumption will be that new retail development will generally only be permitted within Town cores. Where retail development is proposed outside of these town cores applicants must provide detailed justification for them in accordance with the 'Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2012' and in particular through the application of the sequential approach.

EDO40 To ensure that proposed new establishments or modifications to existing establishments classified under Seveso II Directive shall not present an unacceptable health and safety risk.

EDO41 To ensure that development in the vicinity of a Seveso II site shall be assessed having regard to the Major Accidents Directive, the potential risks to health and safety and the need to maintain a suitable separation distance between such sites and new developments.

EDO42 To reduce and to limit the consequences of major accidents involving hazardous substances by consulting with the Health and Safety Authority in respect of all proposals for development involving Dangerous Substances or for development in the vicinity of such establishments.

Chapter 4 – Physical Infrastructure

Section 1: Roads & Transport

PIO1 To improve all Council roads to an appropriate standard subject to the availability of resources.

PIO2 To improve road safety for all road users and reduce fatalities and accidents on Cavan Roads.

PIO3 To enable people, goods and services to reach their destination safely, efficiently and quickly and to improve access to services in rural parts of Cavan.

PIO4 To improve the capacity of the road infrastructure within County Cavan in accordance with national and regional policy.

PIO5 To have a well maintained road network basis.

PIO6 To improve access for mobility impaired people.

PIO7 To provide safer routes to educational establishments within the County.

PIO8 To preserve free from development proposed road realignment/improvement lines and associated corridors where such development would prejudice the implementation of the National Roads Authority or County Council plans.

PIO9 To ensure that access to buildings and public spaces are accessible to people with mobility needs. Car parking shall generally be provided in accordance with 'Buildings for Everyone', 2002 published by the National Disability Authority and other relevant documentation.

PIO10 To promote road safety measures in conjunction with Government Departments and other agencies to avoid the creation of traffic hazards and to ensure traffic management and safety issues are adequately addressed at pre-planning and planning application stage.

PIO11 To have regard to the Cavan County Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014 in the provision of any new Council roads.

PIO12 To ensure that all new developments are assessed with regard to their impact on the operation of the public road network and where appropriate to require a Traffic and Transport Assessment in accordance with standards set out in the 'Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines' published by the National Roads Authority.

PIO13 To ensure that all new developments within the zone of influence of existing public roads or new public roads provide suitable protection against traffic noise in accordance with the requirements of S.I. No. 140 (2006) Environmental Noise Regulations. The costs of implementing any additional noise mitigation measures shall be borne by the developer.

PIO14 To implement the Roads Programme for the County in association with the NRA. Various road schemes will be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment, where necessary.

PIO15 To progress the N55 National Secondary Route Corduff to South of Killydoon Realignment Scheme to construction stage(s).

PIO16 To progress and develop the N3 National Primary Route Edenburt to Cavan Bypass Scheme.

PIO17 To progress and develop the N87 National Secondary Route to Ballyconnell Realignment Scheme.

PIO18 To promote and develop the N54 National Secondary Route through Cavan to a standard appropriate to the volume of traffic carried on this key part of what is a north-east to south-west Strategic Route i.e. Belfast-Limerick and particularly having regard to volume of HGV's using the route.

PIO19 To progress and develop the N55 National Secondary Route, Ballinagh bypass.

PIO20 To continue to carry out Pavement Overlays, Strengthening and Minor Improvements on our National Road Network as required.

PIO21 To co-operate with the NRA in the upgrading of existing National Routes where appropriate.

PIO22 To restrict accesses onto National Roads along sections of road where the speed limit exceeds 60km per hour and to restrict the intensification of any existing accesses in such locations, except in exceptional circumstances, in line with NRA policy."

PIO22 To have regard to the NRA document 'Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines' and 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines' published by the DECLG (January 2012).

PIO23 To progress and develop the Cavan to Dundalk Strategic Route Improvement Scheme (Dundalk - Shercock - Cootehill – Cavan or the R-188, R-192, R-162, R-178).

PIO24 To promote and develop the road network linking Cavan and Sligo.

PIO25 To upgrade the Regional Road network to route consistent standards.

PIO26 To continue our annual restoration, maintenance and improvement programme on our local road network.

PIO27 Cavan County Council will continue our commitment to progress road improvements under the Community Involvement Scheme.

PIO28 To assess the need for and the economic benefits of distributor/relief roads or new streets in the counties towns.

PIO29 To progress and develop the "Cootehill Back Street" scheme which will run parallel to Market Street.

PIO30 Control the proliferation of non-road traffic signage on and adjacent to all roads.

PIO31 Endeavour to improve road safety awareness generally in the County, through the promotion of the "Safe Systems" approach.

PIO32 Provide Road Safety Education and Training in schools throughout the County.

PIO33 Continue to identify and implement a programme of Traffic Calming Schemes and Low Cost Safety Remedial Schemes on roads throughout the County, in association with the National Roads Authority.

PIO34 Continue to co-operate with Gardaí through participation in regular Collision Prevention Programme meetings.

PIO35 Ensure that Road Safety is an integral part of all new planning applications and that formal Road Safety Audits are included in planning conditions where appropriate to ensure in line with requirements of NRA DMRB HD 19/12 Road Safety Audit."

PIO36 Ensure that formal Road Safety Audits are an integral part of the design process for all new public road re-alignment schemes.

PIO37 To ensure that the MapRoad Asset Management Software Programme becomes fully operational.

PIO38 To complete the Pavement Condition Ratings Survey of all Non National Roads.

PIO39 To complete the Condition Survey of all Regional Roads Bridges and critical Local Road Bridges and to prepare a prioritised Programme of Bridge Improvement Works.

PIO40 To ensure that a central database for Public Lighting is completed and maintained.

PIO41 All planning applications shall be in accordance with the standards and guidelines set out in the following publications:

- *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (NRA DMRB);*
- *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DTTAS DMURAS);*
- *Traffic Management Guidelines (DTTAS);*
- *Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas (DoE)*

PIO42 Development proposals will provide car parking having regard to the standards set out in the table 4.7.

PIO42 New developments shall provide adequate provision within the site for servicing of the proposal and for parking and the safe manoeuvring of vehicles and pedestrians associated with it. New developments shall comply with the parking and servicing standards set out in Table 4.7.

PIO43 Ensure that where there are proposals for multiple land uses (such as office and retail) which function concurrently on the site, the combined Parking Standards applicable to both, shall apply. Where it can be reasonably demonstrated that certain uses operate at different times, the Council may apply flexibility of standards in calculating the parking requirements.

PIO44 To encourage the use of electrically operated cars and bicycles, in line with Council and National Policy. Any non-residential developments shall be encouraged to provide facilities for battery operated cars to be recharged in accordance with the following standards: Metered-fast charging 220-240V, 32A three phase. All proposals for developments which require residential parking spaces, including parking spaces for the disabled, shall be assessed for the provision of EV Charging Points on a case by case basis. Any EV Charging points which shall be constructed shall be capable of accommodating future charging points as required – residential space facilities to be coded/metered, slow charging 220V-240V, 13A single phase. As sales of battery operated cars increase to meet the Government objectives of 10% car ownership by 2020, The Council may require that such spaces would be specifically allocated to that use, similar to parking spaces suitable for the disabled and parent and child.

PIO44 Where the applicant cannot provide any or all of the required dedicated parking spaces; the Council may accept a financial contribution in respect of the shortfall in the number of spaces. This will be at the discretion of the

Council as it is only likely to apply to the Town Centre Locations or where the Council already provides, or intends to provide Public Car Parking facilities.

PIO45 In exceptional circumstances, the Council may at their discretion accept a reduced car parking requirement, where the applicant can clearly demonstrate that this would not impact on traffic safety and where it is considered to be in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

PIO46 Landscaping of all car parks shall be required which will include both hard and soft landscaping schemes. Applications which propose the development of car parking shall submit details of how the carpark will be landscape including planting schedules.

PIO47 Where retail, commercial or other development that is proposed requires the development of car parking facilities, provision will also be made for the secure parking of bicycles.

PIP1 Aim to further improve accessibility throughout the life of this Plan and that the economic development of the County will not be constrained by the lack of adequate infrastructure.

PIP2 Maintain, and if possible improve, the current roads infrastructure for the county so that it will be an attractive location for new commercial and residential development.

PIP3 Promote all modes of transport in the County and improve accessibility and connectivity both within the County and to the County by integrating land use planning with a transport system based on sustainability of resources and the development of additional transport infrastructure.

PIO43 To ensure the co-ordination of transport and land use planning.

PIO44 To implement the recommendations of the Transportation Plans for the towns of Cavan, Kingscourt, Bailieborough and Cootehill which were carried out in recent Years.

PIO45 To monitor and assess the need for transportation studies for other towns within the County.

PIO46 Facilitated the extension of the Navan Rail line into Kingscourt and beyond. Assess the viability of extending the Clonsilla-Navan Rail line in consultation with Iarnród Éireann.

PIO47 All existing dismantled railway lines shall be kept free from inappropriate Development.

PIO48 To co-operate with the relevant transport bodies and authorities to secure improvements and further developments of the public transport system.

PIO49 To assist and encourage the development and expansion of the Rural Transport Initiative, in conjunction with other statutory and development agencies in order to facilitate access to services and facilities throughout the County.

PIO50 To carry out an audit of bus stops throughout the county and to assess and monitor their suitability.

PIP5 Encourage the use of electrically operated cars and bicycles within the County in line with local and national policy and the development of Electric Vehicles (EV) charging points in new developments, where appropriate.

PIO51 Encourage non-residential developments to provide facilities for battery operated cars to be recharged in accordance with appropriate standards. All proposals for developments which require residential parking spaces,

including parking spaces for the disabled, shall be assessed for the provision of Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points on a case by case basis.

PIO52 Any EV Charging points which shall be constructed shall be capable of accommodating future charging points as required.

PIO53 To promote and facilitate the development of cycling and walking facilities and routes in the County.

PIO54 To encourage the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities in towns, at neighbourhood centres, at public facilities such as schools, libraries and in all new developments - refer to car and bicycle parking standards.

PIO55 To comply with the 'European Charter of Pedestrian Rights' in order to improve facilities for pedestrians and access to such facilities for people disabilities.

PIO56 Promote awareness of the health benefits of walking and cycling;

PIO57 Facilitate the development of walking and cycling related tourism in Cavan as they contribute to individual health and well-being, create a healthier population and promote more active lifestyles.

PIO58 Seek to reduce car dependency for trips to work and education.

PIO59 Reduce traffic volumes and speeds where pedestrian and cyclist volumes are high.

PIO60 Encourage and promote the modal shift from the private car to other modes of travel such as public transport, cycling and walking.

PIO61 To protect and retain the existing railway corridors in the County for the development of greenways as a walking and cycling amenity.

PIO62 To develop and promote Walking & Cycling Amenities (Greenways) on the sections of the following routes through County Cavan:

- *NCN Cavan Leitrim Greenway extending from Belturbet, County Cavan to Mohill, County Leitrim via Ballyconnell and Ballinamore primarily along the route of the Cavan – Leitrim Railway.*
- *NCN Boyne Valley to Lakelands County Greenway and associated looped Kingscourt Greenway through Dún na Rí Forest Park.*
- *NCN SLNCR (The Sligo Leitrim North Counties Railway Greenway) from Enniskillen, County Fermanagh to Collooney County Sligo and onwards to Sligo town which extends via Blacklion, County Cavan.*
- *NCN Cavan Lakelands Cycle Loop extending from Cavan Town to Killashandra Village via Killykeen Forest Park.*

Section 2: Water & Wastewater Services

SW&W- 001: To seek to improve water and wastewater services, in conjunction with Irish Water, for those areas of the County where deficiencies exist at present, subject to the availability of resources and appropriate statutory approvals.

SW&W-002: To support the implementation of measures to address deficiencies in existing water and wastewater infrastructure in order to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

SW&W-003: To preserve and further develop water and wastewater infrastructure in order to facilitate the growth of settlements at an appropriate rate, which is consistent with the Core Strategy and Settlement Framework.

SW&W-04: To implement adequate surface water drainage measures and prohibit unsuitable development in flood-susceptible areas, as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the County.

SW&W-05: To co-operate with Irish Water in the reparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan for County Cavan – in compliance with the Water Services Act (No.2 (Number 50 of 2013)).

WWS – P01: To ensure sustainable collection, treatment and discharge of wastewater effluent generated within the County.

WWS – P02: To ensure that developers provide effective drainage systems with separate foul and surface water networks.

WWS – P03: To promote the sustainable use of Wastewater Treatment facilities.

WWS – P04: To facilitate proposals for private developers to extend existing public wastewater infrastructure networks, where such proposals would result in the servicing of lands zoned in accordance with the Core Strategy. Any such proposal shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

WWS-005: To ensure that public wastewater treatment infrastructure is in-place with adequate capacity, prior to developments being occupied.

WWS-006: In cases where capacity exists, all proposed developments will be required to connect to the public wastewater treatment plant.

WWS-007: All new developments, post January 2014, shall be subject to a Development contribution, to be levied by Irish Water, to ensure the adequate provision of wastewater treatment infrastructure with adequate capacity that will ensure compliance with the provisions of the relevant River Basin Management Plan(s) and Habitats' Directive.

PIO62 Regard will be taken to the relevant recommendations of the 'Focus on Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland' (Reports for the years 2008-2011) (Office of Environmental Enforcement, EPA 2012)'.

WWS-001 To support the implementation of the relevant recommendations set out in the document Urban Wastewater Discharges in Ireland for Population Equivalents Greater than 500 persons – A Report for the Years 2007 – 2012 (EPA office of the Environment Enforcement, 2009).

WWS-002: To achieve compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

WWS-003: To facilitate the sustainable development of towns and villages across the County, by improving and extending wastewater infrastructure subject to the availability of necessary funding and compliance with the Core Strategy and Settlement Framework for the County.

PIO63 To support the objectives of the report entitled 'Water Services Investment Programme – Assessment of Needs 2009 – 2015' including inter alia the following schemes.

PIO64 To require that adequate and appropriate waste and drinking water service infrastructure is in place prior to further development.

PIO65 To ensure the protection and improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground waters throughout the county by implementing the EU Water Framework Directive, and any other associated legislation.

WS-P01 To ensure an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of good quality water for domestic, commercial and industrial use, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

WS-P02 To ensure that the future development of available lands within the plan area shall be evaluated in terms of requirements of the EIA, Habitats Directive; Water Framework Directive and the Floods' Directive, to ensure that there are no negative impacts on water quality.

WS-P03 To conserve water supplies through the minimisation of leakage and waste in the interests of efficiency and sustainability.

WS-P04 To promote public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures.

WS-P05 To co-operate, support and advise in the provision and management of group water schemes in the County.

WS-O01 To support the objectives of the report entitled 'Water Services Investment Programme – Assessment of Needs 2009 – 2015' including inter alia the following schemes:- Ballyconnell; Cootehill; Killeshandra & Kingscourt.

WS-O02 To require that adequate and appropriate waste and drinking water service infrastructure is in place prior to further development.

WS-O03 To ensure the protection and improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground waters throughout the county by implementing the EU Water Framework Directive, and any other associated legislation.

PIO66 To promote environmental protection through education and enforcement of all current legislation.

PIO67 To improve water quality in the County in accordance with current European and National legislation.

PIO68 To require that septic tanks and proprietary effluent treatment systems comply in full with the requirements of the EPA Wastewater Treatment Code of Practice, 2009 or any subsequent Code of Practice which supersedes it.

PIO69 To require that all site assessments are carried out by persons that have a completed the FETAC Cert and that confirmation of same and professional indemnity insurance cover is submitted with all site assessments.

Section 3: Waste Management

PIO70 To have regard to the following in the assessment of planning applications for waste management facilities:

- *North East Waste Management Plan 2005 -2010 (or any subsequent Regional Waste Plan that relates to County Cavan).*
- *Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended).*
- *EU Landfill Directive.*
- *EPA Landfill Manuals.*

- *EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive.*
- *DOEHLG policy statements including 'Changing Our Ways' and 'Preventing and Recycling Waste-Delivering Change'.*

PIO71 To ensure the provision of recycling facilities in the form of a kerbside type collection, civic amenity sites and/or bring bank-recycling facilities in accordance with the implementation of the Regional Waste Management Plan.

PIO72 To encourage the provision of recycling facilities (i.e. bottle banks, bring centres etc) in close proximity to commercial and residential developments.

PIO73 To encourage waste prevention, minimisation, reuse, recycling and recovery as methods of managing waste.

PIO74 To encourage and facilitate the involvement of communities in environmental awareness activities, community based recycling initiatives or environmental management initiatives that will lead to local sustainable waste management practices.

PIO75 New apartments shall comply fully with 'Design Standards for New Apartments', Guidelines for Planning Authorities, September 2007, in relation to Refuse Storage.

PIO76 New housing schemes, including apartment blocks, multiple holiday home developments, caravan parks and camping sites shall be required to provide for the collection and removal of recyclable materials.

Section 4: Energy

PIO77 Encourage and support efforts to reduce energy consumption across all sectors in support of the implementation of the 'National Energy Efficiency Action Plan' 2007 -2020.

PIO78 Promote renewable energy policies in the county and ensure that Council staff are given the necessary training to implement this policy.

PIO79 Promote energy conservation through a reduction in consumption and by incorporating renewable energy technology into building design standards.

PIO80 Where development is of a scale that requires approval under the Strategic Infrastructure Act, 2006, the applicants/ promoters shall include as an integral part of their planning approval/ planning application documentation, a study by a suitably qualified independent person/body demonstrating whether the proposal is incorporating the most appropriate technology available and method of construction including a comprehensive examination (in the case of transmission lines) of the under-grounding of such services. The applicant shall also ensure that planning applications involving the siting of electricity power lines and other overhead cables, consider in full, the impacts of such development on the landscape, nature conservation, archaeology, residential and visual amenity.

PIO81 The location of overhead power lines shall preserve clearance distances from residential and other property generally occupied by human beings in accordance with Electricity Supply Board Guidelines such as the 'Code of Practice for Avoiding Danger from Overhead Electricity Lines' and other nationally accepted standards or guidance.

PIO82 To support the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity networks in the County and recognise the development of secure and reliable electricity transmission infrastructure as a key factor for supporting

economic development and attracting investment to the area and to support the infrastructural renewal and development.

PIO83 Cognisance will be taken of the 'Code of Practice' between the DECLG and EirGrid (2009)'.

PIO84 To ensure that High Voltage electrical lines must be constructed and monitored in accordance with the 'International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP)' and Commission for Energy Regulation (CER).

PIP6 To respect, where appropriate, the 14m wide BGE Wayleaves associated with the High Pressure Gas Transmission Pipelines.

PIO85 That any developments or excavations within the 14m wide BGE Wayleaves associated with the BGE high pressure Gas Transmission Pipelines shall not be permitted without BGE written consent.

PIO86 To encourage and facilitate the expansion of the Gas network in County Cavan.

PIO87 New advances in wind turbine design in relation to lower heights and shrouding are encouraged and should be considered in proposals for new turbines in order to reduce visual impacts.

PIO88 Proof of good acoustical design of turbines should be submitted with planning applications for such structures.

PIO89 The following issues will be considered in the assessment of a wind energy development:

- *Planning applications for new wind energy development and extensions to existing developments shall include details of full compliance with the Planning Guidelines issued by the DECLG 'Wind Energy Development, 2006'. This shall include but is not limited to details of; Ground conditions/a geology assessment, archaeology, architectural heritage, noise, safety aspects, proximity to roads and power lines, interference with communications systems, aircraft safety, shadow flicker and wind-take, as per, 'Wind Energy Guidelines'. An assessment of siting and design impacts shall also be submitted, as well as a layout'.*
- *The importance of wind energy and its contribution to the achievement of targets set out in the 'National Climate Change Strategy'.*
- ***Impact of the development on habitats, by direct loss, degradation, fragmentation and impact on habitats outside the site.***
- ***Impact of the development on birds through disturbance during construction and operation phase, collision mortality, barrier to movement and loss or degradation of habitats.***
- ***Planning applications should indicate proposals for restoration of the site in the event of the removal of the turbines.***
- *Cables connecting windfarms to the national grid should be located underground, where appropriate.*
- *Identify existing public rights of way and established walking routes and maintain free from development and preserve them as public rights of way or walking routes.*
- ***All applications for new Wind Farms or additional Turbines to existing Wind Farms shall submit an assessment of the cumulative impacts of the proposal in combination with existing wind farms in the area.***

Section 5: Telecommunications and Information Technology

PIO90 To encourage the co-location of antennae on existing support structures and to require documentary evidence, as to the non-availability of this option, in proposals for new structures. The shared use of existing structures will be required where the numbers of masts located in any single area is considered to be excessive. The Planning Authority will generally consider any location with three or more separate support structures as having no remaining capacity for any further structures.

PIO91 In Special Policy Landscape and Amenity Areas the presumption will be that all applications must meet the co-location requirement or be supported by a 'Visual Impact Assessment Report' that will demonstrate that the development can be satisfactorily absorbed into the landscape.

PIO92 Masts will only be permitted within the towns and villages of the County when accompanied by satisfactory proposals for dealing with dis-amenities and in compatible locations.

PIO93 Masts will only be permitted if supported by an acceptable 'Visual and Environmental Impact Assessment Report'.

PIO94 Shared use of existing support structures will be preferred in areas where there are a cluster of masts.

PIO95 Applications for the development of new telecommunications structures shall identify existing public rights of way and established walking routes, maintain them free from development and preserve them as public rights of way or walking routes.

PIO96 Access roads shall only be permitted where they are absolutely necessary. The applicant shall be required to demonstrate that minimal visual impact shall occur, that they do not scar the landscape and that they follow natural contours so as to minimise their visual intrusion. Access roads shall be bordered with native trees and shrubs after construction. It shall be a condition of permission that the land is reinstated at the end of the construction period. Applicants must submit proposal to mitigate the visual impact of access roads

PIO97 To submit a reasoned justification as to the need for the particular development at the proposed location in the context of the operator's overall plans to develop a network and the plans of other operators. To provide details of what other sites or locations were considered and include a map showing the location of all existing telecommunication structures (whether operated by the applicant or by a competing company) within 1km of the proposed site and reasons why these sites were not feasible.

PIO98 When antennae and their support structures are no longer being used and no new user has been identified to ensure that they are removed and that the site is re-instated at the operator's expense and to the Council's satisfaction. Permissions granted will contain a bonding arrangement to this effect. It shall also be an obligation of the original operator to inform the Council if he intends to dispose of the site to another suitable operator.

Chapter 5 – Housing

HP1 To ensure the provision of accommodation for all those who require it and who are unable to obtain it through their own means.

HP2 To implement the provisions of the Housing Strategy.

HP3 To ensure that undue social segregation does not occur.

HP4 To comply with the Department of the Environment, Heritage (Community) and Local Government Publications; 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes and Sustaining Communities' and 'Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities, Statement on Housing Policy'.

HO1 Require that all new residential developments include a mix of house types and sizes to cater for different needs including families, single persons, the elderly and mobility impaired.

HO2 All new residential developments must submit, at planning application state, a design brief which demonstrates clear compliance with the Department of the Environment, Heritage (Community) and Local Government Publications; 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes and Sustaining Communities' and 'Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities, Statement on Housing Policy' in this regard

HO3 Ensure that all new dwellings are reasonably accessible for older people, the very young and people with disabilities. Dwellings shall be designed so as to be lifetime adaptable and so fit to cater for the changing needs of families and changing circumstances of individuals.

