

NATURA IMPACT REPORT

IN SUPPORT OF THE
APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT
FOR
PROPOSED MATERIAL ALTERATIONS
TO THE
**DRAFT MONAGHAN COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2019-2025**

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

for: Monaghan County Council

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

CAAS has been appointed by Monaghan County Council to prepare this Appropriate Assessment (AA) for Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the "Habitats Directive").

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the "favourable conservation status" of habitats and species of European Community Interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds) with Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as European Sites.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the European Sites at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations (in particular Part XAB of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (as amended) to ensure the ecological integrity of these sites. AA is an assessment of whether a plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans or projects, could have significant effects on a European Site in view of the Site's conservation objectives.

This report is part of the ongoing AA process that is being undertaken alongside the preparation of the Monaghan County Development Plan. It will be considered, alongside other documentation prepared as part of this process, when the planning authority finalises the AA at adoption of the Plan.

1.2 Legislative Context

AA is an assessment of the potential for adverse or negative effects of a plan or project, in combination with other plans or projects, on the conservation objectives of a European Site. These sites consist of SACs and SPAs and provide for the protection and long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. In Ireland, these are SACs and SPAs, designated under the Birds Directive, hereafter referred to as European Sites.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European Sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA:

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

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

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

These requirements are implemented in the Republic of Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended). These regulations consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010, as well as addressing transposition failures identified in judgements of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU).

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project may nevertheless be carried out for "Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest" (IROPI), including those of a social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

1.3 Guidance

This NIR has been prepared in accordance with the following guidance:

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010;*
- *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission Environment DG, 2002;*
- *Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC: European Commission, 2000;*
- *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, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2001);*
- *Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2007); and*
- *Flora (Protection) Order, 1999 (as amended).*

The AA is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological and hydrological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and 'grey' literature was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife Website including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and in particular sensitive qualifying interests/special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives. The EPA Envision Map-viewer (www.epa.ie) and available reports were also reviewed.

Definitions of conservation status, integrity and significance used in this assessment are defined in accordance with 'Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC' (EC, 2000).

- The conservation status of a natural habitat is defined as the sum of the influences acting on a natural habitat and its typical species that may affect its long-term natural distribution, structure and functions as well as the long-term survival of its typical species;
- The conservation status of a species is defined as the sum of the influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its population;
- The integrity of a European Site is defined as the coherence of the site's ecological structure and function, across its whole area, or the habitats, complex of habitats and/or populations of species for which the site is or will be classified; and
- Significant effect should be determined in relation to the specific features and environmental conditions of the protected site concerned by the plan or project, taking particular account of the site's conservation objectives.

1.4 Approach

There are four main stages in the AA process; the requirements for each depending on likely impacts to European Sites (SACs and SPAs).

Stage One: Screening

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

Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment

The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European 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. If adequate mitigation is proposed to ensure no significant adverse impacts on European Sites, then the process may end at this stage. However, if the likelihood of significant impacts remains, then the process must proceed to Stage 3.

Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of the European Site.

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

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

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

1.4.1 Source-Pathway-Receptor Model

Ecological impact assessment of potential effects on European Sites is conducted following a standard source-pathway-receptor model, where, in order for an effect to be established all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the mechanism is sufficient to conclude that a potential effect is not of any relevance or significance.

- Source(s) – e.g. pollutant run-off from proposed works;
- Pathway(s) – e.g. groundwater connecting to nearby qualifying wetland habitats and
- Receptor(s) – qualifying aquatic habitats and species of European Sites.

In the interest of this report, receptors are the ecological features which are known to be utilised by the qualifying interests or special conservation interests of a European Site. A source is any identifiable element of the Proposed Material Alterations (PMAs) to Draft Plan provision which is known to have interactions with ecological processes. The pathways are any connections or links between the source and the receptor. This report determines if direct, indirect and cumulative adverse effects (however minor) will arise from the PMAs.

1.4.2 Zone of Influence

Following the source-pathway-receptor process a Zone of Influence (ZOI) is determined based on the characteristics of the development (detailed in Section 3.2) and the foreseen distribution of likely effects through any pathways is identified. All European Sites within the ZOI are assessed with specific reference to the sensitive receptors of each site and pathways for effect that relate to the ecological integrity of the site.

1.5 Relationship between the Appropriate Assessment process and the Draft Plan

AA is fully integrated with the various stages of the County Development Plan preparation process in order to help to ensure that the Draft Plan does not affect European Sites. The screening and the assessment of the Draft Plan provisions in the context of mitigation measures and potential effects on European Sites, has been an iterative process throughout each stage of the Plan-making process.