HO4 To support the concept of independent living for older people and people with disabilities and require, where possible, that such housing is integrated with main stream housing within existing communities. Such housing shall be located close to existing or committed community and convenience retail facilities.

HO5 Ensure that new residential developments are integrate into the existing urban fabric both physically and socially.

HO6 Promote energy efficiency both during construction and during the lifetime of dwellings by sensitive design and layout taking into account topography, orientation and surround features.

HO7 Ensure a sequential approach to residential development in which the priority location for new residential development will be town and village cores, brownfield sites and suitable areas adjoining town and village cores.

HO8 Co-operate with approved Voluntary and Co-operative housing association through the life of the Development Plan in identifying opportunities for their participation in the provision of social housing.

HO9 Support the use of unfinished dwellings and existing Local Authority housing for current and future housing needs.

HO10 Support the Implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme to ensure the provision of adequate and suitable accommodation in consultation with persons from the Travelling community, the general public, and the local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

HO11 Work in conjunction with other statutory and voluntary bodies to encourage social integration of minority groups into Cavan Communities.

HO12 Require, as provided for under Section 95 of the Act, as amended, that 20% of land zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses shall be reserved for the provision of housing for the purposes of (either or both):

- Housing for persons referred to in Section 9 (2) of the Housing Act, 1988,

- Affordable housing (as defined at Section 93 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000).

This objective will apply to all applications for the development of more than 4 residential units or residential development on land of more than 0.1 hectares on lands zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses. This objective will be implemented following consultation with the applicant and having regard to their proposals for meeting the requirements of the Strategy and by the attachment of conditions to planning permissions for residential developments on lands zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential development and other uses.

HO13 Ensure the development of social and affordable housing units is carried out in consultation with the applicant/developer.

Chapter 6 – Social Strategy & Community Facilities

Policies or objectives relating to Social Inclusion, Gender, Older Persons, Disabilities, Ethnic Minorities, certain Educational, Arts and Culture, Museums, Childcare, Healthcare within the Draft Plan are considered not relevant to potential threats to Natura 2000 sites and have been omitted.

SCP13 Recognise the amenity, leisure and social importance of existing areas of amenity and open space and the importance of the provision of new, attractive and useable open space and amenity areas.

SCO25 Ensure the protection of existing areas of open space in residential estates

SCO26 Ensure the protection of areas of amenity, leisure and social value within our towns and villages.

SCO27 Ensure new open space is useable and of leisure and amenity value.

SCO28 Encourage the provision of fully accessible facilities at amenity areas such as public seating and toilets.

SCO29 Recognise and promote the importance of developing angling facilities in suitable Open Space provision and amenity areas and ensures such facilities are easily accessible by all, to encourage anglers of all abilities to access resources.

SCP14 To meet the recreational needs of all communities and individuals in the county.

SCP15 To ensure equal access for all communities and individuals to recreational facilities and opportunities.

SCO30 Seek to ensure the provision of recreation facilities to cater for different abilities, ages and interests within the County, as far as is practical.

SCO31 Support a partnership approach to increase the participation in sports and physical activity.

SCO36 To promote, support and develop opportunities to expand existing school buildings and sports grounds to wider community use.

SCO37 Facilitate the provision of schools by ensuring that suitable lands are zoned for the establishment, improvement and expansion of current facilities, as appropriate.

SCO38 Encourage and facilitate the development of suitable recreational and amenity space in the vicinity of schools.

Chapter 7 – Built Heritage & Archaeology

Policies or objectives relating to protection of architectural heritage including protected structures have limited scope within the Draft Plan and the majority are considered not relevant to potential threats to Natura 2000 sites and have been omitted. However policies and objectives may be relevant to maintenance of structures over watercourses.

BHP1 To protect, preserve and enhance the architectural heritage of County Cavan by taking into consideration the advice contained in the ‘Architectural Protection, Guidelines for Planning Authorities’, 2004. To adhere to the standards advocated in the ‘Principles of Conservation’ published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in undertaking works on elements of the built heritage and to protect all structures or parts of structures, where appropriate, that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific social or technical interest, which are included in the RPS.

BHO3 To protect the architectural heritage of Cavan and to include all structures, or parts of structures, considered to be of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest in the RPS, including modern structures.

BHO13 To protect our industrial architecture and to encourage appropriate new uses for vacant structures.

Chapter 8 – Natural Heritage & Environment

NHEP1 To protect, conserve, manage, enhance and safeguard natural amenity assets and natural heritage features for future generations while maximising their recreational, amenity and tourism potential for the present generation by resisting development that could have a negative impact.

NHEP2 To maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits that may be derived from the conservation and management of Cavan’s Natural Heritage and green infrastructure.

NHEP3 To promote an understanding and awareness of Cavan’s unique natural heritage and elements of this heritage which should be conserved, managed and enhanced.

NHEP3 To implement, in partnership with Cavan County Heritage Forum, relevant stakeholders and the wider community, the Cavan County Heritage and Biodiversity Plans and any subsequent revisions. The Cavan County Heritage and Biodiversity Plans shall be integrated into lower level Plans to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to protecting natural and built heritage.

NHEP4 To protect, manage, conserve and seek to enhance the County’s biodiversity.

NHEP5 To integrate biodiversity consideration into all Cavan County Council activities through the County Biodiversity Action Plan process.

NHEP6 To ensure the protection of species of flora and fauna afforded legal protection under Irish and European Legislation.

NHEP7 To assess the impact on biodiversity of proposals for large developments, particularly those on greenfield sites, or in environmentally sensitive areas. Such developments must include measures for the enhancement and protection of biodiversity.

NHEP8 To increase public participation in biodiversity conservation through community led initiatives.

NHEO1 To consider aims, objectives and actions identified in Cavan County Heritage and Biodiversity Plans and any subsequent revisions, during the lifetime of the Cavan County Development Plan. To integrate as appropriate, the aims, objective and actions identified in Cavan County Heritage and Biodiversity Plans into any lower level plans arising from the implementation of this plan.

NHEO2 To promote the conservation of biodiversity outside of designated areas, including features such as wetlands, woodlands, hedgerows and uplands.

NHEO3 To protect and enhance important landscape features including streams, rivers, canals, lakes, and associated wetlands such as reedbeds and swamps; ponds, springs, bogs, fens, trees, woodland and scrub, wildlife and riparian corridors, hedgerows and other boundary types such as stone walls and ditches which are of importance for wild flora and fauna.

NHEP10 Development on or adjacent to National or European designated sites or proposed designated sites during the lifetime of this plan will be permitted only where an assessment has being carried out to the satisfaction of Cavan County Council and in consultation with the NPWS and where overall integrity of the site will not be compromised or adversely affected.

NHEP9 To have regard to the views of the NPWS in respect of proposed development where such development may have an impact on a designated National or European site or a site proposed for designation.

NHEP10 To continue to undertake surveys and collect data that will assist Cavan County Council in building its knowledge base and meeting its obligations under Article 6 of the Habitat Directives.

NHEO4 To ensure an Appropriate Assessment (AA) in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, and in accordance with the DECLG Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities’, 2009 and relevant EPA and European Commission guidance documents, is carried out in respect of any Plan or Project likely to have significant effect on a Natura 2000 site(s), either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the site’s conservation objectives.

NHEO5 To protect and conserve the conservation value of SPAs, SACs and NHAs as identified by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and any other sites that may be proposed for designation during the lifetime of this plan.

NHEP11 To conserve the existing wide range of flora, fauna and wildlife habitats in the county through the preservation of ecological corridors and networks vital to the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. To designate County Biodiversity Sites within the lifetime of this plan and to protect the ecological integrity of these sites.

NHEO6 To implement the actions of Cavan County Biodiversity Plan and any subsequent revisions in fulfilment of the requirements of the National Biodiversity Plan.

NHEO7 To continue to map the habitats of the county which will enable planning for future development to occur in a sensitive and sustainable manner and ensure that this mapping informs the development management process.

NHEP12 To have regard to the geological and geomorphological heritage values of County Cavan’s geological heritage sites and to avoid inappropriate development, through consultation with the Geological Survey of Ireland.

NHEO8 To undertake an audit of geological heritage sites within County Cavan during the lifetime of this plan. To have regard for the geological heritage sites identified in the geological audit of sites completed for County Cavan.

NHEO9 To raise awareness of the importance of the geological heritage of the county and to disseminate information on sites of geological heritage value in County Cavan, when this information becomes available.

NHEO10 To facilitate and encourage the development of geotourism and the recreational potential of County Cavan through increased social use of the landscape, with attendant conservation, economic, social and community benefits within the region.

NHEO11 To co-ordinate the continuing development of strategic walking routes, trails and other countryside recreational opportunities.

NHEO12 To enhance the geodiversity, biodiversity and natural environments of the region including additional measures to conserve geosites and natural habitats where appropriate.

NHEO13 To develop knowledge and understanding of geology, related Earth Sciences, endangered habitats and associated environmental issues through education and research programmes.

NHEO14 To encourage enquiry through fieldwork and inspire scientific research through education and research programmes.

NHEP14 To support initiatives, which reduce the risk of invasions, help control and manage and prevent the spread of new and established invasive species, monitor impacts and raise public awareness.

NHEO15 To encourage the use of native species in amenity planting and stocking and related community actions to reduce the introduction and spread of non-native species.

NHEP15 To protect existing wetlands from destruction, infilling, fragmentation and degradation.

NHEO16 To resist development that would destroy, fragment and degrade wetlands.

NHEP16 To continue to co-operate with relevant stakeholders to improve public access to State forests for amenity purposes and consider development which will enhance the amenity provided by existing trees and woodlands.

NHEP17 To promote awareness, understanding and best practice in the management of Cavan's woodland, tree, hedgerow and stone wall resource.

NHEO17 To encourage the retention of mature trees and the use of tree surgery rather than felling where possible when undertaking, approving or authorising development.

NHEO18 To protect Champion and Heritage Trees where identified on the Tree Register of Ireland and Heritage Tree Database when undertaking, approving, or authorising development.

NHEO19 To encourage the use of native species wherever possible in Cavan County Council's own landscaping work, and on Council property.

NHEO20 To promote and encourage planting of native hedgerow species of local provenance.

NHEO21 To encourage the retention of hedgerows and stone walls and other distinctive boundary treatments in rural areas and prevent loss and fragmentation, where possible. Where removal of a hedgerow or stone wall is unavoidable, mitigation by provision of the same type of boundary will be required.

NHEP18 To protect the landscape character, quality, and local distinctiveness of County Cavan in accordance with relevant government policy and guidelines as set out above and recognise the Landscape Categorisation of County Cavan.

NHEP19 To require that any necessary assessments, including landscape and visual impact assessments, are provided when undertaking, authorising, or approving development

NHEO22 To protect and enhance the landscape of County Cavan by ensuring development occurs in a manner that has regard to the character (type of landscape or character area) and sensitivity (visual impact) of the landscape.

NHEO23 To support efforts to identify and designate vulnerable landscapes in County Cavan in order to maintain their character.

NHEO24 To identify, protect and enhance landscapes and landscape features of special environmental, geological, and geomorphological, archaeological, historic or cultural interest.

NHEO25 To protect and enhance the visual integrity, distinctiveness, character, scenic value and visual quality of the sensitive and outstanding landscapes, scenic areas, High Amenity Areas from intrusive and/or unsympathetic developments. Protect sensitive areas from injurious development, while providing for development that will benefit for rural community and our visitors. Ensure that, where an overriding need is demonstrated for a particular development in the vicinity of sensitive landscape careful consideration is given to site selection. The development should be appropriate in scale and be sited, designed and landscaped in a manner which minimises potential adverse impacts on the landscape. Proposed developments, where located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes, may be required to provide a landscape report detailing how the proposal will impact on the landscape and mitigation measures to be taken. Proposed developments which have a detrimental impact on the landscape will not normally be permitted. Co-operate with adjoining local authorities to support the co-ordinated designation of sensitive landscape particularly where transboundary vulnerabilities are identified.

NHEO26 To maintain the scenic and recreation value of these areas by restricting all adverse uses and negative visual impacts.

NHEO27 To restrict incompatible development in order to protect the amenity, scientific and historical values of these areas (please refer to County Development Plan for list of sites/locations).

NHEO28 To restrict development that would obstruct views and to minimise visual intrusion by only permitting compatible uses.

NHEO29 To ensure the location, design and visual prominence of developments are examined, including possible effects on views from the public realm toward sensitive or vulnerable landscape features.

NHEO30 To regulate development that would seriously obstruct and detract from views of high scenic value from designated Scenic Routes.

NHEO31 To maintain and protect the natural landscapes visual character which is recognised to be of an exceptional high amenity value.

NHEO32 To regulate development within parks to maximise recreational, amenity and community uses.

NHEO33 To maintain the amenity value of major lakes and their environs within a landscape, recreational and ecological context by restricting and regulating development that would prejudice use and enjoyment of the areas, give rise to adverse visual impacts or threaten habitats through disposal of effluents.

NHEO34 To implement the above along the shorelines of these lakes and the immediate area adjoining, including skyline development on surrounding hill crests.

NHEO35 To regulate development on adjoining lands, to ensure that public use is not prejudiced by incompatible uses or adverse visual impact.

NHEO36 To regulate all development on lands adjoining these rivers in order to maintain their amenity and ecological value.

NHEP20 To protect these amenity areas, permitting only very limited forms of development in these locations.

NHEO37 To require developments likely to have an adverse impact on special landscape policy areas to identify and assess these impacts. Such applications will be required to carry out studies to establish baseline parameters and appropriate measures will be required, as are deemed necessary, to protect the environment.

NHEO38 To examine, review and refine Special Landscape Policy areas during the lifetime of the Development Plan.

NHEP21 To protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of the Waterways and to maintain it free from inappropriate development and to provide for public access, where feasible, acknowledging the existence of contiguous Natura 2000 sites.

NHEO39 To protect the biodiversity of rivers, streams and other water courses of the Inland Waterways to maintain them in an open state and to discourage their culverting or realignment.

NHEO40 To consult with, as appropriate, the Inland Fisheries Board in relation to any development that could have a potential impact on the aquatic ecosystems and associated riparian habitats.

NHEO41 To consult with Waterways Ireland and the NPWS, the DECLG and the Inland Waterways Association on the development proposals that may affect inland waterways, rivers, lakes, canals or watercourses.

NHEO42 To ensure that the County's watercourses are retained for their biodiversity and flood protection values and to conserve and enhance, where possible, the wildlife habitats of the county's rivers and riparian zones, lakes, canals and streams which occur outside of designated areas to provide for a network of habitats and biodiversity corridors throughout the county.

NHEO43 To identify and protect, over the lifetime of the plan, further existing rights of way which give access to places of natural beauty or recreational utility.

NHEO44 Existing Rights of Way and established walking routes shall be identified prior to any new planting, new infrastructural development and any new energy / telecommunications developments and shall be maintained as same.

NHEO45 To identify the existing public rights of way which give access to mountains, lakeshores, riverbanks or other places of natural beauty or recreational activity (please refer to County Development Plan for methodology used).

NHEP23 To develop and support the implementation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for County Cavan during the lifetime of this plan.

NHEP24 To recognise Green Infrastructure as a means for conserving, protecting and managing ecological corridors and networks, that link National E.U. designated sites.

NHEP25 To encourage physical activity and improved health and well-being by providing green spaces for walking and cycling and by providing attractive and safe routes linking key green space sites, parks and open spaces and heritage assets where feasible and appropriate and resist development that would damage, degrade, fragment or prejudice the green infrastructure network.

NHEO46 To undertake a Green Infrastructure Strategy for County Cavan during the lifetime of this Development Plan and to ensure that County Cavan's Natura 2000 sites are central to this strategy.

NHEP47 To identify sites of local biodiversity value in County Cavan over the lifetime of this plan.

NHEO48 To protect existing green infrastructure in the county and to provide additional green infrastructure, where possible.

NHEO49 To require that all Land Use Plans protect, manage and provide where possible green infrastructure in an integrated and coherent manner.

NHEP26 To protect the water resources of County Cavan.

NHEP27 To protect the rivers, streams, lakes and all other watercourses in the County, in order to promote sustainable and suitable habitats for flora and fauna.

NHEP28 To promote the engagement of developers and regulators in sustainable development and to encourage a high standard of environmental protection. The 'precautionary principle' will apply where a significant risk to the environment exists.

NHEP29 To achieve good status in all our waterbodies and prevent the deterioration of existing quality status in all waterbodies in accordance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and to any development where the potential adverse effects are not fully understood, in which case the development shall not proceed. The 'burden of proof' shall be solely with the applicant to ensure that the proposed activity will not cause significant environmental harm.

NHEP30 Ensure that all industrial or agricultural developments generating manure, organic fertilizer and sludge that are dependent on the off-site recovery or disposal of waste take account area mapping into account. Including lands with impaired drainage or percolation properties and lands where rock outcrop and extreme vulnerability of groundwater is present. Restrictions shall apply in areas where water source catchments are present.

NHEP31 Ensure the implementation and enforcement of the European Communities, 'Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters Regulations' (2009) and associated European Communities 'Good agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters Regulations', 2010- S.I.610 of 2010.

NHEO49 All applications for development shall be assessed in terms of the potential impact on the quality of surface waters through the implementation of, where applicable, the RBMP's objectives and targets set under the following; 'Neagh Bann International River Basin District', 'Water Matters' and 'North Western International River Basin District: Water Matters', 'Shannon International River Basin District: Water Matters' and the 'Eastern International River Basin District: Water Matters'.

NHEO50 All development applications are assessed in compliance with the 'European Communities Environmental Objectives on (Surface Waters) Regulations'(2009) (S.I.No 272 of 2009) and the 'European Communities Environmental Objectives Groundwater Regulations' 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010).

NHEO51 Ensure that the protection of all known and potential groundwater reserves in County Cavan are met through the effective implementation of the Groundwater Protection Scheme for County Cavan.

NHEO52 Promote best practice in design, layout construction and operation of all new developments and re-developments through the requirement for the submission of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). Developments shall be designed to ensure both water quality protection and flood minimisation are included in proposals where significant hard surfaces are proposed for commercial, industrial, intensive agriculture, public and institutional or multi-residential developments.

NHEO53 Ensure that, where instances of pollution arise, the enforcement of planning conditions relating to the installation, operation and maintenance of on-site wastewater treatment or septic tanks is carried out jointly with the Environment and Planning Sections.

NHEO54 To encourage the connection of all unconnected premises, within town boundaries, to the existing wastewater treatment plants, where available.

NHEO55 To support the continued development of the wastewater leak detection programme and the use of a strategic metering system to aid in leak detection for the protection of existing water resources.

NHEP32 Support the 'National Climate Change Strategy', (2007 – 2012) and all measures contained within this strategy that are implementable at a local level.

NHEP33 Ensure the reduction of GHG emissions through the implementation of measures including: planning for compact settlements which accommodate sufficient lands for residential, industrial and commercial land uses in order to reduce trip generation making services more accessible and facilitating more sustainable means of travel.

NHEP34 Ensure that all planning applications for developments which potentially cause noise pollution are subject to appropriate noise monitoring programmes. Potential noise-generating land uses and developments which are subject to the planning process will be assessed in terms of the 'Environmental Noise Regulations' (S.I. 140 of 2006).

NHEP35 Protect and enhance the county's floodplains and wetlands as vital green infrastructure which provides space for the storage and conveyance of floodwaters, thus enabling flood risk to be more effectively managed and reducing the need for flood defences and flood alleviation measures in the future.

NHEP36 Ensure that all significant developments impacting on flood risk areas shall submit a 'Flood Impact Assessment' (FIA) Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (Site FRA) at Planning Stage, to examine the risks from all

sources of flooding of the risks to and potentially arising from development on a specific site, including the examination of the effectiveness and impacts of any control or mitigation measures to be incorporated into that development. at Planning Stage, to identify potential loss of floodplain storage and how it is to be offset to minimise the impact on the river flood regime.

NHEP37 Prohibit development which will be directly exposed to flooding or which may through the Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (Site FRA) (FIA) Flood Impact Assessment process, be found to exacerbate the flooding in areas outside of the site proposed for development.

NHEP38 To ensure that developments in rural areas -in the case of driveways, drainage measures shall be provided to a detail acceptable to the Planning Authority, so as to avoid run-off from the site to adjoining public road;

NHEP 39: The limitation of surface water run-off to pre-development levels will be required for all Greenfield developments. Where a developer can clearly demonstrate that capacity exists to accommodate run-off levels in excess of Greenfield levels, then the Planning Authority shall give consideration to such proposals on a case-by-case basis.

HHEP 40: To ensure that, in the case of a brownfield development, whilst existing surface water drainage measures will be taken into account, some attenuation measures for surface water may be required at the discretion of the Planning Authority in the interests of balanced and sustainable development.

NHEP 41: All new development must be designed and constructed to meet the following minimum flood design standards:- where streams, open drains or other watercourses are being culverted, the pipework shall be designed to adequately accommodate the maximum anticipated flows. (Access should be provided for maintenance as appropriate).

NHEO56 Prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the County, in accordance with the requirements of the DEHG and the OPW 'Guidelines for The Planning System and Floodrisk Management' (2009), taking account of the impact of Climate change so that risk is avoided where possible. In all cases, the onus will be on the developer to provide justification for the development in accordance with the provisions of these guidelines.

NHEO57 Ensure that all run-off from new developments in towns or villages shall be restricted to the pre-development levels (i.e. green fields sites) by the effective implementation of storm water attenuation on the site and the use of SUDS, as a measure to assist in flood avoidance. Developers will be required to demonstrate how they will achieve this during the planning application stage.

NEP44: To ensure that, where applicable, Plans, projects or developments which in the opinion of the Planning Authority, may have a likely impact on the Environment, a sub-threshold Environmental Impact Statement; A Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and/or an Appropriate Assessment may be required to be prepared by the applicant/developer.

Chapter 9 – Recreation & Tourism

RTO 1 Recognise and support the important contribution that angling makes to the leisure and tourist sector in the County whilst ensuring the protection of our Natural Heritage in line with chapter eight of this Plan.

RTP2 Support and encourage the development of access and other infrastructure for angling including access for people with mobility issues.

RTP3 Ensure the protection of existing angling locations and maintain free from inappropriate development.

RTO4 To promote the development of new walking routes and ensure the protection, development and maintenance of walking and cycling routes within the County. To recognise the importance of walking and cycling routes and other countryside recreational opportunities, promote their development and ensure their protection, maintenance and where feasible improvement .

RTO5 To protect areas of outstanding landscape, the natural and built environment and the cultural heritage that forms the County's tourism resource.

RTO6 To encourage and assist areas, where tourism is currently underdeveloped and there is a need for local tourism development initiatives to realise their full tourism potential in an environmentally sustainable manner."

RTO7 To work in partnership with Fáilte Ireland, funders and other tourism organisations to promote and facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure supports for the development of tourism.

RTO8 To support and promote sustainable tourism through the encouragement of development that enhances as well as protects the County's landscape and other elements of the natural and built heritage.

RTO9 To improve existing Local Authority recreational and amenity facilities, and provide new facilities where considered necessary.

RTO10 To facilitate the provision of tourist facilities in keeping with the Tourism Strategy and the protection of the environment.

RTO11 To ensure the protection of and co-ordinate the continuing development of strategic walking routes, trails and other countryside recreational opportunities.

RTO12 To further enhance the geodiversity, biodiversity and natural environment of the region including additional measures to conserve geosites and natural habitats where appropriate.

RTO13 To facilitate opportunities for the social use of state forests and to enhance public enjoyment of the geology and natural landscapes of the region.

RTO14 To promote and facilitate the redevelopment of the Ulster Canal and associated waterways

RTO15 To promote and facilitate the opening of the waterway between Belturbet and Killeshandra.

RTO16 To support those families wishing to remain on the land and by taking a favourable approach towards agri-tourism schemes and other enterprises intended to supplement farm income.

RTO17 Develop tourism initiatives across the county and in particular the Cross-Border Global Geopark.

RTO18 To investigate and facilitate, subject to resources, the re-use of railways lines for amenity and recreational purposes, and encourage their development as accessible walking and cycling routes

RTO19 Protect established walking and cycling routes and keep free from development which would adversely impact upon them and their use as walking and cycling routes.

RTO20 Encourage and support the enhancement and extension of existing walking and cycling routes, by utilising links from residential areas, parks, open spaces and existing or new public rights of way to facilitate the creation of a

secure, safe green network, to provide access to scenic, mountain, lakeshore and river features and views of special interest. To support, promote and encourage the development of walking and cycling routes, in conjunction with the Irish Sports Council, IW and Fáilte Ireland, which provide linkages with trails, particularly those with historical associations, in adjoining counties including cross border counties in partnership with their councils, the state, private and voluntary sectors.

RTO21 To promote Walking and Cycling by securing the development of a network of safe cycle routes and footpaths on existing roads and on new road improvement schemes and on routes reserved exclusively for pedestrians and cyclists. To provide, improve and extend the network of cycle lanes and pedestrian routes on existing roads, on all new regional, local distributor and local collector roads and on roads being up-graded, to create a safer, more convenient and more user-friendly environment.

RTO22 To ensure that in respect of proposed walking routes for the various settlements, the route selection process considers and assesses the potential for likely significant effects on the environment (including disturbance to species and habitats) in selecting a preferred route and states that where certain routes are adjacent to Natura 2000 sites, the requirements of the Habitats Directive should be taken into account.

RTO23 To ensure that in the preparation of walking/cycling strategy for the County, potential effects (both positive and negative) on the environment should be taken into account for potential cumulative effects.

RTO24 Applications for new tourist accommodation shall submit details of existing tourist facilities in the area along with justification for the development. In rural areas the development of new tourist accommodation may not be suitable and strong justification is required. Along with general requirements including landscaping plans, site assessment and visual impact assessments, applicants and developers are required to establish the suitability of specific sites in the context of sustainability.

RTO25 To ensure tourism proposals follow the principles of proper planning and sustainable development as per the policies and objectives of this plan.

RTO26 To promote where possible the re-use and adoption of existing rural buildings if tourist accommodation is proposed outside existing settlements.

RTO27 To promote the development of high quality tourist accommodation, especially hotels and guesthouses and self-catering accommodation.

RTO28 To ensure in all tourism related developments high standards of design and landscaping. To ensure that all tourism related developments are of a high standard in terms of their design and landscaping. Applications for such developments shall demonstrate how the development will be assimilated into the landscape by siting, design and landscaping and how it will have no significant adverse impacts on natural, archaeological and built heritage features, landscapes, environmentally sensitive areas, scenic and visual amenities and should be appropriate to the character of the area.

RTO29 To direct tourism based development, where appropriate, into existing settlements, where there is adequate infrastructure to service the development and where residents can contribute to the maintenance of essential rural services.

RTO30 To ensure tourist related development is constructed in such a manner as to conserve and enhance the natural environment and therefore to serve the future of the tourist industry in the County without compromising its natural beauty.

RTO31 To promote the continued sustainable development of Integrated Tourism/Recreational Complex's throughout the County as important generators of tourist and economic activities.

Chapter 10 – Rural Settlement Strategy

RHP1 Rural generated housing needs should be accommodated in the locality in which they arise and where the applicant comes within the development plan definition of need, subject to satisfying good planning practice in matters of location, siting, design, access, wastewater disposal and the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and areas of high landscape value.

RHO1 Urban generated housing needs should be accommodated in areas identified for housing in the adjoining towns and villages.

RHO2 All rural housing planning applications shall be required to complete a "Rural Housing Application" form. The purpose of this form is to ascertain the need for housing in rural areas and to allow the Planning Authority to monitor trends to ensure effective decision making.

RHO3 Applications in rural areas shall be for individual dwelling houses only and must be made in the name of the person who is the intended occupier of the dwelling house.

RHO4 To apply occupancy condition of 7 years where appropriate (as recommended in Circular SP 5/08 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 'Rural Housing Policies and Local Need Criteria in Development Plans').

RHO5 Applicants need to submit evidence of their rural generated housing need at the particular location they are seeking permission.

RHO8 To cater for the housing requirements of members of the local rural community who have a rural generated housing need.

RHO9 Urban generated housing development shall be directed into town and village settlements.

RHO10 To apply an occupancy condition of a minimum of 7 years

RHO11 To prevent ribbon development extending out along radial roads from the towns in this area.

RHO12 To facilitate proposals for permanent residential development in order to tackle declining population levels.

RHO13 To monitor the operation of settlement policies on an ongoing basis to avoid excessive levels of inappropriately located development.

RHO14 Appropriately located and designed clustered development will be encouraged and accommodated, subject to normal good planning practice and other technical requirements.

RHO15 Proposals for more than two dwellings shall not be permitted. Applications must be accompanied by a local needs assessment.

RHO16 To permit infill development, where appropriate, subject to good planning practice in matters of location, siting, design, access, wastewater disposal and the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and areas of high landscape value.

RHO17 To require all applications for rural houses to comply with the “Design Guide for Single One-off Rural Houses within Cavan Rural Countryside.”

RHO18 One detached domestic garage only shall be permitted for any single dwelling. Domestic garages shall be single storey, domestic in appearance and in character with the domestic dwelling. Carports are not permitted in rural locations.

RHO19 Extensions to dwellings which are considered to interfere with the character of the dwelling or overwhelm it by virtue of their size and design shall not be permitted in rural locations.

RHO18 To ensure that development near or adjacent to a site or archaeological Interest does not have a negative impact on the special interest of the site or its setting by reason of its location, scale, bulk or visual impact.

RHO19 To ensure that applications that are likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site either directly or indirectly site are subject to an appropriate assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

RHO20 To have regard to special landscape policy areas and Landscape Categorisation Analysis of County Cavan to ensure that these areas are not adversely affected by incompatible development.

RHO21 To promote the viable re-use of vernacular dwellings without losing their character and to support applications for the sensitive restoration of disused vernacular or traditional dwellings.

RHO22 To encourage and facilitate the appropriate refurbishment of existing housing stock in rural areas and in certain limited cases the replacement of existing dwellings.

RHO23 Cavan County Council shall assess applications for refurbishment and/or replacement of existing housing stock in rural areas, having regard to the following criteria:

- *That in the case of replacement dwellings, to require that the original structure was last used as a dwelling and that its roof, internal and external walls are generally intact.*
- *That replacement dwellings are provided at locations where safe access and acceptable wastewater disposal arrangements can be put in place and where other policies and objectives of the Development Plan are not compromised.*
- *That in the case of refurbishment and extension proposals, that the scale and architectural treatment of proposed works are sympathetic to the character of the original structure and the surrounding area including adjoining or nearby development;*
- *That the replacement dwelling shall be designed to be of a size and scale appropriate to the site*
- *The design of replacement dwellings in rural areas shall comply with the “Design Guide for Single One-off Rural Houses within Cavan Rural Countryside” as contained within Appendix X of the Development Plan.*

RHO24 All proposals involving the installation of an on-site wastewater treatment system must be in accordance with the requirements of the EPA Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (2009) or any subsequent Code of Practice which supersedes it.

RHO25 All proposals shall be accompanied by a Site Characterisation Form which has been properly completed by a suitably qualified person.

RHO26 Proposals for significant extensions will be required to ensure that existing effluent treatment systems are adequate to cater for any additional loading that may result from the extension.

RHO28 To protect and maximise the potential of the county's national primary and secondary roads as key strategic infrastructure vital to the county's continued economic development by preventing ribbon development or random one-off housing.

RHO29 To ensure that future development affecting national primary or secondary roads shall be assessed in accordance with the guidance given in the document 'Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, January 2012'.

RHO30 To ensure that all development accessing off the county's road network is at a location and carried out in a manner which would not endanger public safety by way of a traffic hazard.

RHO31 New development proposals onto certain regionally and locally important county road routes that act as particularly important transport links and that traverse County Cavan shall be assessed having regard to:

- Avoiding unnecessary new accesses, for example, where access could be provided off a nearby county road*
- Ensuring that necessary new entrances are located in such a manner as to provide effective visibility for both users of the entrance and users of the public roads so that opportunities for conflicting movements are avoided*
- Avoiding the premature obsolescence of regional roads in particular, through creating excessive levels of individual entrances.*

RHO32 To avoid the removal of existing roadside boundaries except to the extent that this is needed for a new entrance, and where required for traffic safety reasons.

RHO33 If traffic safety requires that the existing front boundary treatment must be set back, it will be requirement that a replacement boundary is put in place and that this boundary is similar to the one removed. In cases where the boundary to be removed consist of non-native species than the replacement boundary shall be of mix of native species.

RHO34 New front boundaries of rural dwellings shall comply with guidelines for landscaping as outlined in section 3.0 Landscaping of 'Design Guide for Single One off Rural Houses within Cavan Rural Countryside'. The new front boundary shall replicate the original roadside boundary and walls shall be permitted for entrance splay only and shall be of a design and height appropriate to the rural area.

Chapter 11 – Development Management Standards

DM – P01 All new developments shall have regard to the policies and objectives regarding the provision of critical infrastructure capacity as contained in (Chapter 4: Infrastructure) of the plan.

TVP1 Identify and meet the needs of communities within towns.

TVP2 Promote local economic development and employment growth by focusing on the vibrancy and vitality of town centres.

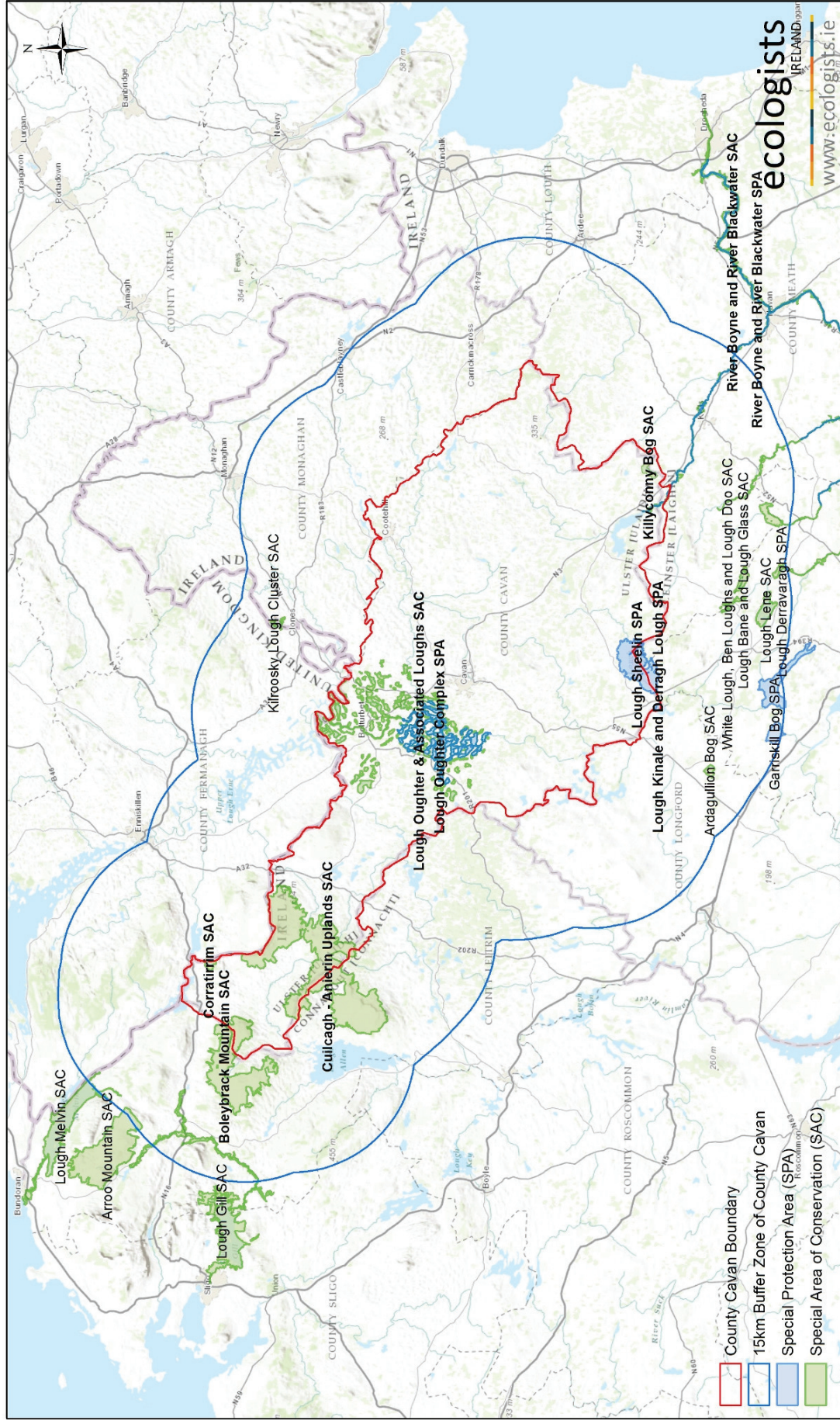
TVP3 Integrate environmental considerations into local planning by addressing both the causes and effects of climate change such as flood risk, maximising bio- diversity, and providing green infrastructure.

TVP4 Ensure that adequate provision is made for schools and other social and community infrastructure.

TVP5 Facilitate smarter travel patterns thorough more compact, less sprawling and better structured urban areas and more sustainable, healthier travel habits such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

TVP6 Focus on the delivery of high quality urban design that improves people’s quality of life and ensures access for all.

Figure 1. Natura 2000 Network included in the Screening for Appropriate Assessment.



3.0 NATURA 2000 SITES

3.1 Overview of Natura 2000 Sites in County Cavan.

The natural environment both within and surrounding County Cavan is rich in biodiversity, the extensive drumlins so prevalent across the country are integrated into a largely agricultural landscape, with inter-drumlin areas forming a diverse network of lakes, rivers, wetlands and peatlands. As shown in Figure 1, there are currently nine Natura 2000 sites designated for conservation interest within a European context. Five Special Areas of Conservation are designated within the County, including two sites that overlay the boundary, covering a total land area of c.16,600ha. Four Special Protection areas have been designated within the County, two of which overlay the boundary with a total land cover of c.4110.2ha.

3.2 Special Areas of Conservation in County Cavan.

The five SACs located within Cavan represent a diverse range of annexed habitats. The inter-drumlin network of wetlands and upland peatlands typical of the Cavan landscape comprise the core interest across the Natura 2000 network in the region. A broad guild of environmental conditions and associated habitats occur within County Cavan; from the botanically rich limestone pavement at Corratirrim, to the sparse arctic-alpine vegetation on siliceous rocky outcrops in the Cuilcagh-Anierin Uplands. The River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC is the only site designated for annexed species within the County, notably for nationally important populations of River Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon, and European Otter. Figure 2. Shows the location of all SACs in the County. Table 2 summarises the designated features of each site and the relevant policies and objectives in the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 that may have potential to exacerbate the existing pressures and threats to site integrity.

Figure 2. Special Areas of Conservation in County Cavan.

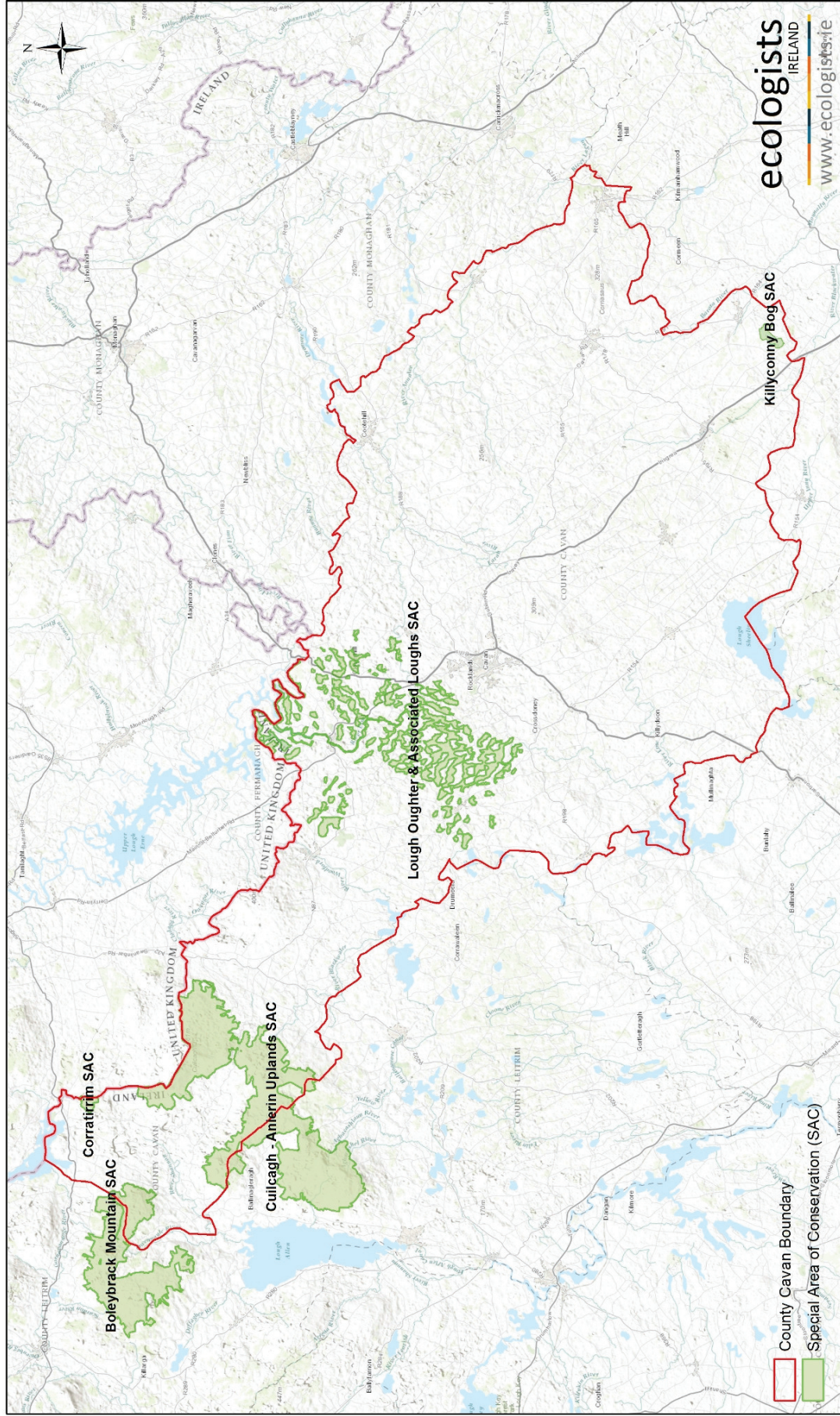


Table 2. Qualifying Features of Special Areas of Conservation in County Cavan.

Sources: NPWS (2013) *The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2; NPWS (2013) The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Species Assessments Volume 3.*

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>Boleybrack Mountain Special Area of Conservation [002032] Site Area: 4268.76ha Boleybrack Mountain is an extensive upland plateau situated to the north of Lough Allen. It is dominated by blanket bog and wet heath, with small oligotrophic lakes scattered throughout.</p>	<p>Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Dystrophic systems most often associated with Blanket bogs [7130] and may include isolated seasonal pools, random collections of irregularly-shaped more-or-less permanent waters, and ordered linear or concentric arrays of pools and small lochs. These water bodies are very acidic and poor in plant nutrients. Most examples are small (less than 5 ha in extent), shallow, and contain a limited range of flora and fauna.</p>	<p>This habitat represents approximately 1% of the land cover within the SAC (c.42ha). Natural dystrophic lakes occur in 87% of all suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 10 SACs are designated for this habitat type. Boleybrack Mountain SAC represents 1.17% of the total SAC contribution in the Member State.</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology (drainage); Forestry; Peat extraction; Renewable wind-energy development; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; Recreation; and, illegal dumping. Policies & Objectives: CSP12 CSP15 EDP2 EDO14 EDP11 EDO27 EDO29 PI053</p>
<p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010] Wet heath usually occurs on acidic, nutrient-poor substrates, such as shallow peats or sandy soils with impeded drainage. The vegetation is typically dominated by mixtures of cross-leaved heath <i>Erica tetralix</i>, heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, grasses, sedges and <i>Sphagnum</i> bog-mosses</p> <p>European dry heaths [4030] Occur in a variety of forms in Ireland, mostly on free-draining, nutrient poor acidic soils associated with upland or lowland slopes.</p>	<p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010] Wet heath usually occurs on acidic, nutrient-poor substrates, such as shallow peats or sandy soils with impeded drainage. The vegetation is typically dominated by mixtures of cross-leaved heath <i>Erica tetralix</i>, heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, grasses, sedges and <i>Sphagnum</i> bog-mosses</p>	<p>This habitat represents 30% of the land cover within the SAC (c.1280ha). Wet heath occurs in 89% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 40 SACs are designated for this habitat type. Boleybrack Mountain SAC represents 3.15% of the total SAC contribution for the Member State.</p> <p>This habitat represents 22% of the land cover within the SAC (c.939ha). Dry Heaths occur in 81% of all suitable 10km squares in Ireland. Boleybrack Mountain represents c.2.4% of the total SAC contribution within the Member State.</p>	

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
	<p>Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] Molinion meadows are found mainly on moist, moderately base-rich, peats and peaty gley soils, often with fluctuating water tables. They usually occur as components of wet pastures or fens, and often form mosaics with dry grassland, heath, mire and scrub communities.</p>	<p>This habitat represents 1% of the land cover within the SAC (c.42ha). <i>Molinia meadows</i> occur within 96% of all suitable 10km squares in Ireland. Boleybrack Mountain represents c.1.3% of the total SAC contribution within the Member State.</p>	<p>As above (previous page)</p>
	<p>Blanket bogs (*if active only) [7130] These extensive peatlands have formed in areas where there is a climate of high rainfall and a low level of evapotranspiration, allowing peat to develop not only in wet hollows but over large expanses of undulating ground. *Active' is defined as supporting a significant area of vegetation that is normally peat-forming. Typical species include the important peat-forming species, such as bog-mosses <i>Sphagnum</i> spp. and cotton grasses <i>Eriophorum</i> spp., or purple moor-grass <i>Molinia caerulea</i> in certain circumstances, together with heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> and other ericaceous species.</p>	<p>This habitat represents 30% of the land cover within the SAC (c.1280ha). Blanket Bogs occurs in 83% of all suitable 10km squares in Ireland. Boleybrack Mountain represents c.0.8% of the total SAC contribution for this habitat in the Member State.</p>	
<p>Killyconny Bog candidate Special Area of Conservation [000006] Site Area: 191.2ha There are few raised bogs in the region and Killyconny Bog is one of the best developed.</p>	<p>Active raised bogs [7110] Peat-forming ecosystems that have developed during thousands of years of peat accumulation, to such an extent that the depth of peat isolates them from the influence of groundwater. Within the raised bog ecosystem the bog surface typically displays a distinctive micro-topography, with patterns of hummocks and hollows rich in <i>Sphagnum</i> and other peat-forming species.</p>	<p>The habitat type forms 20% of the land cover within the SAC (c.38.2ha). This habitat is largely confined to the lowland central and mid-west of the country and is extremely rare in Ireland with few pristine examples remaining. This habitat has undergone an estimated decrease in land cover of more than</p>	<p>Peat extraction; Changes in local hydrology (drainage); Illegal burning; Forestry; Renewable wind-energy development; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; and, illegal dumping.</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>Killyconny Bog consists of two small basins which have coalesced over a low drumlin ridge.</p>	<p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Degraded raised bogs occur where there has been widespread disruption, usually by man, to the structure and function of the peat body. This can involve changes to the hydrology, vegetation, and physical structure of the bog, leading to desiccation, oxidation and loss of species or changes in the balance of the species composition. In contrast to 7110 Active raised bogs, peat is not currently forming in degraded bog, however which are 'capable of natural regeneration', i.e. "where the hydrology can be repaired and where, with appropriate rehabilitation management, there is a reasonable expectation of re-establishing vegetation with peat-forming capability within 30 years".</p>	<p>35% in the last decade and respectively only occurs in 56% of suitable concentrated 10km squares in Ireland. Killyconny Bog represents c.8.3% of the SAC contribution for this habitat in the Member State.</p>	<p>Policies & Objectives: CSP12 CSP15 EDP2 EDP11 EDO27 EDO29</p>
<p>Corratirrim Special Area of Conservation [000979] Site Area: 117.03ha In the north-west of Co. Cavan, Carboniferous limestone underlies the shales and grits that form the Cullcagh range.</p>	<p>Limestone pavements [8240] The landscape, flora and associated fauna have evolved in response to millennia of farming, principally grazing. This habitat supports a diverse flora and forms mosaics of orchid-rich grassland, limestone heath and hazel scrub. Limestone pavement is found mainly in counties Clare, Galway and Mayo, most famously in the Burren and the Aran Islands.</p>	<p>This habitat forms c.23% of the land cover within the SAC (23.4ha). Limestone pavements occur in 81% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 23 SACs are designated for this habitat type. Corratirrim represents c.0.1% of the total SAC contribution for this habitat in the Member State.</p>	<p>Agricultural improvement / reclamation, agricultural abandonment, grazing regimes, direct loss of habitat through quarrying.</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands Special Area of Conservation [000584] Site Area: 9739.7ha</p> <p>This site has one of the largest expanses of intact, undisturbed mountain blanket bog in Ireland.</p>	<p>Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or of the Isoetes-Nanojuncetea [3130] The clear soft water which characterises this habitat type contains low to moderate levels of plant nutrients and supports a characteristic assemblage of plant species. The vegetation community is characterised by amphibious short perennial vegetation, with shoreweed <i>Littorella uniflora</i> being considered as the defining component.</p> <p>Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Dystrophic systems most often occur on 7130 Blanket bogs and may include isolated seasonal pools, random collections of irregularly-shaped more-or-less permanent waters, and ordered linear or concentric arrays of pools and small lochs. These water bodies are very acidic and poor in plant nutrients. Their water has a high humic acid content and is usually stained dark brown through exposure to peat. Most examples are small (less than 5 ha in extent), shallow, and contain a limited range of flora and fauna.</p>	<p>This habitat represents c.1% of the land cover with the SAC (97.4ha). Oligotrophic to Mesotrophic lakes occur in 83% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. There are 10 SACs designated for this habitat type. Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands represents c.2.4% of the SAC contribution for this habitat within the Member State.</p> <p>This habitat represents approximately 1% of the land cover within the SAC (c.97ha). Natural dystrophic lakes occur in 87% of all suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 10 SACs are designated for this habitat type. Cuilcagh - Anierin Uplands SAC represents c.2.7% of the total SAC contribution in the Member State.</p>	<p>Policies & Objectives: CSP12 EDP2 ED014 EDP11</p> <p>Changes in local hydrology; Peat extraction; Overgrazing; Forestry; burning; Illegal dumping. Changes in local hydrology; Renewable wind-energy development; and, Recreation.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives: CSP12 CSP15 EDP2 ED014 EDP11 ED027 ED029 PI053</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]	This habitat represents approximately 15% of the land cover within the SAC (c.1461ha), equivalent to 3.6% of the total SAC contribution in the Member State.	See above (previous page).
	European dry heaths [4030]	This habitat represents approximately 5% of the land cover within the SAC (c.487ha), equivalent to 1.25% of the total SAC contribution in the Member State.	
	Species rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas [6230] Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands tend to develop where there is flushing through base-rich strata on siliceous bedrock. These may include moderately base-rich metamorphic and igneous rocks. The soils have an acidic pH (<7.0 and mainly <6.0) and are derived from bedrocks with at least some silica. Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands are important because they support a wide range of species, including Atlantic, sub-Atlantic and arctic-alpine plants and invertebrates.	This habitat represents approximately 1% of the land cover within the SAC (c.97.4ha). This habitat occurs in 84% of all suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 10 SACs are designated for this habitat type. Cuilcagh – Anierin represents 13.3% of the total SAC contribution for this habitat type in the Member State.	
	Blanket bogs (*if active only) [7130]	This habitat represents approximately 58% of the land cover within the SAC (c.5649ha), equivalent to c.3.6% of the total SAC contribution within the Member State.	
	Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] Chasmophytic vegetation consists of plant communities that colonise the cracks and fissures of rock faces. The type of plant community that develops is largely determined by the base-status	This habitat represents approximately 1% of the land cover within the SAC (97.4ha) and occurs in 100% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 16 SACs are designated for this habitat	

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs [000007] Site Area: 4757.9ha Lough Oughter and its associated loughs occupy much of the lowland drumlin belt in north and central Cavan between Upper Lough Erne, Killashandra and Cavan town consisting of some 90 inter-drumlin lakes and 14 basins in the course of the Erne River.</p>	<p>of the rock face. Siliceous communities develop on acid rocks whereas calcareous sub-types develop on lime-rich rocks such as limestone and calcareous schists. Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation [3150] Natural eutrophic lakes have nutrient levels that are higher than those of oligotrophic, dystrophic or mesotrophic lakes, resulting in higher natural productivity, and are typically species-rich. However, many such lakes have been damaged by over-enrichment with nutrients, resulting in hypertrophic conditions and a reduction in species-richness.</p>	<p>type. Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands represent c.2.81% of the total SAC contribution within the Member State. This habitat represents approximately 67% of the land cover within the SAC (3187.8ha). This habitat occurs in 87% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 11 SACs are designated for this habitat type. Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs represent 24% of the total SAC contribution within the Member State.</p>	<p>Water quality and pollution (waste water treatment / effluent); Arterial drainage; Water abstraction (lowering of the regional water table); Loss of fringe vegetation to development; Illegal dumping; and, Introduction of non-native invasive species. Policies & Objectives: The Settlement Framework identified a requirement for 15 hectares of land suitable for residential development within the towns of Ballyconnell and Belturbet. Both towns are within close proximity to this SAC. CSPI2 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>River Boyne & River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation [002299] Site Area: 2320.8ha</p>	<p>Alkaline Fens [7230] Alkaline fens consist of a complex assemblage of vegetation type's characteristic of sites where there is tufa and/or peat formation with a high water table and a calcareous base-rich water supply.</p>	<p>The extent and location of Alkaline Fen within the SAC is not detailed in the site synopsis. Alkaline Fen occurs in 73.9% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 39 SACs are designated for this habitat type. Within the SAC this habitat represents only c.1% of the land cover (23.2ha), equivalent to 0.79% of the entire SAC contribution within the Member State.</p>	<p>EDP11 P1039 SCP13 SCO29</p> <p>Dredging; Forestry; Draining for agriculture; infilling; pollution from fertilisers and eutrophication.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives: CSP12 EDP2</p>
	<p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</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>) comprises woods dominated by alder <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and willow <i>Salix</i> spp. on flood plains in a range of situations from islands in river channels to low-lying wetlands alongside the channels. The habitat typically occurs on moderately base-rich, eutrophic soils subject to periodic inundation.</p>	<p>The extent of alluvial forests within the Boyne catchment is localised and restricted to small areas. The largest area of this habitat occurs on a chain of three small riparian islands 2.5km west of Drogheda. Alluvial Forest occurs in 61% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 28 SACs are designated for this habitat type. Within the SAC, however, this habitat represents only c.1% of land cover (23.2ha), equivalent to c.0.71% of the entire SAC contribution within the Member State.</p>	<p>EDO1 EDO14 EDP11 P1039</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
	<p>River Lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> [1099] The river lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> is found in coastal waters, estuaries and accessible rivers. The species is normally anadromous (i.e. spawning in freshwater but completing part of its life cycle in the sea), and pollution or artificial obstacles such as weirs or dams impede migration.</p>	<p>River Lamprey are widespread throughout Ireland and considered to be in favourable conservation status nationally, occupying 100% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 9 SACs are designated for River Lamprey. The River Boyne & River Blackwater represents 1.12% of the total SAC contribution for this species.</p>	<p>See above (previous page)</p>
	<p>Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> [1106] The Atlantic salmon is an anadromous species (i.e. adults migrate from the sea to breed in freshwater). Spawning takes place in shallow excavations called redds, found in shallow gravelly areas in clean rivers and streams where the water flows swiftly. The young that emerge spread out into other parts of the river. After a period of 1-6 years the young salmon migrate downstream to the sea as 'smolts'. Salmon have a homing instinct that draws them back to spawn in the river of their birth after 1-3 years in the sea.</p>	<p>The River Boyne system is an important spawning catchment for Atlantic Salmon, with excellent salmon spawning throughout the main tributaries and headwaters, Atlantic Salmon occur in 148 Irish Rivers. 26 SACs are designated for this species. The River Boyne & River Blackwater represents 0.52% of the total SAC contribution in the Member State.</p>	
	<p>European Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> [1355] The otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> is a semi-aquatic mammal, which occurs in a wide range of ecological conditions, including inland freshwater and coastal areas. Inland populations utilise a range of running and standing freshwaters. These must have an abundant supply of food (normally associated with high water quality), together with suitable habitat, such as vegetated river banks, islands, reedbeds and woodland, which are used for foraging, breeding and resting.</p>	<p>Occur throughout the Boyne river system. Nationally the European Otter occupies 53.8% of suitable 10km squares in Ireland. 47 SACs are designated for this species.</p>	

3.3 Special Protection Areas in County Cavan.

Many species of migratory waterbirds depend on interconnected networks of wetlands. The extensive inter-drumlin networks of wetlands of Cavan are an important resource for migrating and wintering waterbirds and three of the four Special Protection Areas in the County are designated for these interest features. Wetlands are also a great asset to the local community and economy, benefitting people by providing clean water and opportunities for fishing, agriculture, recreation and tourism within the County. Despite their importance, wetlands are amongst the world's most vulnerable ecosystems – being threatened by conversion for agriculture and development, drought, drainage and pollution. Consequently, an alarming 42% of the migratory waterbird populations in Europe are in decline.

The remaining site is the River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA and is designated for Kingfisher. Figure 3 shows all SPAs in County Cavan. Table 3 summarise the qualifying features of each site and the potential threats and existing pressures from the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020.

Figure 3. Special Protection Areas in County Cavan.

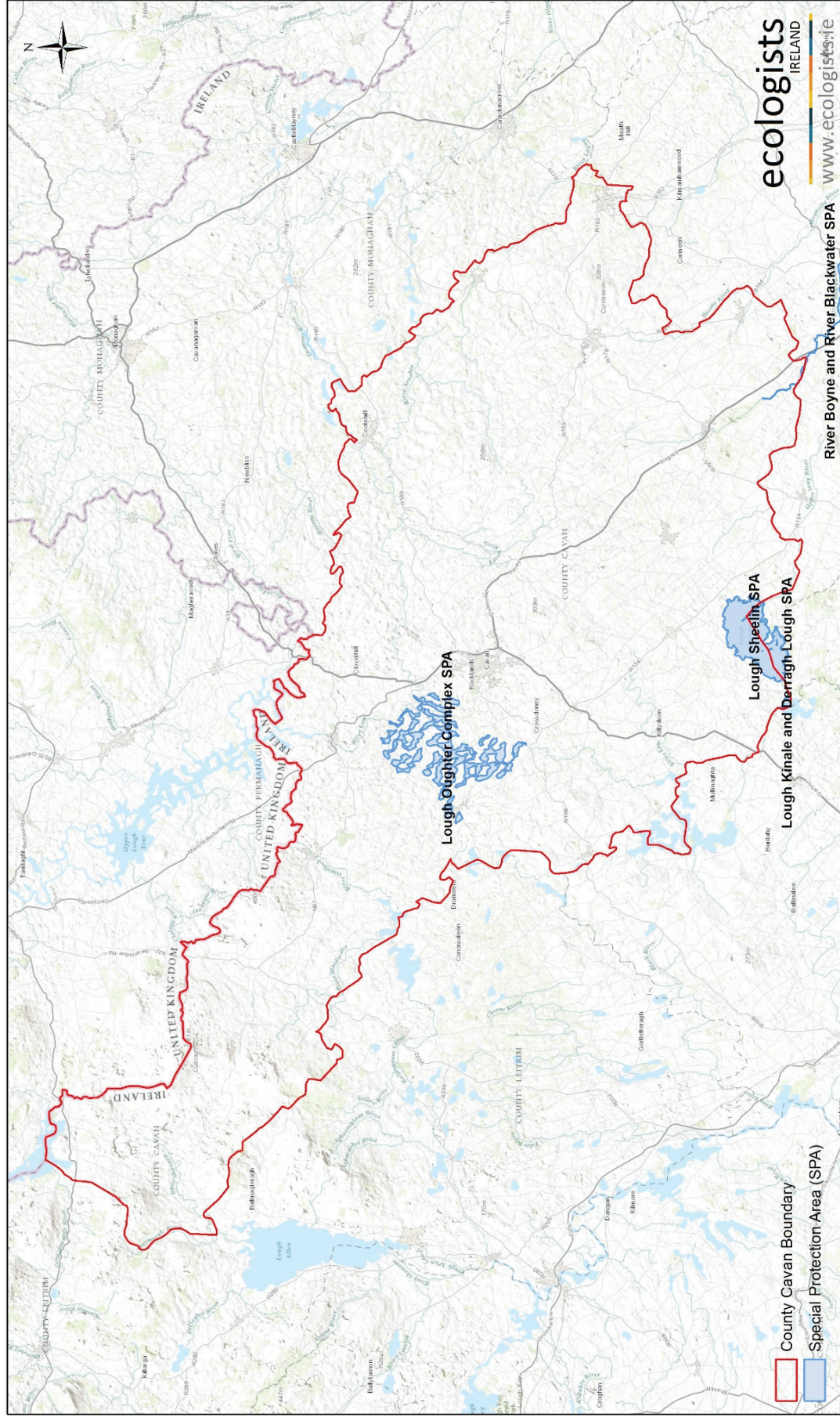


Table 3. Qualifying Features of Special Protection Areas in County Cavan.

Sources: Colhoun & Cummins (2013) *Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 2014–2019*; Selection threshold figures from Stroud et al., (2001) *The UK SPA Network: its scope and content*. JNCC.

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
<p><i>Lough Oughter Complex Special Protection Area [004049]</i></p> <p>Site Area: 1466.5ha</p> <p>The Lough Oughter Complex SPA is of ornithological importance for its wintering waterbird populations. Of particular note is the internationally important population of Whooper Swan that is based in the area. The site also supports nationally important populations of a further two wintering species and, notably, holds the highest breeding concentrations of Great Crested Grebe in the country.</p>	<p>Great Crested Grebe [A005] is a widespread breeder across much of Europe, which accounts for less than half of its global breeding range. Its European breeding population is large (>300,000 pairs). The species breeds on fresh or brackish waters with abundant emergent and submerged vegetation showing a preference for non-acidic eutrophic waterbodies with flat or sloping banks and muddy or sandy substrates usually 0.5-5 m deep and with large areas of open water. Suitable habitats include small pools or lakes, backwaters of slow-flowing rivers and artificial waterbodies.</p> <p>Whooper Swan [A038] Four discrete populations of the Whooper Swan have been identified in western Eurasia. Icelandic breeding stock winters in Iceland, Britain and Ireland comprising of c.16,000 birds.</p>	<p>Ireland supports in excess of 1,000 breeding pairs. Lough Oughter is at the centre of the Irish breeding range of Great Crested Grebe and the site supports in excess of 5% of the estimated national breeding total of this species. Ireland supports approximately 3,500 wintering Great Crested Grebe. It is estimated that c.40% occur in SPAs. Lough Oughter Complex support an average peak count of 85 individuals each year, equivalent to 2.4% of the wintering population in the Member State, and c.6 % of the SPA contribution for this species respectively.</p> <p>Ireland supports approximately 14,530 wintering Whooper Swan. Lough Oughter supports 318 roosting Whooper Swan (five year mean peak 1995 – 2000), equivalent to 2% of the wintering population. The Icelandic population is believed to be stable or declining slightly.</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology; nutrient enrichment from agricultural run-off and waste-water; loss of fringe vegetation or damage to the vegetation sequence as a result of development (e.g., private jetties). Disturbance of roosting birds from recreation.</p> <p>Lough Oughter is on the list of Wildfowl Sanctuaries and is an exclusion zone from Open Season Orders; however there is anecdotal evidence that illegal hunting of Whooper within the complex does occur.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives:</p> <p>CSP12</p> <p>EDP2</p> <p>EDO1</p> <p>EDO14</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
	<p>Wigeon [A050] In winter, Wigeon are highly gregarious, and occur in large, mobile flocks. Wigeon is largely a coastal species, feeding on mud-flats, coastal flooded grassland and saltmarsh pastures, however are also widespread on inland flooded grassland.</p>	<p>Ireland supports approximately 62,980 wintering Wigeon. Lough Oughter Complex supports 903 (five year mean peak 1995 – 2000) Wigeon, equivalent to 1.5% of the wintering population in Ireland.</p>	<p>EDPI1 PI039 SCO29 PI053</p>
	<p>Wetland & Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the wetlands and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds.</p>	
<p>Lough Sheelin Special Protection Area [004065] Site Area: 1901.7ha Lough Sheelin is a medium- to large-sized lake, with a maximum length of 7 km. The lake lies near the top of the catchment of the Inny River, a main tributary of the River Shannon.</p>	<p>Great Crested Grebe [A005] As detailed above.</p> <p>Pochard [A059] During the winter Pochard frequent similar habitats to those it breeds in, including large lakes slow-flowing rivers, reservoirs, marshes and flooded gravel pits. Pochard prefer waterbodies less than 3 m deep, diving to the bottom to forage. They feed on seeds, roots, grasses, sedges and aquatic plants, as well as invertebrates, amphibians and small fish.</p>	<p>Ireland supports approximately 3,500 wintering Great Crested Grebe. Approximately 140 Great crested grebe winter at Lough Sheelin, equivalent to 4% of the wintering population.</p> <p>Ireland supports approximately 16,030 wintering Pochard. 546 Pochard (average 5 year peak 1995 – 2000) winter at Lough Sheelin, equivalent to 3.4% of the wintering population.</p>	<p>Pochard, Tufted Duck and Goldeneye are on the Open Season Order of listed birds that may be hunted between the period beginning 1 September in each year and ending on 31 January in the year immediately following that year.</p> <p>Lough Sheelin is not a listed Wildfowl Sanctuary (exclusion zone); therefore hunting is a threat to the maintenance of the population.</p> <p>Trophic status of the lake has varied greatly since the 1970s due to pollution from mainly agricultural</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
	<p>Tufted Duck [A061] In winter, Tufted Ducks are highly gregarious, preferring large, freshwater lakes, ponds and reservoirs, though they are also found in estuaries, along sheltered seacoasts and on brackish inland seas in winter. They feed by diving, with 80% of the diet consisting of animal material, but also feed on seeds and green parts of aquatic plants, aquatic insects and crustaceans. Its European wintering population is large (>1,200,000 individuals)</p>	<p>Ireland supports approximately 40,000 wintering Tufted Duck each winter. Lough Sheelin supports an average peak number of 762 individuals, equivalent to 1.9% of the wintering population.</p>	<p>sources. It was recently (1998-2000) classified as a highly eutrophic system. Threats therefore centre heavily on deterioration in water quality. Other threats are loss of fringe vegetation, changes in hydrology due to drainage; and, recreational disturbance.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives: CSP12 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14 EDP11 PI039 SCO29 PI053</p>
	<p>Goldeneye [A067] is a widespread breeder in northern and central Europe, which holds less than half of its global population. Its European wintering population is large (>310,000 individuals).</p>	<p>In Ireland the species winters mainly on large rivers, loughs, turloughs and reservoirs. The species is restricted to water close to the shore and less than 10 m deep (showing a preference for waters 4 m deep). Ireland supports approximately 6,040 individual Goldeneye each winter. Lough Sheelin supports an average peak number of 225 individuals, equivalent to 3.7% of the wintering population.</p> <p>As detailed above.</p>	
	<p>Wetland & Waterbirds [A999]</p>		

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
<p><i>Lough Kinale Special Protection Area [004061]</i> Site Area: 282.3ha <i>Lough Kinale is a relatively small lake that is situated immediately downstream of Lough Sheelin.</i></p>	<p>Pochard [A059] As detailed above.</p>	<p>Ireland supports approximately 16,030, wintering Pochard. Lough Kinale supports a peak average number of 951 individuals, equivalent to 5.9% of the wintering population.</p>	<p>As for Lough Sheelin, Pochard, and Tufted Duck are on the Open Season Order of listed birds that may be hunted between the period</p>
<p><i>Lough Kinale is a relatively small lake that is situated immediately downstream of Lough Sheelin.</i></p>	<p>Tufted Duck [A061] As detailed above.</p>	<p>Ireland supports approximately 40,000 wintering Tufted Duck each winter. Lough Kinale supports a peak average number of 449 individuals, equivalent to 1.1% of the wintering population.</p>	<p>beginning 1 September in each year and ending on 31 January in the year immediately following that year.</p>
<p><i>Lough Kinale has two main basins, almost separated by swamp formations.</i></p>	<p>Wetland & Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>As detailed above.</p>	<p>Lough Kinale is not a listed Wildfowl Sanctuary (exclusion zone); therefore hunting is a threat to the maintenance of the population. The trophic status of Lough Kinale has varied greatly since the 1970s due to pollution and was also recently (1998-2000) classified as a highly eutrophic system. Threats are continued nutrient enrichment and eutrophication; the loss of fringe vegetation due to agricultural reclamation and development; changes in hydrology due to drainage; and, recreational disturbance.</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Extent and Character	Threats to Site Integrity
<p><i>Lough Kinale Special Protection Area [004061]</i> Site Area: 282.3ha</p>			<p>Policies & Objectives: CSPI2 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14 EDP1 PI039 SCO29 PI053</p>
<p><i>River Boyne & River Blackwater Special Protection Area [004232]</i> Site Area: 460.3ha</p>	<p>Kingfisher Alcedo atthis [breeding] [A229] Kingfishers are relatively widespread throughout Ireland with a more easterly bias in their distribution, however are considered to be a bird of conservation concern (Amber listed).</p>	<p>The survey undertaken in 2010 by Cummins et al. 2010 estimated 15 probable and 4 possible breeding pairs within the River Boyne, representing some of the highest numbers per kilometre recorded during the survey (0.09 – 0.12 territories per km). Estimates of national population were not provided in Cummins et al. 2010 due to the site specific focus of the study. Gibbons et al. 1993 present estimates of between 1,300 – 2,100 breeding pairs in Ireland. The SPA therefore represents between c.0.9 and 1.5% of the national population.</p>	<p>Policies & Objectives: CSPI2 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14 PI053</p> <p>Destruction and loss of riparian banks (nest sites); human disturbance at nest sites during the breeding season; predation from domestic cats, rats and mink; and, river pollution</p>

3.4 Overview of Natura Sites within 15km of County Cavan

All Natura 2000 sites entirely or partially within a 15km buffer from the county boundary have been included in this assessment in accordance with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government guidance (DoEHLG, 2010). This distance was deemed to be sufficient to cover all likely significant effects which may arise from the implementation of the County Development Plan on Natura 2000 sites. ArcView software using Ordnance Survey maps and NPWS shapefiles were used to identify the boundaries of Natura 2000 Sites within 15km of the Cavan County border. Cavan borders six counties; Leitrim to the west, Fermanagh and Monaghan to the north, Meath to the south-east, Longford to the south-west and Westmeath to the south.

3.5 Special Areas of Conservation within 15km of County Cavan

Eight SACs occur within 15km of the Cavan County boundary. Figure 4 shows the location of these sites in relation to County Cavan. Table 4 summarises the designated features of these sites and the potential threat and impacts from policies and objectives in the Draft Cavan County Development Plan.

Figure 4. Special Areas of Conservation within 15km of County Cavan.

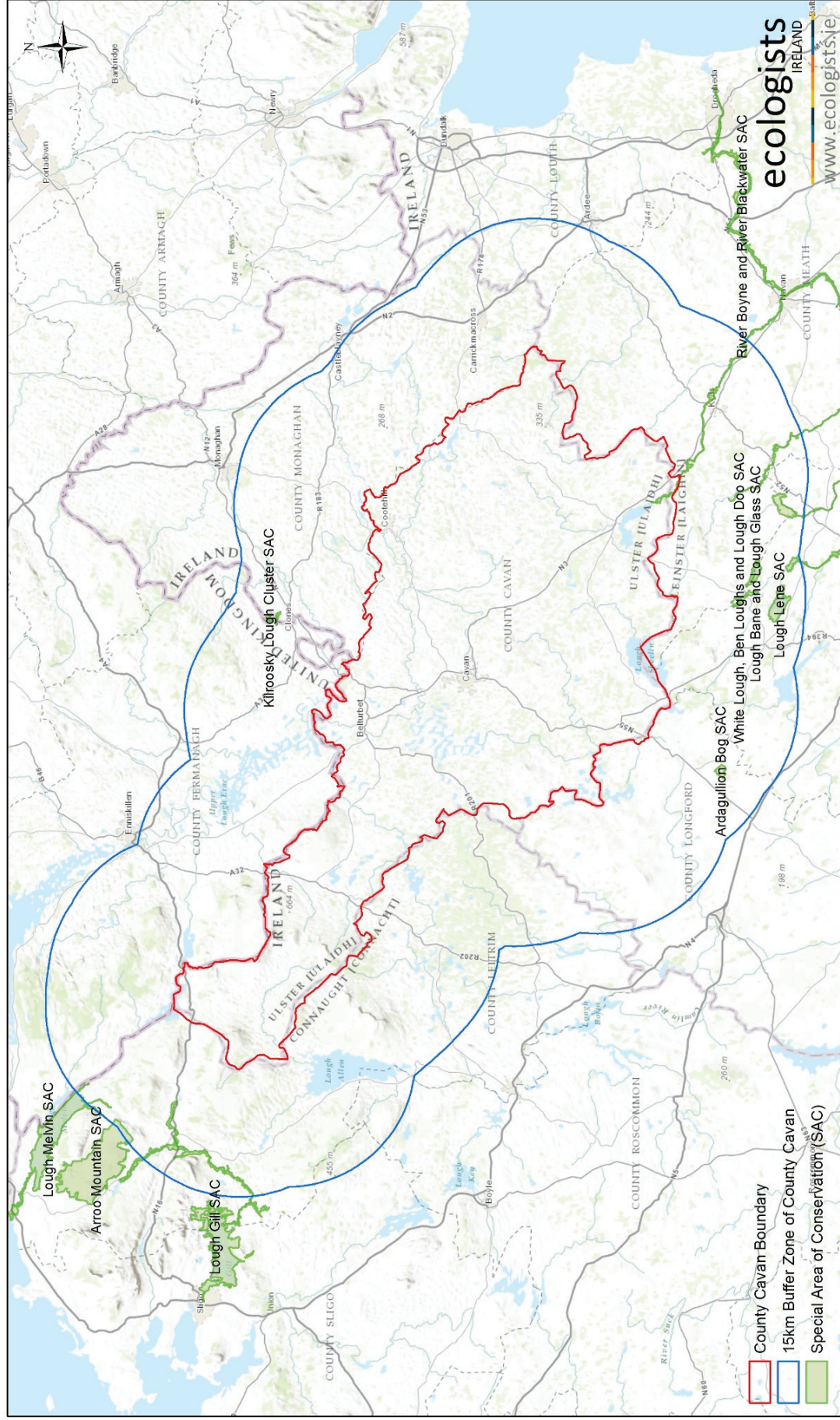


Table 4. Qualifying Features of Special Areas of Conservation within 15km of County Cavan.

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>Lough Melvin Special Area of Conservation [000428] Site Area: 2269.8ha</p>	<p>Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and <i>Isoetes-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> [1106] European Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> [1355]</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology; Forestry (sedimentation); Peat extraction; Renewable wind-energy development; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; and, illegal dumping.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives: There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance of any towns and villages in Cavan from the Natura 2000 site.</p>
<p>Aroo Mountain Special Area of Conservation [001403] Site Area: 3967.9ha</p>	<p>Blanket Bog (*active only) [7130] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] Petrifying spring with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] Calcareous and calcschist screes of the montane to alpine levels [8120]</p>	<p>Forestry; Peat extraction; Illegal burning; Renewable wind-energy development; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; recreational disturbance (e.g. rock climbing).</p> <p>Policies & Objectives: There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance of any towns and villages in Cavan from the Natura 2000 site.</p>
<p>Lough Gill Special Area of Conservation [001976] Site Area: 3298.5ha</p>	<p>Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i>-type vegetation [3150] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus-glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> [91E0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> [91A0] Sea Lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> [1095]</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology and drainage; Forestry (sedimentation); Loss of fringe vegetation to development and recreational pressure; illegal removal of trees for timber;</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Threats to Site Integrity
	<p>Brook Lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i> [1096] / River Lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> [1099]</p> <p>Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> [1106]</p> <p>European Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> [1355]</p> <p>White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> [1092] lives in a diverse variety of clean aquatic habitats but especially favours hard-water streams and rivers.</p>	<p>Policies & Objectives:</p> <p>There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance of any towns and villages in Cavan from the Natura 2000 site.</p>
<p>Ardaguillion Bog Candidate Special Area of Conservation [002341]</p> <p>Site Area: 117.3ha</p> <p>Ardaguillion Bog is located 5 km north-east of Edgeworthstown, mainly in the townlands of Cloonshannagh (Coolamber Manor Demesne) and Ardaguillon in Co. Longford. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog.</p>	<p>Active raised bogs [7110].</p> <p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120].</p> <p>Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150].</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology; Forestry; Peat extraction;</p> <p>Renewable wind-energy development; Illegal burning; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; and, illegal dumping.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives:</p> <p>There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance of any towns and villages in Cavan from the Natura 2000 site.</p>
<p>Garriskil Bog Candidate Special Area of Conservation [000697]</p> <p>Site Area: 324.8ha.</p> <p>This raised bog site lies 3 km west of Lough Derravaragh and 3 km east of Rathowen. It is bounded to the southeast and southwest by the rivers Inny and Riffey.</p>	<p>Active raised bogs [7110].</p> <p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120].</p> <p>Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150].</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology; Forestry; Peat extraction;</p> <p>Renewable wind-energy development; Illegal burning; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; and, illegal dumping.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives:</p> <p>There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance of any towns and villages in Cavan from the Natura 2000 site.</p>

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>Lough Lene Candidate Special Area of Conservation [002121] Site Area: 489.9ha This lake is situated 4km north east of Castlepollard in Co. Westmeath. It is a deep (20m max.), clear hard-water lake with marl deposition.</p>	<p>Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp [3140]. White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> [1092].</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology; Water abstraction; Nutrient enrichment from agricultural run-off and development. Loss and fragmentation of fringe vegetation from development and resultant shifts in population density, especially for young life-stages of White-clawed crayfish; and, the spread of invasive American crayfish and associated diseases.</p>
<p>White Lough, Ben Loughs & Lough Doo Candidate Special Area of Conservation [001810] Site Area: 116.3ha. This site is comprised of four hard water lakes in a small, poorly-drained valley, 4 km east of Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath.</p>	<p>Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp [3140]. White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> [1092].</p>	<p>Policies & Objectives: There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance of any towns and villages in Cavan from the Natura 2000 site.</p>
<p>Lough Bane & Lough Glass Candidate Special Area of Conservation [002120] Site Area: 203.5ha. This site is located on the Meath/Westmeath border, about 10 km south of Oldcastle. It comprises three lakes situated in a shallow valley. Lough Bane is by far the largest of the group, with the much smaller Lough Glass occurring immediately to the east and Lough Glass North to the north-west. The lakes occur at the headwaters of the River Deel, with the main outflow at the south-east end of Lough Bane.</p>	<p>Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp [3140]. White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> [1092].</p>	

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>Kilroosky Lough Cluster Special Area of Conservation [001786] Site Area: 57.6ha. Kilroosky Lough Cluster straddles the border with Northern Ireland, and is located approximately 2 km north-west of Clones, Co. Monaghan. The site consists of three separate areas which contain several calcium-rich, clean water (oligo-mesotrophic) lakes and their marginal fen vegetation.</p>	<p>Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210]. Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp [3140]. Alkaline Fens [7230]. White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> [1092].</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology; Water abstraction; Nutrient enrichment from agricultural run-off and development. Loss and fragmentation of fringe vegetation from development and resultant shifts in population density, especially for young life stages of White-clawed crayfish; and, the spread of invasive American crayfish and associated diseases.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives: There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance of any towns and villages in Cavan from the Natura 2000 site.</p>

3.6 Special Protection Areas within 15km of County Cavan

Two Special Protection Areas are designated within 15km of the Cavan county boundary. Both of these sites are located to the south of County Cavan in County Westmeath. Garriskil Bog SPA (14.1km south of the boundary) is designated for wintering Greenland white-fronted Goose, while Lough Derravaragh SPA (12.2km south of the boundary) is designated for its importance to wintering Waterbirds. Figure 5 shows the location of these SPAs in relation to Cavan County boundary. Table 5 summarises the potential threats and impacts on these sites from policies and objectives within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan.

Figure 5. Special Protection Areas within 15km of County Cavan

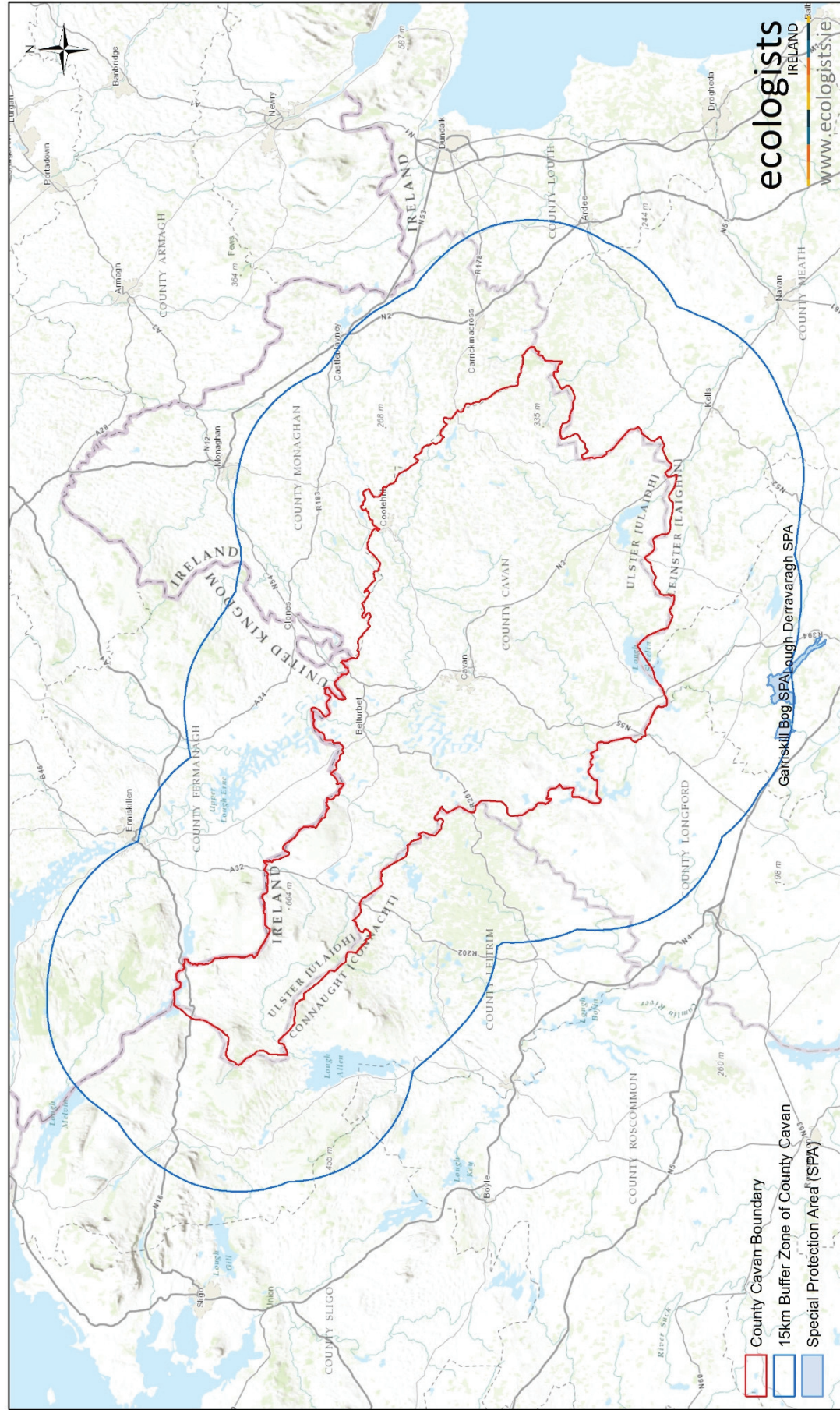


Table 5. Qualifying Features of Special Protection Areas within 15km of County Cavan.

NATURA 2000 Site	Qualifying Features	Threats to Site Integrity
<p>Garriskil Bog Candidate Special Protection Area [004102] Site Area: 324.25ha Site lies 3 km west of Lough Derravaragh in Co. Westmeath. It is bounded to the southeast and southwest by the rivers Inny and Riffey.</p>	<p>Greenland White-fronted Goose [A395]</p>	<p>Forestry; Changes in local hydrology; Peat extraction; Renewable wind-energy development; Illegal burning; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; and, illegal dumping.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives: There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance from the Natura 2000 site (14.1km).</p>
<p>Lough Derravaragh Special Protection Area [004043] Site Area: 1120.4ha Lough Derravaragh is located approximately 12 km north of Mullingar town. It is a medium- to large-sized lake of relatively shallow water (maximum depth 23 m). The lake extends along a south-east/north-west axis for approximately 8 km. The Inny River, a tributary of the River Shannon, is the main inflowing and outflowing river.</p>	<p>Whooper Swan [A038] Pochard [A059] Tufted Duck [A061] Coot [A125] Coots generally favour large, still or slow-moving eutrophic or mesotrophic waterbodies, such as lakes, ponds, gravel pits, canals, slow-moving rivers, open marshes, and lagoons. Wetland & Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>Changes in local hydrology; nutrient enrichment from agricultural run-off and waste-water; loss of fringe vegetation or damage to the vegetation sequence as a result of development (e.g., private jetties). Disturbance of roosting birds from recreation.</p> <p>Policies & Objectives: There are no current policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan that are considered to be potential threats to site integrity. This is due to the distance from the Natura 2000 site (12.2km).</p>

3.7 Conservation Objectives

To maintain the annexed habitats and species for which the Natura 2000 sites have been designated at a favourable conservation status. The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level. The favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing;
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and,
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable;

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and,
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

4.0 SCREENING OF POTENTIAL LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

4.1 Assessment Criteria

4.1.1 Description of the Elements of the Project likely to give rise to Impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.

The Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 is a robust strategic document developed in combination with a range of European, National and Regional legislation; and, planning guidelines and policy documents pertinent to environmental management. The plan is guided by, and operates within the context of the National Plans and Guidance documents, notably the Border Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 – 2022 and Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010.

A key requirement within the planning guidelines is that the Draft Development Plan is subject to a Strategic Environmental Screening Report and Assessment, and to be consistent with the Habitats Directive, subject to an Appropriate Assessment. The Draft Plan serves to clarify and strengthen the core strategy for planning and sustainable development within the County, detailing the locations and projected spatial extent of development within local areas and the required provision of key amenities.

The strategic development proposals in the Draft Cavan County Development Plan are:

- To consolidate the settlement strategy through the provision of appropriate land use objectives in accordance with Regional and National spatial and economic policy; and,
- To ensure that high level strategic spatial policy and more specific objectives potentially impacting on the environment are a material legal and procedural consideration in the planning process, including the potential for significant impacts on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites.

The Core Strategy determines the level of residential zoning, changes to zoning and the expected or desired land use targets during the lifetime of the Plan. Projected population growth within the town and village Plans has resulted in an allocation of 175ha available for development. The residential zoning targets within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 for smaller towns and villages results in no allocation of lands for development. The overall area of land identified for development, notably the number of housing units is therefore significantly reduced.

4.1.2 Description of the Likely Impact of the Plan on the Natura 2000 sites.

Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

Size, scale, area and land take:

The total area of land cover subject to land use zoning objectives in the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 is 175ha. These lands areas are allocated to meet the projected demand for residential development as part of town and village plans on the basis of trends in population growth. The Draft Cavan County Development Plan

does not propose any zoning of land within Natura 2000 sites. Notwithstanding this zoning, the Council shall take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of these designated sites in accordance with the policies and objectives set out in the Draft Cavan County Development Plan (please refer to Section 4.2 below). The protection of the Natura 2000 network of sites is further strengthened by the additional policies and objectives of the Council relating to Flood Risk Management, the Water Framework Directive and the EU Habitats Directive.

The inclusion within the Plan of the N55 Ballinagh Bypass along the National Secondary Route and the preferred route corridor for the Cavan to Dundalk Strategic Route Improvement Scheme (Dundalk - Shercock - Cootehill - Cavan; R-188, R-192, R-162, R-178) are essential to the future development of the County Cavan. The promotion and development of cycle links will also provide improved resources for recreation and tourism within the County. However, it is important that this infrastructure is delivered in an environmentally sensitive way. The delivery of this infrastructure shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC).

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts upon the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from their size, scale, area and land take, shall be permitted on the basis of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020 (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site:

The policies and objectives in the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 relevant to the Core Strategy; those conforming to National Strategies, Policies and Guidance; and, the expansion of industry sectors do not apply to any specific location and are considered applicable to the entire County.

Town and Village plans that have allocated areas of land to development and their proximity to Natura 2000 sites are detailed in Table 1. The vast majority of Natura 2000 sites are out-with the sphere of influence for potential impacts from zones for development in the town & village plans; however Ballyconnell and Belturbet village plans are within immediate proximity to Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC. Both village plans have identified a requirement of 15ha of land for development during the lifetime of the Plan. The main potential impacts to this site, and also applicable to the partial overlapping designation of Lough Oughter Complex SPA are changes in hydrology, drainage and deterioration of water quality through nutrient enrichment from agricultural surface water run-off and wastewater treatment.

Emission (disposal to land, water or air):

The level of water supply and extraction has been considered in relation to the Settlement Framework within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020. It is anticipated that population growth will continue in the County's larger towns, however will be slow or cease in the majority of rural villages. The allocation of set areas for development in the Settlement Framework reflects these projected rates of growth and demand. As detailed in Chapter 4 – Sections 2 & 3 of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan, water conservation and network management is now an integral component of the Water Services Investment Programme – Assessment of Needs

2009 – 2015 and is key to the sustainable use of water resources. The Settlement Framework provides details of respective Water Supply Schemes for each town and village plans. All Water Supply Schemes and Waste Water Treatment Plants are currently working within capacity. There will be no additional water consumption demand as a result of the Draft Plan. The additional policies in respect of Wastewater Disposal as set out in the Draft Plan will strengthen the protection of receiving waters. The Water Framework Directive has set procedures and obligations for managing water resources at River Basin District level and has expedited a comprehensive assessment of water quality within the region and catchment area. Accordingly, the updated policy in respect of implementation of the recommendations of the River Basin District Plans as set out in the Draft Plan will assist in securing good water quality standards and associated habitats within the region.

Duration:

The period of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan extends to 2020 and will not continue or be applicable beyond this date.

4.1.3 Description of Likely Changes to the Natura 2000 sites.

Describe any likely changes to the designated sites arising as result of:

- *Reduction of habitat area*

The Draft Plan does not propose any additional land take within Natura 2000 sites. The Village Plans for Ballyconnell and Belturbet require the development of 15ha respectively during the lifetime of the Plan and due to the proximity of these settlements to the Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs SAC there are more likely to be pathways of risk to this site through changes in land use within zoned development areas. Prior to any proposed plans or projects commencing each shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC).

- *Disturbance to key species*

No specific plans or proposals in the Draft Plan are considered to represent any significant impacts to key species through disturbance. The Council shall take appropriate steps to avoid the disturbances of key species within designated sites in accordance with the policies and objectives set out in Chapter 8 of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020.

- *Habitat or species fragmentation*

No specific plans or proposals in the Draft Plan are considered to represent any significant impacts to habitat or species through fragmentation. The Council shall take appropriate steps to avoid the fragmentation of habitat or isolation of populations of annexed species within designated sites in accordance with the policies and objectives set out in Chapter 8 of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020.

- *Reduction in species density*

No specific plans or proposals in the Draft Plan are considered to represent any decline to species distribution or abundance within Natura 2000 sites. The Council shall take appropriate steps to avoid the

reduction in species density within designated sites in accordance with the policies and objectives set out in Chapter 8 of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020.

- *Changes in key indicators of conservation value (e.g., water-quality, etc.).*

Cavan County Council is involved in the management and monitoring of four River Basin Districts (RBDs) each include specific River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) for the Neagh Bann International River Basin District (NBIRNBF), the Eastern River Basin District (ERBD), Shannon International River Basin District (SIRBD) and the North Western International River Basin District (NWIRBD). Under the Water Framework Directive it is an objective for all waters to achieve at least good water quality status within prescribed timeframes. Cavan County Council is required to meet the environmental objectives of these River Basin Management Plans and the Draft Plan incorporates these principles/targets through the spatial planning process by way of specific development management policies and objectives.

Intrinsically linked to meeting the objectives of the four River Basin Districts is Regulation 42(21(f)) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 which requires Cavan County Council to consider for Appropriate Assessment consents / licences for Waste Water Treatment Plants. Potential impacts on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites from discharges through deterioration in water quality shall be considered for each Waste Water Discharge Authorisation and that operational discharges conform to the Emission Limit Values (ELVs).

The legal provision of the Water Framework Directive, the European Communities (Birds & Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 overlap with the requirement of the Planning & Development Acts (as amended) 2010 and the basic measures undertaken by Statutory Authorities to ensure linkages between planning, water services and the environment achieve the objectives of the RBDs.

The implementation of these requirements during the timeline of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan will assist in improving and securing good water quality standards; the favourable extent and condition of habitats dependant on water quality; and, the maintenance of designated species associated with these habitats in the region.

4.1.4 The Likely Impacts on the Natura 2000 sites as a whole.

Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 as a whole in terms of:

- *Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site.*

The Draft Plan does not propose any development, plan or projects within any specific Natura 2000 site and therefore it is considered that there will be no potential negative impacts on the relationships that define the structure of Natura 2000 sites.

- *Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.*

The Draft Plan does not propose any development, plan or projects within any specific Natura 2000 site and therefore it is considered that there will be no potential impacts on the relationships that define the structure of Natura 2000 sites.

4.1.5 Indicators of Significance of the Impacts.

Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

- *Loss*
- *Fragmentation*
- *Disruption*
- *Disturbance*
- *Change to key elements of the site (e.g., water quality etc.)*

The Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020 has been formulated to ensure that uses, development and effects arising from permissions based upon this Draft (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site. Cavan County Council shall take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of these designated sites in accordance with the policies and objectives set out in Chapter 8 of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan.

4.1.6 Likely Significance of Potential Impacts

Describe from above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above potential impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale of magnitude of impacts are not known:

The screening process identified all impacts and relevant significance indicators of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020. A significant weighting on the conclusions of no significant impacts is based on the following rationale:

That in implementation of the Plan, no areas of habitat that are important for the survival of the designated habitats or species within the Natura 2000 will be:

- Modified or fragmented, destroyed or isolated. No key biogeochemical processes necessary for the survival of the designated features will be impacted, directly or indirectly or in the short to long term.

No ecologically meaningful proportion of habitat, or designated feature dependant on that habitat within the Natura 2000 sites examined in this screening will be:

- Seriously impacted (either through loss, damage or deterioration in water quality).

4.2 Screening Matrix

A Screening Matrix is provided below which shows the rationale under which the conclusions in section 4.1.6 were reached. Section 2.4 has detailed all policies (with the exception of certain social devoid of any developmental context) within the amended draft plan. Section 3 described the Natura 2000 sites within the sphere of influence of the amended draft plan, why these sites are designated and the actions that represent potential threats to site integrity. Section 4 has assessed the amended draft plan in regard to the network described in Section 3. The screening matrix in Table 2 below ties in these sections, linking sites, threats policies and assessment conclusions.

It is not generally considered best practice to justify conclusions of no significant impacts of policies and objectives in development plans through the premise of other policies and objectives so devised to off-set those impacts, albeit through valid legislative means in the planning process. It is important to consider however, that the vast majority of policies and objectives pertaining to development in the amended draft plan are all caveated by a central objective and requirement to implement Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive, (by subjecting any plan or project likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of Natura 2000 or European Sites (SACs, SPAs), whether directly (in situ), indirectly (ex-situ) or in combination with other plans or projects, to an appropriate assessment in order to inform decision making). This caveat is also supplemented by policies and objectives ensuring compliance with regulation standards and promoting positive reinforcement for the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services. The evaluation of the amended draft plan in this screening adopts a “*conservation feature*” led assessment of relevant policies and objectives. This serves to avoid repetitious appraisal of generic policies and objectives that have no conceivable pathways of risk to Natura 2000 sites.

Table 6. Significance of Impacts Matrix

Interest feature	Conservation objective	Specific Threats from the Plan.	Relevant Development Plan Policy or Objective	Effect on site integrity?
Boleybrack Mountain Special Area of Conservation [002032]				
Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]	- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and	Changes in local hydrology (drainage); Forestry; Peat extraction;	CSP12	No significant impacts. General policy statements and none detailing any specific projects.
Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]	- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and	Renewable wind-energy development; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; Recreation; and, illegal dumping.	CSP15 EDP2 EDO14 EDP11 EDO27	Any proposed afforestation application subject to Forest Service
European dry heaths [4030]	and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and		EDO29	Appropriate Assessment Procedure (AAP) (Forest Service, 2013).
<i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>) [6410]	- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.		PI053	
Blanket bogs (*if active only) [7130]				

Interest feature	Conservation objective	Specific Threats from the Plan.	Relevant Development Plan Policy or Objective	Effect on site integrity?
Killyconny Bog candidate Special Area of Conservation [000006]				
Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]	- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and	Peat extraction; Changes in local hydrology (drainage); Illegal burning;	CSP12	No significant impacts. General
Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]	- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for	Forestry; Renewable wind-energy development; Over-grazing; Under-grazing; and, illegal dumping.	CSP15	policy statement which is too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur. No specific scheme detailed in the Plan.
European dry heaths [4030]	its long-term maintenance exist		EDP2	Any proposed afforestation
Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>) [6410]	and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and		EDP11	application subject to Forest Service
Blanket bogs (*if active only) [7130]	- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.		EDO27	Appropriate Assessment Procedure (AAP) (Forest Service, 2013).
Active raised bogs [7110]			EDO29	
Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]				
Corratirrim Special Area of Conservation [000979]				
Limestone pavements [8240]	General conservation objectives for habitats as above.	Agricultural improvement / reclamation, grazing regimes, direct loss of habitat through quarrying.	CSP12 EDP2 ED014 EDP11	No significant impacts. General policy statements which are too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur. No specific industrial (quarrying) scheme detailed in the Plan.

Interest feature	Conservation objective	Specific Threats from the Plan.	Relevant Development Plan Policy or Objective	Effect on site integrity?
Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands Special Area of Conservation [000584]				
Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or of the <i>Isoetes-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130]	- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and - the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and - the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.	Changes in local hydrology; Overgrazing; Forestry; Changes in local hydrology; Renewable wind-energy development; and, Recreation.	CSP12 CSP15 EDP2 EDO14 EDP1 EDO27 EDO29 PI053 PI089	No significant impacts. General policy statement which is too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur. General policy statement which will, in itself, not lead to development. Any proposed afforestation application subject to Forest Service Appropriate Assessment Procedure (AAP) (Forest Service, 2013).
Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]				
Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]				
European dry heaths [4030]				
Species rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas [6230]				
Blanket bogs (*if active only) [7130]				
Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]				

Interest feature	Conservation objective	Specific Threats from the Plan.	Relevant Development Plan Policy or Objective	Effect on site integrity?
Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs Special Area of Conservation [000007]				
Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation [3150]	- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and - the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and - the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.	Water quality and pollution; Arterial drainage; Water abstraction; Loss of fringe vegetation to development; and, Introduction of non-native invasive species.	CSPI2 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14 EDPI1 PI039 SCPI3 SCO29	No significant impacts. General policy statements which are too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur. Policy for the protection of the water environment including (NHEP29) , by extension, the integrity of Natura 2000 sites within the amended draft Plan area. Proposed infrastructure improvements subject to ecological survey and assessment for Otter adhering to National Roads Authority Guidance (NRA, 2009).
Bog woodland [91D0]		Arterial drainage and over-grazing.		
Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]		Vehicular induced mortality; and, diffuse and point source pollution of freshwaters is likely to have indirect effect on otters through impacts on prey abundance.		
River Boyne & River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation [002299]				
Alkaline Fens [7230]	General conservation objectives for habitats and species as above.	Draining for agriculture; infilling; pollution from fertilisers and eutrophication.	CSPI2 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14	No significant impacts. General policy statements which are too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur.
River Lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> [1099]		Water quality and pollution (waste water treatment / effluent); Arterial drainage.	EDPI1 PI039	Policy for the protection of the water environment including (NHEP29) , by extension, the integrity of Natura 2000 sites within the amended draft.
Atlantic Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> [1106]				

Interest feature	Conservation objective	Specific Threats from the Plan.	Relevant Development Plan Policy or Objective	Effect on site integrity?
European Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> [1355]	General conservation objectives for habitats and species as above.	Vehicular induced mortality; and, diffuse and point source pollution of freshwaters is likely to have indirect effect on otters through impacts on prey abundance.	As above.	Proposed infrastructure improvements subject to ecological survey and assessment for Otter adhering to National Roads Authority Guidance (NRA, 2009).
Lough Oughter Complex Special Protection Area [004049]				
Great Crested Grebe [A005]	- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and - the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and - there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.	Human intrusions and disturbances to breeding birds; outdoor sports and leisure activities; recreational activities and watersports; and, Diffuse and point source pollution of freshwaters.	CSPI2 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14 EDPI1 PI039 SCO29 PI053	No significant impacts. General policy statement which is too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur.
Whooper Swan [A038]				
Wigeon [A050]				No significant impacts. Lough Oughter is a Wildfowl Sanctuary and exclusion from Open Season Order enforced by National Parks & Wildlife Service.
Wetland & Waterbirds [A999]				

Interest feature	Conservation objective	Specific Threats from the Plan.	Relevant Development Plan Policy or Objective	Effect on site integrity?
Lough Sheelin Special Protection Area [004065]				
Great Crested Grebe [A005]	<p>- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and</p> <p>- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and</p> <p>- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.</p>	<p>Human intrusions and disturbances to breeding birds; outdoor sports and leisure activities; recreational activities and watersports; and, Diffuse and point source pollution of freshwaters.</p>	<p>CSP12 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14 EDP11 PI039 SCO29 PI053</p>	<p>No significant impacts. General policy statement which is too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur.</p> <p>No significant impacts. Lough Oughter is a Wildfowl Sanctuary and exclusion from Open Season Order enforced by National Parks & Wildlife Service.</p>
Pochard [A059]				
Tufted Duck [A061]				
Goldeneye [A067]				
Wetland & Waterbirds [A999]				
Lough Kinale Special Protection Area [004061]				
Pochard [A059]	<p>General conservation objectives for annexed species as above.</p>	<p>Human intrusions and disturbances to breeding birds; outdoor sports and leisure activities; recreational activities and watersports; and, diffuse and point source pollution of freshwaters.</p>	<p>CSP12 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14 EDP11 PI039 SCO29 PI053</p>	<p>No significant impacts. General policy statements which are too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur.</p>
Tufted Duck [A061]				
Wetland & Waterbirds [A999]				

Interest feature	Conservation objective	Specific Threats from the Plan.	Relevant Development Plan Policy or Objective	Effect on site integrity?
<p>River Boyne & River Blackwater Special Protection Area [004232]</p> <p>Kingfisher [breeding] [A229]</p>	<p>- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and</p> <p>- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and</p> <p>- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.</p>	<p>Destruction and loss of riparian banks (nest sites); human disturbance at nest sites during the breeding season; and, diffuse and point source pollution of freshwaters.</p>	<p>CSP12 EDP2 EDO1 EDO14 PIO53 R7020</p>	<p>No significant impacts. General policy statements which are too general to predict accurately where potential effects may occur.</p>

4.3 Policies and Objectives protecting Natura 2000 sites

A material consideration in defining the strategy and policies within the Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 is the regulatory and legal instruments protecting designated sites and their respective conservation objectives. The Plan contains numerous policies and measures which contribute to the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites and compliment Cavan County Council’s obligation to ensure that the Plan complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

The Plan under Chapter 8 refers to Natura 2000 sites and states:

“Planning Authorities must ensure that an Appropriate Assessment of the implications of proposals on designated Natura Sites is undertaken. This assessment is required for all planning applications which have shown likely significant effects on these sites through a screening process. Screening for Appropriate Assessment applies to all development proposals, either within or outside a Natura 2000”.

The screening process involved a review of the proposed policies within the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020 that implement specific objectives protecting Natura 2000 sites and the environmental conditions that underpin [structure and function] those sites in accordance with the Habitats Directive. The Plan states;

It is the policy of Cavan County Council:

CSP1. To ensure that the future spatial development of County Cavan is in accordance with higher level plans including the National Development Plan, National Spatial Strategy, Border Regional Planning Guidelines, as well as, national policy guidance issued under section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, as amended, the River Basin Management Plans, Surface Water Regulations and the Habitats Directive.

CSP5. To take into account, in the assessment of development proposals, Article 6(3) (4) and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the Surface Water Regulations 2009 and the relevant measures of the River Basin Management Plans 2009 – 2015.

EDP6 To ensure the protection of our built and natural heritage including Protected Structures, National Monuments and other areas or sites of archaeological importance, the NATURA 2000 network, NHA’s and pNHA’s, the Global Geopark and any other sites and areas which are of biodiversity or amenity value.

EDP9 To require an EIS, as part of a planning application, where the thresholds outlined in Schedule 5 of the ‘Planning and Development Regulations 2000’, as amended are met. The Planning Authority will also exercise its powers under Section 103-subsection (1) to require an EIS for sub-threshold development where it is considered that the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment or heritage. Where a development proposal is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, an Appropriate Assessment will be required. Appropriate mitigation measures and details of re-instatement after use must be included.

WS-P01 To ensure an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of good quality water for domestic, commercial and industrial use, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

WS-P02 To ensure that the future development of available lands within the plan area shall be evaluated in terms of requirements of the EIA, Habitats Directive; Water Framework Directive and the Floods’ Directive, to ensure that there are no negative impacts on water quality.

NHEP6 To ensure the protection of species of flora and fauna afforded legal protection under Irish and European Legislation.

NHEP9 To have regard to the views of the NPWS in respect of proposed development where such development may have an impact on a designated National or European site or a site proposed for designation.

NHEP10 To continue to undertake surveys and collect data that will assist Cavan County Council in building its knowledge base and meeting its obligations under Article 6 of the Habitat Directives.

NHEP28 To promote the engagement of developers and regulators in sustainable development and to encourage a high standard of environmental protection. The 'precautionary principle' will apply where a significant risk to the environment exists.

NEP44: To ensure that, where applicable, Plans, projects or developments which in the opinion of the Planning Authority, may have a likely impact on the Environment, a sub-threshold Environmental Impact Statement; A Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and/or an Appropriate Assessment may be required to be prepared by the applicant/developer.

It is an objective of Cavan County Council to:

EDO7 To support agricultural development as a contributory means of maintaining the population in the rural area and sustaining the rural economy, whilst maintaining and enhancing the standing of the rural environment and through application of the Water Framework and Habitats Directive.

EDO22 Carefully examine applications for extractive industries in areas designated as or adjacent to c/SACs, c/SPAs, p/NHAs, Water Framework Directive, Protected Areas and other designations.

PIO14 To implement the Roads Programme for the County in association with the NRA. Various road schemes will be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment, where necessary.

WWS-007: All new developments, post January 2014, shall be subject to a Development contribution, to be levied by Irish Water, to ensure the adequate provision of wastewater treatment infrastructure with adequate capacity that will ensure compliance with the provisions of the relevant River Basin Management Plan(s) and Habitats' Directive.

WS-003 To ensure the protection and improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground waters throughout the county by implementing the EU Water Framework Directive, and any other associated legislation.

NHEO4 To ensure an Appropriate Assessment (AA) in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, and in accordance with the DECLG Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities', 2009 and relevant EPA and European Commission guidance documents, is carried out in respect of any Plan or Project likely to have significant effect on a Natura 2000 site(s), either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

NHEO5 To protect and conserve the conservation value of SPAs, SACs and NHAs as identified by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and any other sites that may be proposed for designation during the lifetime of this plan.

RHO19 To ensure that applications that are likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site either directly or indirectly site are subject to an appropriate assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

4.4 Ecological Coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in County Cavan

In addition to examining Natura 2000 sites, Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA's) are also a material consideration in the screening process. A Natural Heritage Area is an area considered important for the habitats present or which holds species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection. NHAs are given legal protection through statutory instruments which restrict certain activities that may impact negatively on the features of interest. Proposed Natural Heritage Areas are areas consisting of feature(s) of conservation interest but have not yet received full statutory designation. Protecting other designated sites of conservation importance serves an important supportive and functional role; retaining ecological coherence in the wider landscape and improving ecosystem health, and, crucially supports the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 network.

In addition to statutory instruments for NHAs, there is also a key legislative provision in the European Communities (Bird and Habitat) Regulations 2011 that aims to protect annexed habitats that occur outside Special Areas of Conservation. Habitats that are equivalent to those listed, but not within SACs are still classed as priority habitats of international and national importance and under Article 27 (4(b)), the planning authority has a duty to avoid the pollution or deterioration of Annex I habitats.

There are two Natural Heritage Areas in County Cavan, Slieve Rushen Bog NHA, which consists of a plateau of upland blanket bog straddling the border with Co. Fermanagh and is an important site for a declining population of breeding Hen harrier and a very small isolated population of Red Grouse; and, Lough Kinale which is also designated as a Special Protection Area, for its importance in supporting large numbers of wintering Waterbirds.

There are twenty proposed Natural Heritage areas in Cavan and represent a very diverse range of habitats and species of conservation importance. Of relevance to the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network will be that more than half of the pNHA's are inter-drumlin lakes and wetlands with a high variance in water chemistry (nutrient levels and pH), size, and depth; in the development of fringe communities and the intact/modified vegetation sequences from open water to adjacent terrestrial habitats. Five pNHA's also closely overlap the boundaries of existing SACs.

4.5 Policies & Objectives Protecting the Ecological Coherence of Natura 2000 sites.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive states that Member States shall endeavour in their land use, planning and development policies, to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of importance for wild flora and fauna.

It is a policy of Cavan County Council:

- *To conserve the existing wide range of flora, fauna and wildlife habitats in the county through the preservation of ecological corridors and networks vital to the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.*
- *To designate County Biodiversity Sites within the lifetime of this plan and to protect the ecological integrity of these sites.*

It is an objective of Cavan County Council:

- *To implement the actions of Cavan County Biodiversity Plan and revisions thereof in fulfilment of the requirements of the National Biodiversity Plan.*
- *To continue to map the habitat of the county to enable planning for the future development in a sensitive and sustainable manner and this mapping to inform the development management process.*

As detailed above, the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 has many amendments within policies and objectives that serve to pre-emptively avoid and minimise risks to Natura 2000 sites. Many of these policies and objectives reinforce the statutory authorities' obligation to comply with environmental legislation and serve to promote the importance of other areas designated for conservation interest and strengthen the protection of ecologically importance networks within the County. The Plan states:

It is the policy of Cavan County Council:

CSP13. To protect the natural heritage, landscape character and cultural heritage of all parts of the county.

PIO65 To ensure the protection and improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground waters throughout the county by implementing the EU Water Framework Directive, and any other associated legislation.

PIO89 The following issues will be considered in the assessment of a wind energy development:

- *Impact of the development on habitats, by direct loss, degradation, fragmentation and impact on habitats outside the site.*
- *Impact of the development on birds through disturbance during construction and operation phase, collision mortality, barrier to movement and loss or degradation of habitats.*
- *Planning applications should indicate proposals for restoration of the site in the event of the removal of the turbines.*
- *All applications for new Wind Farms or additional Turbines to existing Wind Farms shall submit an assessment of the cumulative impacts of the proposal in combination with existing wind farms in the area.*

NHEP11 To conserve the existing wide range of flora, fauna and wildlife habitats in the county through the preservation of ecological corridors and networks vital to the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. To designate County Biodiversity Sites within the lifetime of this plan and to protect the ecological integrity of these sites.

NHEP15 To protect existing wetlands from destruction, infilling, fragmentation and degradation.

NHEP21 To protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of the Waterways and to maintain it free from inappropriate development and to provide for public access, where feasible, acknowledging the existence of contiguous Natura 2000 sites.

NHEP24 To recognise Green Infrastructure as a means for conserving, protecting and managing ecological corridors and networks, that link National E.U. designated sites.

It is the objective of Cavan County Council:

EDO4 To ensure that all agricultural activities comply with legislation on water quality, such as the Phosphorous Regulations, Water Framework Directive and Nitrates Directive.

EDO11 All applications for enterprise development in rural areas must be accompanied by an assessment of impacts on the environment, residential amenities and the rural character of the area and contain details pertaining to safe access and egress.

EDO17 To consider development in rural areas which present substantial employment opportunities having due regard to; [Full assessment of any potential environmental effects].

EDO23 The Council will require that extractive industry proposals do not adversely impact upon the water environment, including surface water and groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated wetlands.

NHEO2 To promote the conservation of biodiversity outside of designated areas, including features such as wetlands, woodlands, hedgerows and uplands.

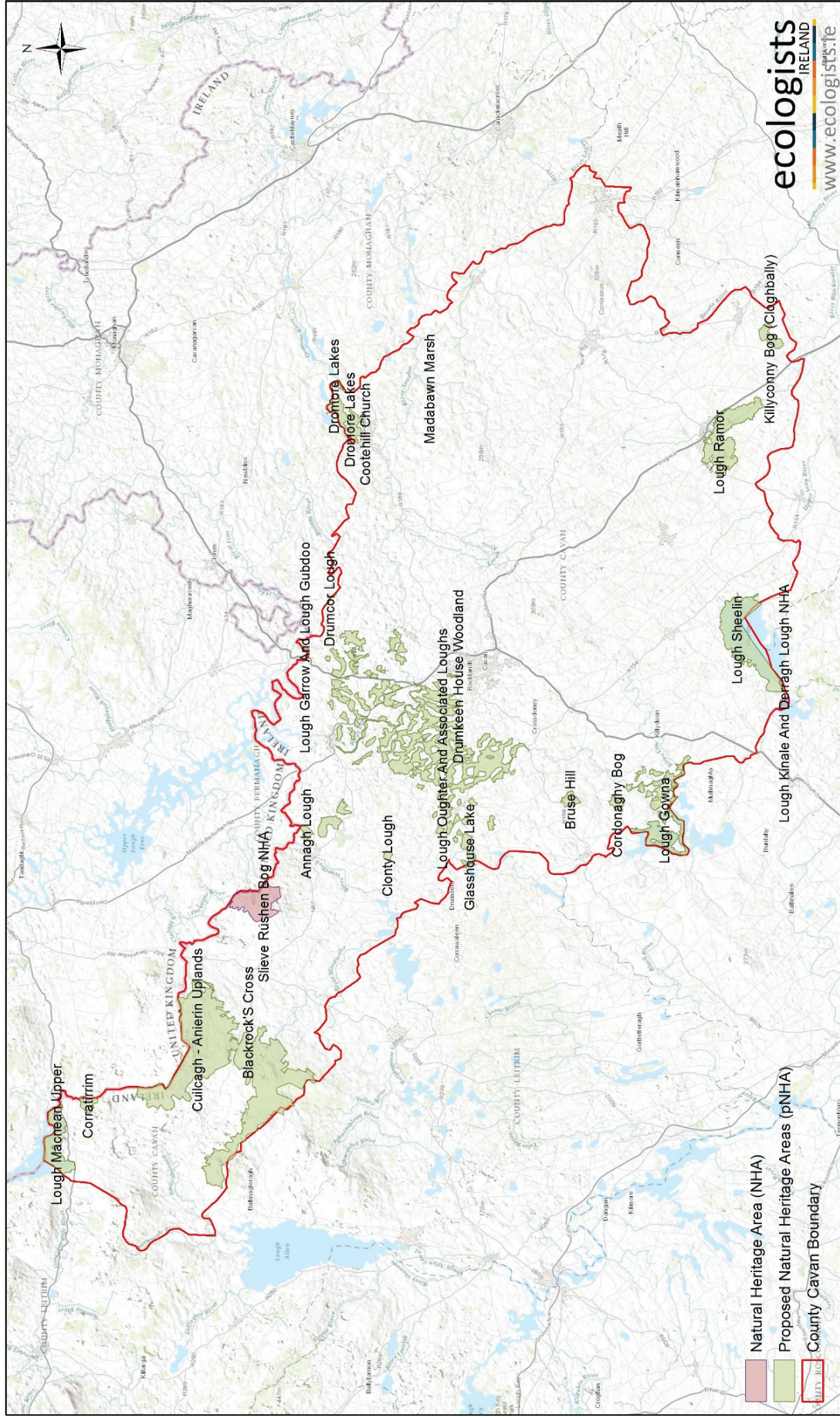
NHEO3 To protect and enhance important landscape features including streams, rivers, canals, lakes, and associated wetlands such as reedbeds and swamps; ponds, springs, bogs, fens, trees, woodland and scrub, wildlife and riparian corridors, hedgerows and other boundary types such as stone walls and ditches which are of importance for wild flora and fauna.

NHEO16 To resist development that would destroy, fragment and degrade wetlands.

NHEO39 To protect the biodiversity of rivers, streams and other water courses of the Inland Waterways to maintain them in an open state and to discourage their culverting or realignment.

NHEO42 To ensure that the County's watercourses are retained for their biodiversity and flood protection values and to conserve and enhance, where possible, the wildlife habitats of the county's rivers and riparian zones, lakes, canals and streams which occur outside of designated areas to provide for a network of habitats and biodiversity corridors throughout the county.

Figure 6. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites in County Cavan



5.0 CONCLUSIONS

This Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 has been conducted in accordance with the “Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC” as published by the European Commission and “Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities” published by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. In view of the information presented for consideration from the statutory consultees, and on implementation of the Draft Core Strategy; Settlement Framework (town and village plans); and, Zoning policies, it is objectively concluded that there are likely to be no significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites and that appropriate protection and mitigation, where necessary, in respect of Natura 2000 Network has been formulated within the Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan (as outlined in 4.2) to ensure that changes in land utility, development and the potential impacts from permissions based on policies and objectives detailed in the Plan conform to the requirements of the European Communities (Birds & Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

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STAGE 1 SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT MATRIX (FONSE)

In accordance with Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC

<p>Development Type</p>	<p>Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020</p>
<p>Development Location</p>	<p>County Cavan including surrounding lands within 15km of the county boundary.</p>
<p>Natura 2000 site(s) within impact zone</p> <p>*Sites listed in bold within County Cavan Only these sites included in Appendix II</p>	<p>Boleybrack Mountain Special Area of Conservation [002032]</p> <p>Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands Special Area of Conservation [000584]</p> <p>Lough Oughter & Associated Loughs [000007]</p> <p>Corratirrim Special Area of Conservation [000979]</p> <p>River Boyne & River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation [002299]</p> <p>Lough Oughter Special Protection Area [004049]</p> <p>Lough Sheelin Special Protection Area [004065]</p> <p>Lough Kinale Special Protection Area [004061]</p> <p>River Boyne & River Blackwater Special Protection Area [004232]</p> <p>Lough Melvin Special Area of Conservation [000428]</p> <p>Aroo Mountain Special Area of Conservation [001403]</p> <p>Lough Gill Special Area of Conservation [001976]</p> <p>Ardagullion Bog Candidate Special Area of Conservation [00234]</p> <p>Lough Lene Candidate Special Area of Conservation [002121]</p> <p>White Lough, Ben Loughs & Lough Doo Candidate Special Area of Conservation [001810]</p> <p>Lough Bane & Lough Glass Candidate Special</p>

	<p>Area of Conservation [002120] Kilroosky Lough Cluster Special Area of Conservation [001786]</p> <p>Garriskill Bog Candidate Special Protection Area [004102]</p> <p>Lough Derravaragh Special Protection Area [004043]</p>
<p>Qualifying interests of Natura 2000 site(s)</p>	<p>Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]</p> <p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</p> <p>European dry heaths [4030]</p> <p><i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]</p> <p>Blanket bogs (*if active only) [7130]</p> <p>Active raised bogs [7110]</p> <p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]</p> <p>Limestone pavements [8240]</p> <p>Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]</p> <p>Species rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas [6230]</p> <p>Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]</p> <p>Alkaline Fens [7230]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> [91E0]</p> <p>Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130]</p> <p>Petrifying spring with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]</p> <p>Calcareous and calschist screes of the montane to alpine levels [8120]</p> <p>Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i>-type vegetation [3150]</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> [91A0]</p> <p>Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150].</p> <p>Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp [3140].</p> <p>Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210].</p> <p>Sea Lamprey [1095]</p> <p>Brook Lamprey [1096]</p>

	<p>River Lamprey [1099]</p> <p>Atlantic Salmon [1106]</p> <p>European Otter [1355]</p> <p>White-clawed Crayfish [1092]</p> <p>Wetland & Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p>Great Crested Grebe [A005]</p> <p>Whooper Swan [A038]</p> <p>Wigeon [A050]</p> <p>Pochard [A059]</p> <p>Tufted Duck [A061]</p> <p>Goldeneye [A067]</p> <p>Kingfisher [A229]</p> <p>Greenland White-fronted Goose [A395]</p> <p>Coot [A125]</p>
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1.0 Name of project or plan: Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020	
Name and location of Natura 2000 site:	The Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan does not relate to any one Natura 2000 site and considers all sites within County Cavan and within a recommended 15km buffer zone.
Description of the project or plan	The Plan establishes a framework for the co-ordinated and sustainable economic, social, cultural and environmental development of County Cavan. The Plan details the policies and objectives of Cavan County Council's vision for the spatial and sectoral development of Cavan over the period from 2014 – 2020. The Plan also serves as a point of reference for statutory authorities, planners, developers and the general public on how development proposals are likely to be assessed.
Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?	The Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020 is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 Network. The Plan provides the strategic direction and policy against which proposed developments are based. A material consideration in that strategy and respective policy platform is the regulatory and legal instruments protecting designated sites with a specific focus on the key conservation objectives of those sites.
Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?	This Amended Draft Plan once adopted will form the County Development Plan. The Plan sets the framework for the sustainable development of the County over a six year period. It is the primary document for the setting out of the councils aim, policies and objectives in terms of land use planning. In doing so it must be consistent with, and ensure the implementation of National and Regional Plans and Guidelines as well as a host of other European,

	National and Regional Legislation, in terms of the management of the environment.
2.0 The assessment of significance of effects	
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 Site.	The policies and objectives detailed in Amended Draft Plan will have the effect of strengthening the management of and enhancing the protection of Natura 2000 sites within County Cavan.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant.	<p>Specific policies and objectives have been formulated within the Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 - 2020 to allow the Council to take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>The legal provision of the Water Framework Directive and the European Communities (Birds & Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 overlap with the requirement of the Planning & Development Acts (as amended) 2010 and ensure linkages between planning and environment legislation in achieving the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>The Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 has many policies and objectives that serve to pre-emptively avoid and minimise risks to Natura 2000 sites. Many of these policies and objectives reinforce the statutory authorities’ obligation to comply with environmental legislation and serve to promote the importance of other areas designated for conservation interest and strengthen the protection of ecologically importance networks within the County.</p> <p>The implementation of these policies and objectives during the timeline of the Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan therefore serve to provide a proactive approach to environmental legislation, promote awareness of environmental issues within the County; and protect the favourable extent and condition of habitats within and out-with Natura 2000 sites.</p>
List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or email address	<p>National Parks & Wildlife Service John Matthews (West Cavan) John.Matthews@ahg.gov.ie</p> <p>David McDonagh (East Cavan) David.McDonagh@ahg.gov.ie</p> <p>Fiona Wheeldon (Leitrim/Sligo) Fiona.Wheeldon@ahg.gov.ie</p> <p>Caitriona Douglas Caitriona.Douglas@ahg.gov.ie</p> <p>Susan Moles (Longford) Susan.Moles@ahg.gov.ie</p>

	<p>Heritage Council Anne-Marie Ward (Cavan Heritage Officer) amcurley@cavancoco.ie</p>
Response to consultation:	<p><i>Provision of information relating to existing and potential future threats to Natura 2000 site integrity within relevant jurisdictions.</i></p>

3.0 Data collected to carry out the assessment			
Who carried out the assessment?	Sources of data	Level of assessment completed	Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed
<p>Ryan Wilson-Parr B.Sc (Hons) M.Res CMIEEM ESAS MMO PSO Managing Director Ecologists Ireland Consultants Ltd</p> <p>For and on behalf of Cavan County Council.</p>	<p>National Parks and Wildlife Services; Heritage Council; Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014-2020; The Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report for the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020. Settlement Framework and respective Town and Village Plans.</p>	<p>Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment</p>	<p>This report titled: Wilson-Parr, 2014. Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment pursuant to Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC on Plans & Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites. Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020.</p>

Overall Conclusions

The screening process identified all impacts and relevant significance indicators of the Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020.

No areas of habitat that are important for the survival of the designated features/species within the Natura 2000 sites will be:

- Modified or fragmented, destroyed or isolated. No key biogeochemical processes necessary for the survival of the designated features will be impacted, directly or indirectly or in the short to long term.

No ecologically meaningful proportion of the habitat of designated feature of the Natura 2000 sites will be:

- Seriously impacted (either through loss, damage or deterioration in water quality).

It can be objectively concluded that there are not likely to be significant effects on the Natura 2000 site(s) arising from the Amended Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2014 – 2020.

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: BOLEYBRACK MOUNTAIN

SITE CODE: 002032

Boleybrack Mountain comprises an extensive upland plateau situated to the north of Lough Allen. It is dominated by active mountain blanket bog and wet heath, with small oligotrophic lakes scattered throughout. The site also contains low rocky cliffs, areas of dry heath and a variety of grassland types, including *Molinia*-dominated heath/grassland, *Agrostis/Festuca*-dominated upland acid grassland, orchid-rich meadows and rush (*Juncus* spp.)-dominated wet pastures.

The site is a candidate Special Area of Conservation selected for blanket bog, wet heath, dry heath, *Molinia* meadow and dystrophic lake, all habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive.

A wide diversity of plant communities is found, associated with the different habitats occurring on the site. The mountain blanket bog is dominated by Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) and moss species such as *Sphagnum capillifolium*, *S. palustre* and *Racomitrium lanuginosum*. Intact areas of bog have a varied topography with hummocks of *R. lanuginosum*, *Cladonia portentosa* and Ling Heather interspersed with lawns of both and Common Cottongrass and Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*). The level areas of bog also feature pools that contain species such as the Bog Moss, *Sphagnum cuspidatum*, and Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*). Other prominent species present include Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*) and Round-leaved Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*). Locally rare species recorded in this habitat include Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*), Dioecious Sedge (*Carex dioica*) and the lichen *Cladonia portentosa*.

The areas of wet heath feature expanses of Ling Heather interspersed with Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Sharp-flowered Rush (*Juncus acutifloris*) and tussocks of Hare's-tail Cottongrass. Other species present include Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), Wavy Hair-grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*), Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*) and Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*). The locally rare species Cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) and Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) occur in this habitat.

Acid grassland is dominated by a variety of grass species (mostly *Agrostis* and *Festuca* spp.). This species-rich habitat also supports a variety of herb species such as Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Devil's-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), clovers (*Trifolium* spp.) and Cat's-ear (*Hypochoeris radicata*), amongst others. *Molinia*-dominated/wet heath vegetation occurs on the lower slopes of the site. Orchid-rich meadows with heathy elements and abundant Heath Spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza maculata*) and Common Spotted-orchid (*D. fuchsii*) occur in south-eastern sections of the site. Areas of rush pasture on the site are dominated by Soft Rush and Sharp-

flowered Rush interspersed with Marsh bedstraw (*Galium palustre*) and Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*).

The site provides excellent areas of feeding habitat for Red Grouse, Snipe, Curlew and Ravens. Golden Plover nests within the site (2-3 pairs), while Hen Harrier may use the site for foraging. Both these species are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

The site is lightly grazed by sheep and locally affected by burning and turbarry. Much of the site is bounded by mature coniferous forestry plantations; recent planting on areas of blanket bog has caused significant local damage.

The site is of considerable conservation importance for the various habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive that it supports, in particular the good examples of mountain blanket bog and wet heath. The examples of these habitats on the site are among the best remaining in the northern half of the country. The presence of a number of rare plant species and of a variety of bird species adds to the conservation significance of the site.

19.06.2003

Conservation Objectives for Boleybrack Mountain SAC [002032]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- ◆ [3160] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds
- ◆ [4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*
- ◆ [4030] European dry heaths
- ◆ [6410] *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinia caerulea*)
- ◆ [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active only)

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Boleybrack Mountain SAC [002032]. Generic Version 3.0. Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME : CORRATIRRIM

SITE CODE : 000979

In the north-west of Co. Cavan, Carboniferous limestone underlies the shales and grits that form the Cuilcagh range. At Corratirrim, on the border with Co. Fermanagh, approximately 2 km south of Belcoo, the limestone outcrops at the surface. There the scenery consists of grassy slopes, small cliffs, many small patches of limestone pavement, and patches of scrub.

The site is a candidate SAC selected for limestone pavement, a priority habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive.

Limestone pavement, particularly where it occurs at the approximate centre of the site, consists of clints and grykes up to a depth of approximately 18 inches. Some areas of shattered pavement are present. Moss and lichen species, such as *Ctenidium molluscum* and *Rhizocarpon badioatrum*, are common. Fern species have established, though not with the vigour and variety seen in the Burren. They include Hart's-tongue Fern (*Phyllitis scolopendrium*), Wall-rue (*Asplenium ruta-muraria*), Maidenhair Spleenwort (*A. trichomanes*) and the relatively rare Brittle Bladder-fern (*Cystopteris fragilis*). Vascular plant species present include Mountain Everlasting (*Antennaria dioica*), Early-purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*), Mossy Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hypnoides*), Herb-robert (*Geranium robertianum*), Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Early Dog-violet (*Viola reichenbachiana*), abundant Wild Thyme (*Thymus praecox*) and low-growing/grazed Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). Yew (*Taxus baccata*) was found on pavement on the eastern slopes.

The eastern and north western slopes of the site consist of rocky outcrops surrounded by a mossy heath type grassland with both calcicole and calcifuge species co-existing. Species present include Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), Daisy (*Bellis perennis*), Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Common Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Fairy Flax (*Linum catharticum*), Wild Thyme, Eyebright (*Euphrasia* spp.) and Quaking-grass (*Brizia media*).

On the western and southern slopes and at the far east of the site a heath vegetation where Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*) are dominant with Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and Tormentil occurs. Blue Moor-grass (*Sesleria albicans*), although occurring throughout, is especially common where the soil cover is thin over the limestone. Sheep's-fescue (*Festuca ovina*), Crested hair-grass (*Koeleria macrantha*), Sheep's-bit (*Jasione montana*), Heath Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) and Lousewort (*Pedicularis sylvatica*) are also found in grassy patches between the heathers. The rare Small-white Orchid (*Pseudorchis albida*) is found on the steep south-west facing slope in the limestone uplands. This is a protected species under the Flora Protection Order 1999. At the centre east of the site the heath is dominated by Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

At the base of the slopes, where conditions are wetter, bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.) are found along with Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*) occasional Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Horsetails (*Equisetum* spp.) and Devil's-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*).

Throughout the site grazing is carried out by sheep and cattle which generally prevents the spread of scrub.

Corratirrim is a varied site of ecological interest for the occurrence of limestone pavement in the north east of the country. The fact that there are acidic areas interspersed with the limestone and the presence of a rare and protected species adds to its scientific interest. The site is of particular importance for the occurrence of limestone pavement, a habitat mainly associated with the counties of Clare and Galway, which is not known elsewhere in eastern Ireland.

20.03.2003

Conservation Objectives for Corratirrim SAC [000979]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- ◆ [8240] * Limestone pavements

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Corratirrim SAC [000979]. Generic Version 3.0. Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning

SITE SYNOPSIS0

SITE NAME: CUILCAGH - ANIERIN UPLANDS

SITE CODE: 000584

This site follows a series of shale uplands in the counties of Cavan and Leitrim, including to the north Cuilcagh Mountain on the border with Northern Ireland, Benbrack, Bencroy and to the south Slieve Anierin, rising above Lough Allen. It links the following pre-existing Areas of Scientific Interest: Bellavally Mountain, Cuilcagh Mountain and Lough Cratty Bog, Moneenterriff Cliffs and Levenakilla Bog. The site is of special interest because of its geology, physiography and upland flora and fauna.

Geological interest is comprised of the complete representation of the Carboniferous Leitrim Group, including richly fossiliferous sequences of sandstones, shales and mudstones, while physiographical interest relates to various active processes, notably slope weathering, as well as the presence of peat and pseudo-karst features. The total sequence on the Upper Cuilcagh area provides an excellent section through approximately 560 m of the Leitrim Group of Carboniferous rocks. On the lower ground, particularly on east Cuilcagh, a series of potholes or shakeholes (dry vertical shafts) and sinks (shafts and surface water plunges) have developed on limestone. Pollnagallun is one of these. Landforms due to past and present processes are also noticeable and include periglacial rock shattering throughout the area, associated blockfields at the edges (Moneenterriff), rock slides throughout and bog flows.

The biological interest of the site is associated with the presence of one of the largest expanses of intact mountain blanket bog in Ireland (seen at Cratty's Lough at the north-east of the site), and also with upland grasslands on the steepest slopes of the peaks, fine examples of dry heath on the less steep slopes of these peaks and a gradation from these to wet heaths and wet rush (*Juncus* spp.) grasslands.

A well developed oceanic, montane bryophyte flora exists throughout. At the tops of ridges such as at Slieve Anierin, Bencroy, Benbrack and at The Playbank, on level terrain at the slope bases and often sandwiched between two succeeding slopes, blanket peat also occurs. The extensive blanket bog exhibits a wide range of characteristic vegetation and structural features, with well developed pool/hummock and lawn complexes, drier peat, acid flushes and bog bursts. The presence of a large number of streams (or river sources) adds to the biological interest.

Flat blanket peat areas on water-logged ground is characterised by the presence of such species as Deer Grass (*Trichophorum cespitosum*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), Common Cotton-grass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) and small amounts of Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) over a *Sphagnum* moss mat of predominantly *S. capillifolium* and *S. papillosum*.

On more freely-draining gentle slopes, abundant and tall Ling Heather, Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*) are more

typical over a mixed bryophyte layer of *S. capillifolium*, *Hypnum jutlandicum* and *Rhytidialphus* spp. The presence of weak flushing of acidic water through the surface peat layer is indicated by the occurrence of sparsely scattered Purple Moor-grass (*Molinea caerulea*) or Sharp-flowered Rush (*Juncus acutiflorus*).

Where flushing is concentrated over a thinner peat or a peaty gley soil or is associated with iron-staining, the vegetation is characterised by a small sedge community with Lesser Spearwort (*Ranunculus flammula*), Butterwort (*Pinguicula* spp.), Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), Cuckoo Flower (*Cardamine pratensis*), Marsh Bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*) and a range of non-ombrotrophic bryophytes.

A small number of high level oligotrophic lakes occur within the site, with Lough Nambrack, Knockgorm Lake and Munter Eolas Lough being the main examples. Scattered throughout the site are dystrophic lakes, with peat bases and often peat stained water. These lakes typically have sparse vegetation, with Common Cottongrass, Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and *Sphagnum* mosses being the dominant plants.

Sloped ground and areas of shallow peat support heath communities. Wet heath is extensive and is dominated by Cross-leaved Heath, Ling Heather, Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Purple Moor-grass, Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), Heath Rush (*Juncus squarrosus*), and *Rhytidiadelphus*, *Sphagnum* and *Polytrichum* mosses. Dry heath is also well-represented within the site and is typically found where shallow peats occur on sloped ground in association with exposed rock. The dominant species in the vegetation is invariably Ling Heather, which is generally accompanied by Bilberry, Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*) and, in places, Gorse (*Ulex* spp.). Tormentil and Heath Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) are also common species. Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) is a scarcer species of the dry heath vegetation. Upland grassland frequently merges with the heath community and is dominated by Mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*) and Bent Grasses (*Agrostis* spp.) and in places is considered to be species rich. In wetter areas, the grassland communities are dominated by rushes (*Juncus effusus*, *J. acutiflorus* and some *J. articulatus*).

In places extensive areas of cliff occur. Here the heathy vegetation is augmented by typical cliff and scree species, particularly ferns such as the Buckler Fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*). On the low steep slopes at the north-east of the site, such as at Gorteenaglogh, some small areas of Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) woodland add to the habitat diversity of the site. A small number of unimproved enclosed fields are also included on the edges of the site.

The site provides good habitat for breeding wading birds, with Curlew, Golden Plover and Dunlin nesting in small numbers. Other typical upland species such as Peregrine, Merlin and Ring Ouzel are also present. Golden Plover, Peregrine and Merlin are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive and, along with Dunlin and Ring Ouzel, are also Red Data Book Species. Red Grouse, also a Red-listed species, is present on the site.

A number of locally rare plant species, including the moss *Dicranodontium asperulum*, occur. Other species found on the site which are scarce in Ireland or in the Leitrim/Cavan area include White Sedge (*Carex curta*), Common Yellow-sedge (*C. demissa*) and Bog Sedge (*C. limosa*), Blue Moor-grass (*Sesleria albicans*), Cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*), Beech Fern (*Phegopteris connectilis*), Lesser Twayblade (*Listera cordata*), Starry Saxifrage (*Saxifraga stellaris*), Stag's-horn Clubmoss (*Lycopodium clavatum*) and the lichens *Cladonia anomaea*, *C. bellidiflora*, *C. ciliata* var. *tenuis*, *C. crispata* var. *cetrariiformis*, *C. incrassata*, *C. coniocraea*, *C. pyxidata* and *C. strepsilis*.

The blanket bog areas of this site are extensive and relatively undisturbed. Natural transitions from blanket bog to heath and acidic grassland are evident, and cliffs, small ravines and small woodland blocks add diversity to the site.

30.6.2004

Conservation Objectives for Cuilcagh - Anierin Uplands SAC [000584]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- ◆ [3130] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or of the *Isoëto-Nanojuncetea*
- ◆ [3160] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds
- ◆ [4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*
- ◆ [4030] European dry heaths
- ◆ [6230] * Species-rich *Nardus* grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)
- ◆ [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active only)
- ◆ [8220] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Cuilcagh - Anierin Uplands SAC [000584]. Generic Version 3.0.
Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGH KINALE AND DERRAGH LOUGH SPA

SITE CODE: 0004061

Lough Kinale is a relatively small lake that is situated immediately downstream of Lough Sheelin, both lakes being near the top of the catchment of the Inny River, a main tributary of the River Shannon. Derragh Lough, a much smaller system, is connected to Lough Kinale and the Inny River. This is a typical limestone system and is very shallow (maximum depth of Lough Kinale is c. 4 m). As with Lough Sheelin, the trophic status of the lake has varied greatly since the 1970s due to pollution. It was recently (1998-2000) classified as a highly eutrophic system. The lake was formerly an important Trout fishery.

Lough Kinale has two main basins, almost separated by swamp formations. Reed swamp is frequent around the lakes, with Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and Tufted-sedge (*Carex elata*) occurring commonly. A calcium-rich small sedge marsh occurs along parts of the shoreline. This is characterised by species such as Long-stalked Yellow-sedge (*Carex lepidocarpa*), Marsh Pimpernel (*Anagallis tenella*), Knotted Pearlwort (*Sagina nodosa*), Marsh Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*) and Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*). Areas of bog occur around the margins of the lakes in places but some of these have been planted with conifers.

Despite the very variable water quality in recent decades, Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough remain an important site for wintering waterfowl, especially diving duck. The site supports nationally important populations of two species, i.e. Pochard (951) and Tufted Duck (449) - figures are average peaks for the 5 seasons 1995/96-1999/00. A large population of Mute Swan (120), close to the threshold for national importance, also uses the site. Coot (199), whilst still occurring in substantial numbers, formerly had a population of national importance. A number of other species are found, in relatively low numbers, including Great Crested Grebe (25), Mallard (130) and Goldeneye (22). Marginal grassland areas outside of the site attract feeding wildfowl and waders such as Lapwing and Golden Plover.

The variable water quality over the years, with periods of highly eutrophic conditions, undoubtedly has had adverse impacts on the wintering waterfowl, and especially the diving duck. This would appear to be borne out by very variable numbers of birds recorded over the years. The lake is still vulnerable to pollution and it is considered that there is urgent need to reduce the phosphorus inputs to the system. Afforestation has taken place close to parts of the shoreline and further planting would be undesirable. Angling and wildfowling activities currently cause some disturbance to the birds and any increase in such activities would be of concern.

Whilst relatively small in area and subject to a number of damaging activities, this site retains national importance for two duck species. With an improvement in the

environmental conditions pertaining at the site, higher numbers of some species would undoubtedly occur.

19.8.2004



Conservation Objectives for Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA [004061]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| ◆ <i>Aythya ferina</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Aythya fuligula</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ Wetlands | [] |

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA [004061]. Generic Version 4.0.
Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGH OUGHTER COMPLEX SPA

SITE CODE: 004049

Lough Oughter and its associated loughs occupy much of the lowland drumlin belt in north and central Co. Cavan between Belturbet, Killashandra and Cavan town. This area comprises a maze of waterways, islands, small lakes and peninsulas. Lough Oughter, the largest lake in the site, is relatively shallow (maximum depth of 10 m) and considered to be a naturally eutrophic system. Its main inflowing rivers are the River Erne and the Annalee River, whilst the main outflow is the River Erne, which connects the lake to Upper Lough Erne and Lower Lough Erne to the north.

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Great Crested Grebe, Whooper Swan, and Wigeon. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds.

The Lough Oughter Complex is of importance for a range of wintering waterfowl. Of particular note is an internationally important population of Whooper Swan (318) that is based in the area and which uses the lakes as a roost - all figures are five year mean peaks for the period 1995/96 to 1999/2000. A population of Greenland White-fronted Goose (75) of regional importance also roosts on the lakes and feeds mainly on agriculturally improved grassland nearby. The site supports nationally important wintering populations of two species, Great Crested Grebe (89) and Wigeon (903). Other species which occur regularly include Mute Swan (139), Teal (220), Mallard (336), Pochard (58), Tufted Duck (105), Goldeneye (117), Lapwing (381), Curlew (33), Little Grebe (8), Cormorant (81) and Black-headed Gull (311). A small colony of Common Tern occurs (10 pairs recorded at Farnham Lough in 1995).

Lough Oughter is at the centre of the Irish breeding range of Great Crested Grebe and the site supports in excess of 10% of the estimated national breeding total of this species (115 individuals in 1986-88).

The Lough Oughter Complex SPA is of ornithological importance for its wintering waterbird populations. Of particular note is the internationally important population of Whooper Swan that is based in the area. The site also supports nationally important populations of a further two wintering species and, notably, holds the highest breeding concentrations of Great Crested Grebe in the country. Two of the species which occur regularly are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, i.e. Whooper Swan and Greenland White-fronted Goose.

29.9.2010



Conservation Objectives for Lough Oughter Complex SPA [004049]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

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The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

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- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| ◆ <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Anas penelope</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ Wetlands | [] |

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Lough Oughter Complex SPA [004049]. Generic Version 4.0.
Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGH OUGHTER AND ASSOCIATED LOUGHS

SITE CODE: 000007

Lough Oughter and its associated loughs occupy much of the lowland drumlin belt in north and central Cavan between Upper Lough Erne, Killeshandra and Cavan town. The site is a maze of waterways, islands, small lakes and peninsulas including some 90 inter-drumlin lakes and 14 basins in the course of the Erne River. The area lies on Silurian and Ordovician strata with Carboniferous limestone immediately surrounding.

This site is a candidate Special Area of Conservation for natural eutrophic lakes and bog woodland, two habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive and for the otter, a species listed on Annex II of the same Directive. The site also contains areas of dry woodland, marsh, reedbed and wet pasture.

Drainage within the area is inefficient and the water levels prone to natural fluctuation as a result. The regularly flooded areas still accommodate a variety of specialist plant species such as Amphibious Bistort (*Polygonum amphibium*) and Marsh Foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*), as well as rarer species such as Needle Spike-Rush (*Eleocharis acicularis*) and Lesser Marshwort (*Apium inundatum*).

The lakes and basins are shallow, and the water well mixed and nutrient rich (eutrophic). The aquatic flora is varied with several pondweed species such as Blunt-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton obtusifolius*), Shining Pondweed (*Potamogeton lucens*), Broad-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*), Reddish Pondweed (*Potamogeton alpinus*) and Various-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton gramineus*). Typical in the zone of aquatic plants are Yellow Water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*), Canadian Pondweed (*Elodea canadensis*), Mare's Tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), Water Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*), Water Dropwort (*Oenanthe spp.*) and Starwort (*Callitriche sp.*). The aquatic community includes species of limited distribution in Ireland such as the Duckweed species *Lemna gibba* and *Spirodela polyrhiza*.

Around much of the shoreline there are well developed swamp and marsh communities, typically with a zone of Bulrush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) in front of a zone of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) which is in turn backed by a more species rich zone of sedges, grasses and herbs, particularly Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*), Common Sedge (*Carex nigra*), Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Marsh Helleborine (*Epipactis palustris*), Water Plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), Rough Horsetail (*Equisetum hyemale*), Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*) and Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*). Less widespread species also occur on the wet lake margins; species such as Water Dock (*Rumex hydrolapathum*), Greater Water-parsnip (*Sium latifolium*), Cowbane (*Cicuta virosa*), Tufted Sedge (*Carex elata*), Water Soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*), Arrowhead

(*Sagittaria sagittifolia*), Flowering Rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) and Greater Spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*) may be locally prominent.

There are many variations on this typical zonation of sheltered shores with species such as Reedmace (*Typha* spp.), Branched Bur-Reed (*Sparganium erectum*) and Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) gaining local prominence. More exposed shores lack the extensive swamp zones, here smaller species such as Common Spike Rush (*Eleocharis palustris*) can be found.

Level, wet pastures tend to be dominated by Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and Rush species (*Juncus* sp.) with a scattering of marshland and wet grassland plants such as Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpiodes*) and Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*). Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*) is most abundant with frequent Hard Rush (*Juncus inflexus*) and Sharp-Flowered Rush (*Juncus acutiflorus*) and less widespread Conglomerate Rush (*Juncus conglomeratus*) also occurring.

Where a general lack of grazing pressure or a particular slope has allowed it, deciduous woodland has re-established itself behind the reedbeds. Two species of Willow (*Salix caprea* and *Salix cinerea*) are common constituents along with Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). Along submerged margins Alder and Willow are most commonly found with a flooded understorey typically containing Reed Canary-grass, Meadow Sweet, Yellow Flag and in places Tufted Sedge (*Carex elata*) and Greater Tussock Sedge (*Carex paniculata*). Downy Birch occurs along lake edges and also forms stands of wet woodland on cutover bog with varying degrees of wet and dry peat. Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Marsh Cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*) and Bog Moss (*Sphagnum* sp.) occur in areas with pools and dry areas. Where there is dry peat, Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and Gorse (*Ulex* sp.) occur under the Birch canopy. Birch dominated wood is also found in association with Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) bog.

In areas of wet bog with good *Sphagnum* cover, bog woodland has developed. Downy Birch characterises this habitat; other typical species include Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*).

Dry broad-leaved woodland is characterised by Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hazel, Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Oak (*Quercus* spp.), while shrubs include Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) and Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*). The Red Data Book species Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*) has also been recorded from the site. The clayey soils have a characteristic flora, including Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*), Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*) and Wood Sedge (*Carex sylvatica*).

The site supports a substantial population of water birds including internationally important numbers of Whooper Swan (average peak 231) and nationally important numbers of Tufted Duck (average peak 247) and Cormorant (average peak 130) as well as important numbers of species such as Greenland White-fronted Goose, Great Crested Grebe, Wigeon, Teal and Pochard. Lapwing, Snipe and Golden Plover also

utilise the wet grassland areas. Wildfowl Sanctuaries exist at Inchin Lough, Derrygid Lough, Farnham Lough, Derrybrick Lough, Derrinishbeg Lough and Annagh Lough. Part of the site is designated an SPA under the EU Birds Directive.

Otter, a species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive occurs at the site. Irish Hare has also been recorded. Both of these species are listed in the Irish Red Data Book and are legally protected under the Wildlife Act 1976.

The main threats to the quality of the site are water polluting activities such as run-off from fertiliser and slurry application and sewage discharge which have raised the nutrient status of some lakes to hypertrophic. Housing and boating developments are on the increase, adjacent to and within the site respectively. There is also significant fishing and shooting pressure on and around the lakes. Increased afforestation has resulted in some loss of wetland habitat and also loss of feeding ground for wintering birds such as Greenland White-fronted Geese.

The Lough Oughter area contains important examples of two habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive and supports a population of the Annex II species, otter. The site as a whole is the best inland example of a flooded drumlin landscape in Ireland and has many rich and varied biological communities. Nowhere else in the country does such an intimate mixture of land and water occur over a comparable area, and many of the species of wetland plants, some considered quite commonplace in Lough Oughter and its associated loughs, are infrequent elsewhere.

27.11.2002



Conservation Objectives for Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC [000007]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

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The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- ◆ [1355] *Lutra lutra*
- ◆ [3150] Natural eutrophic lakes with *Magnopotamion* or *Hydrocharition*-type vegetation
- ◆ [91D0] * Bog woodland

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC [000007]. Generic Version 3.0. Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGH SHEELIN SPA

SITE CODE: 004065

Lough Sheelin is a medium- to large-sized lake, with a maximum length of 7 km. The lake lies near the top of the catchment of the Inny River, a main tributary of the River Shannon. It is a typical limestone lake and is fairly shallow (maximum depth 14 m). The trophic status of the lake has varied greatly since the 1970s due to pollution from mainly agricultural sources. It was recently (1998-2000) classified as a highly eutrophic system.

The shoreline is varied and no one plant species predominates over large areas. Species present include Jointed Rush (*Juncus articulatus*) and Common Spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*) growing on stony beaches, with Yellow Sedges (*Carex cf. demissa*), Lesser Spearwort (*Ranunculus flammula*), Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*) and Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*) also represented. The shore of the lake is also wooded in places and there are some very small offshore islands that are wooded with willows (*Salix aurita* and *S. cinerea*). The islands are fringed by swamp communities of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), Common Clubrush (*Scirpus lacustris*) and Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*). A good range of Charophytes has been recorded from the lake, including *Chare denudata*, a Red Data Book species.

Despite very variable water quality in recent decades, Lough Sheelin remains a very important site for wintering waterfowl, especially diving duck. It supports nationally important populations of four species, i.e. Great Crested Grebe (140), Pochard (546), Tufted Duck (762) and Goldeneye (224) all figures are average peaks for the 5 seasons 1995/96-1999/00. A number of other species occur in relatively low numbers, including Mute Swan (28), Mallard (76), Coot (24), Little Grebe (19), Cormorant (42) and Black-headed Gull (202).

The variable water quality over the years, with periods of highly eutrophic conditions, undoubtedly has had some adverse impacts on the wintering waterfowl, especially the diving duck. This would appear to be borne out by the very variable numbers of birds recorded over the years. It is considered that there is urgent need to reduce the phosphorus inputs to the feeder streams entering the lake.

Lough Sheelin is a nationally important site for four species of wintering wildfowl and is one of the main Midlands lakes sites for wintering birds. An improvement in water quality would probably result in higher numbers of birds frequenting the site.

6.10.2004



Conservation Objectives for Lough Sheelin SPA [004065]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

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- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| ◆ <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Aythya ferina</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Aythya fuligula</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ <i>Bucephala clangula</i> | [wintering] |
| ◆ Wetlands | [] |

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Lough Sheelin SPA [004065]. Generic Version 4.0. Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: RIVER BOYNE AND RIVER BLACKWATER

SITE CODE: 002299

This site comprises the freshwater element of the River Boyne as far as the Boyne Aqueduct, the Blackwater as far as Lough Ramor and the Boyne tributaries including the Deel, Stoneyford and Tremblestown Rivers. These riverine stretches drain a considerable area of Meath and Westmeath and smaller areas of Cavan and Louth. The underlying geology is Carboniferous Limestone for the most part with areas of Upper, Lower and Middle well represented. In the vicinity of Kells Silurian Quartzite is present while close to Trim are Carboniferous Shales and Sandstones. There are many large towns adjacent to but not within the site. Towns both small and large, include Slane, Navan, Kells, Trim, Athboy and Ballivor.

The site is a candidate SAC selected for alkaline fen and alluvial woodlands, both habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected for the following species listed on Annex II of the same directive – Atlantic Salmon, Otter and River Lamprey.

The main areas of alkaline fen are concentrated in the vicinity of Lough Shesk, Freehan Lough and Newtown Lough. The hummocky nature of the local terrain produces frequent springs and seepages which are rich in lime. A series of base-rich marshes have developed in the poorly-drained hollows, generally linked with these three lakes. Open water is usually fringed by Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Common Club-rush (*Scirpus lacustris*) or Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and this last species also extends shorewards where a dense stand of Great Fen Sedge or Saw Sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) frequently occurs. This in turn grades into a sedge and grass community (*Carex* spp., *Molinia caerulea*) or one dominated by the Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*). An alternative direction for the aquatic/terrestrial transition to take is through a floating layer of vegetation. This is normally based on Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and Marsh cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*). Other species gradually become established on this cover, especially plants tolerant of low nutrient status e.g. bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.). Diversity of plant and animal life is high in the fen and the flora, includes many rarities. The plants of interest include Narrow-leaved Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza traunsteineri*), Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), Cowbane (*Cicuta virosa*), Frogbit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*) and Least Bur-reed (*Sparganium minimum*). These species tend to be restricted in their distribution in Ireland. Also notable is the abundance of aquatic Stoneworts (*Chara* spp.) which are characteristic of calcareous wetlands.

The rare plant, Round-leaved Wintergreen (*Pyrola rotundifolia*) occurs around Newtown Lough. This species is listed in the Red Data Book and is protected under the Flora Protection Order, 1999, and this site is its only occurrence in Co. Meath.

Wet woodland fringes many stretches of the Boyne. The Boyne River Islands are a small chain of three islands situated 2.5 km west of Drogheda. The islands were formed by the build up of alluvial sediment in this part of the river where water movement is sluggish. All of the islands are covered by dense thickets of wet, Willow (*Salix* spp.) woodland, with the following species occurring: Osier (*S. viminalis*), Crack Willow (*S. fragilis*), White Willow (*S. alba*), Purple Willow (*Salix purpurea*) and Grey Willow (*S. cinerea*). A small area of Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) woodland is found on soft ground at the edge of the canal in the north-western section of the islands. Along other stretches of the rivers of the site Grey Willow scrub and pockets of wet woodland dominated by Alder have become established, particularly at the river edge of mature deciduous woodland. Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Birch (*Betula pubescens*) are common in the latter and the ground flora is typical of wet woodland with Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Yellow Iris, Horsetail (*Equisetum* spp.) and occasional tussocks of Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*).

The dominant habitat along the edges of the river is freshwater marsh - the following plant species occur commonly here: Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*), Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Canary Reed-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Marsh Bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*) and Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*). In the wetter areas of the marsh Common Meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) is found. In the vicinity of Dowth, Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), a scarce species mainly confined to marshy areas in the midlands, is common in this vegetation. Swamp Meadow-grass (*Poa palustris*) is an introduced plant which has spread into the wild (naturalised) along the Boyne approximately 5 km south-west of Slane. It is a rare species which is listed in the Red Data Book and has been recorded among freshwater marsh vegetation on the banks of the Boyne in this site. The only other record for this species in the Republic is from a site in Co. Monaghan.

The secondary habitat associated with the marsh is wet grassland and species such as Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*), Silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Meadow Vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) are well represented. Strawberry Clover (*Trifolium fragiferum*), a plant generally restricted to coastal locations in Ireland, has been recorded from wet grassland vegetation at Trim. At Rossnaree river bank on the River Boyne, is Round-Fruited Rush (*Juncus compressus*) found in alluvial pasture, which is generally periodically flooded during the winter months. This rare plant is only found in three counties in Ireland.

Along much of the Boyne and along tributary stretches are areas of mature deciduous woodland on the steeper slopes above the floodplain marsh or wet woodland vegetation. Many of these are planted in origin. However the steeper areas of King Williams Glen and Townley Hall wood have been left unmanaged and now have a more natural character. East of Curley Hole the woodland has a natural appearance with few conifers. Broad-leaved species include Oak (*Quercus* spp.), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Willows, Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Horse chestnut (*Aesculus* sp.) and the shrubs Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*). South-west of Slane and in Dowth, the addition of some more exotic tree species such

as Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), and occasionally Lime (*Tilia cordata*), are seen. Coniferous trees, Larch (*Larix* sp.) and Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) also occur. The woodland ground flora includes Barren Strawberry (*Potentilla sterilis*), Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*) and Ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), along with a range of ferns. Variation occurs in the composition of the canopy, for example, in wet patches alongside the river, White Willow and Alder form the canopy.

Other habitats present along the Boyne and Blackwater include lowland dry grassland, improved grassland, reedswamp, weedy wasteground areas, scrub, hedge, drainage ditches and canal. In the vicinity of Lough Shesk, the dry slopes of the morainic hummocks support grassland vegetation which, in some places, is partially colonised by Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) scrub. Those grasslands which remain unimproved for pasture are species-rich with Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) commonly present. Fringing the canal alongside the Boyne south-west of Slane, are Reed Sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*), Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) and Meadowsweet.

The Boyne and its tributaries is one of Ireland's premier game fisheries and it offers a wide range of angling from fishing for spring salmon and grilse to seatrout fishing and extensive brown trout fishing. Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) use the tributaries and headwaters as spawning grounds. Although this species is still fished commercially in Ireland, it is considered to be endangered or locally threatened elsewhere in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive. Atlantic Salmon run the Boyne almost every month of the year. The Boyne is most important as it represents an eastern river which holds large three-sea-winter fish from 20–30 lb. These fish generally arrive in February with smaller spring fish (10 lb) arriving in April/May. The grilse come in July, water permitting. The river gets a further run of fish in late August and this run would appear to last well after the fishing season. The salmon fishing season lasts from 1st March to 30th September.

The Blackwater is a medium sized limestone river which is still recovering from the effects of the arterial drainage scheme of the 70's. Salmon stocks have not recovered to the numbers pre drainage. The Deel, Riverstown, Stoneyford and Tremblestown Rivers are all spring fed with a continuous high volume of water. They are difficult to fish in that some are overgrown while others have been affected by drainage with the resulting high banks.

The site is also important for the populations of two other species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, namely River Lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*) which is present in the lower reaches of the Boyne River while the Otter (*Lutra lutra*) can be found throughout the site. In addition, the site also supports many more of the mammal species occurring in Ireland. Those which are listed in the Irish Red Data Book include Pine Marten, Badger and Irish Hare. Common Frog, another Red Data Book species, also occurs within the site. All of these animals with the addition of the Stoat and Red Squirrel, which also occur within the site, are protected under the Wildlife Act.

Whooper Swans winter regularly at several locations along the Boyne and Blackwater Rivers. Parts of these areas are within the cSAC site. Known sites are at Newgrange (c. 20 in recent winters), near Slane (20+ in recent winters), Wilkinstown (several records of 100+) and River Blackwater from Kells to Navan (104 at Kells in winter 1996/97, 182 at Headfort in winter 1997/98, 200-300 in winter 1999/00). The available information indicates that there is a regular wintering population of Whooper Swans based along the Boyne and Blackwater River valleys. The birds use a range of feeding sites but roosting sites are not well known. The population is substantial, certainly of national, and at times international, importance. Numbers are probably in the low hundreds.

Intensive agriculture is the main landuse along the site. Much of the grassland is in very large fields and is improved. Silage harvesting is carried out. The spreading of slurry and fertiliser poses a threat to the water quality of this salmonid river and to the lakes. In the more extensive agricultural areas sheep grazing is carried out.

Fishing is a main tourist attraction on the Boyne and Blackwater and there are a number of Angler Associations, some with a number of beats. Fishing stands and styles have been erected in places. The Eastern Regional Fishery Board have erected fencing along selected stretches of the river as part of their salmonid enhancement programme. Parts of the river system have been arterially dredged. In 1969 an arterial dredging scheme commenced and disrupted angling for 18 years. The dredging altered the character of the river completely and resulted in many cases in leaving very high banks. The main channel from Drogheda upstream to Navan was left untouched, as were a few stretches on the Blackwater. Ongoing maintenance dredging is carried out along stretches of the river system where the gradient is low. This is extremely destructive to salmonid habitat in the area. Drainage of the adjacent river systems also impacts on the many small wetland areas throughout the site. The River Boyne is a designated Salmonid Water under the EU Freshwater Fish Directive.

The site supports populations of several species listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive, and habitats listed on Annex I of this directive, as well as examples of other important habitats. Although the wet woodland areas appear small there are few similar examples of this type of alluvial wet woodland remaining in the country, particularly in the north-east. The semi-natural habitats, particularly the strips of woodland which extend along the river banks and the marsh and wet grasslands, increase the overall habitat diversity and add to the ecological value of the site as does the presence of a range of Red Data Book plant and animal species and the presence of nationally rare plant species.

6.10.2006

Conservation Objectives for River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC [002299]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- ◆ [1099] *Lampetra fluviatilis*
- ◆ [1106] *Salmo salar* (only in fresh water)
- ◆ [1355] *Lutra lutra*
- ◆ [7230] Alkaline fens
- ◆ [91E0] * Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC [002299]. Generic Version 3.0. Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: RIVER BOYNE AND RIVER BLACKWATER SPA

SITE CODE: 004232

The River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA is a long, linear site that comprises stretches of the River Boyne and several of its tributaries; most of the site is in Co. Meath, but it extends also into Cos Cavan, Louth and Westmeath. It includes the following river sections: the River Boyne from the M1 motorway bridge, west of Drogheda, to the junction with the Royal Canal, west of Longwood, Co Meath; the River Blackwater from its junction with the River Boyne in Navan to the junction with Lough Ramor in Co. Cavan; the Tremblestown River/Athboy River from the junction with the River Boyne at Kilnagross Bridge west of Trim to the bridge in Athboy, Co. Meath; the Stoneyford River from its junction with the River Boyne to Stonestown Bridge in Co. Westmeath; the River Deel from its junction with the River Boyne to Cummer Bridge, Co. Westmeath. The site includes the river channel and marginal vegetation.

Most of the site is underlain by Carboniferous limestone but Silurian quartzite also occurs in the vicinity of Kells and Carboniferous shales and sandstones close to Trim.

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive of special conservation interest for the following species: Kingfisher.

A survey in 2010 recorded 19 pairs of Kingfisher (based on 15 probable and 4 possible territories) in the River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA. A survey conducted in 2008 recorded 20-22 Kingfisher territories within the SPA. Other species which occur within the site include Mute Swan (90), Teal (166), Mallard (219), Cormorant (36), Grey Heron (44), Moorhen (84), Snipe (32) and Sand Martin (553) – all figures are peak counts recorded during the 2010 survey.

The River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Protection Area is of high ornithological importance as it supports a nationally important population of Kingfisher, a species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

25.11.2010



Conservation Objectives for River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA [004232]

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:

- ◆ *Alcedo atthis* [breeding]

Citation:

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA [004232]. Generic Version 4.0.
Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.

For more information please go to: www.npws.ie/protectedsites/conservationmanagementplanning