This NIR for the Proposed Material Alterations is part of the ongoing AA process that is being undertaken alongside the preparation and adoption of the Plan. It will be considered alongside other documentation prepared as part of this process – in totality, before adoption – once the details of the final Draft Plan to be adopted are known.

2 Description of and background to the Proposed Material Alterations

2.1 Draft Monaghan County Development Plan

The Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan over the timescale of the Plan. Spatial planning through the development plan policies endeavors to achieve balance between the common good and the interests of those individuals. It is acknowledged that many of the major issues affecting the County's development are contingent on national policy and government funding. However, the reform of local government in 2014 it is also noted that a new document has been produced which focuses on what can be achieved locally by working together to bring about a higher quality of life and more sustainable economic development in Monaghan. In January 2016, Monaghan County Council working alongside Monaghan Local Community Development Committee published the first Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for County Monaghan. This was produced following extensive research and consultation in order to identify the key challenges, opportunities and priorities from both a community and economic perspective. This will set a vision, goals and objectives as well as detailed actions to mobilize all stakeholders with an interest in a successful future for Monaghan. The LECP and the County Development Plan are complementary policy documents, which share the same vision to provide an overall strategy for the social, economic, cultural and physical development of the County.

Therefore, this Plan builds on the review of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 but also takes account of more recent key development trends, national, regional and local policy documents as well as EU legislative requirements.

2.1.1 Strategic Objectives

The realization of this aim will be pursued by seeking to secure the following overall strategic objectives of the Plan:

1. To develop to its full potential each part of County Monaghan in economic, social and environmental terms.
2. To sustain traditional settlement patterns while developing the role and function of each town, village and settlement throughout the County in accordance with the settlement strategy.
3. To realise the potential of County Monaghan in the context of its strategic location along the border, adjacent to the eastern economic corridor and to improve linkages and communications between Monaghan and its neighbouring counties.
4. To support balanced economic development throughout the County by delivering improved infrastructure and services.
5. To protect and nurture the County's rich natural resources, heritage and amenities along with the environmental quality of the natural and built environment in both the urban and rural areas.
6. To plan for greater social inclusion and to improve the quality of life of all who live and work in County Monaghan.
7. To provide a framework for the management and regulation of development and use of land that will guide day to day planning decisions.

2.1.2 Settlement Plans

The Draft Plan incorporates settlement plans for the five towns of County Monaghan. These Settlement Plans include for those towns listed in Tier 1, 2 and 3 of the Core Strategy.

2.1.3 Vision

The overall purpose of the settlement plans is to set out a shared vision of how the sustainable and coordinated growth and development of the towns in the County can be shaped in a planned manner

which will also act as a catalyst for the economic, physical, cultural and environmental development of the towns.

The concept of sustainable development is a theme which runs through this Plan and it requires that development occurs in a manner which shall provide for the greater community need in the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs and enjoy the same quality of life and environment. This approach will also protect the natural and built environment by ensuring that new development is of a high standard considering surrounding properties and uses.

Specific Strategic Objectives for Settlement Plan Towns:

Settlement	Specific Strategic Objective
SH01 Monaghan Town	To facilitate the development of Monaghan to maintain its position as the principle town in the County at the top of the settlement hierarchy and to ensure that its expansion takes place in an orderly and sustainable fashion that will not detract from the vitality and viability of its town center.
SH02 Carrickmacross & Castleblayney	To promote the Strategic Towns as prosperous and thriving local development and service towns where the principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability including protection of the town's heritage and natural and built environment are enshrined.
SH03 Clones & Ballybay	To promote and develop Tier 3 Service Towns in order to create self-sufficient sustainable and vibrant communities which will act as local development and service centers for the border catchment and the mid Monaghan hinterland.

2.2 Proposed Material Alterations

As part of the ongoing Draft Plan preparation process, this step involves Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan described above. There were a series of alterations proposed that arose from the submissions received during the public consultation process. Most of the changes are texted based changes relating to the clarification of definitions and processes. However, there are several new policies and objectives that relate to forestry, greenway infrastructure, tourism, wind energy development and intensification of road works. For further details please refer to the Proposed Material Alterations document prepared by Monaghan County Council.

2.3 Relationship with other Relevant Plans and Programmes

The Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan sit within a hierarchy of strategic actions such as plans and programmes. The Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan must comply with relevant higher-level strategic actions and may, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions.

2.3.1 Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between.

The National Planning Framework and accompanying National Development Plan share ten National Strategic Outcomes as follows:

1. Compact Growth;
2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility;
3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities;
4. Sustainable Mobility;
5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills;
6. High-Quality International Connectivity;
7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage;

8. Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society;
9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources; and
10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services.

2.3.2 Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (Replacing Regional Planning Guidelines; will commence in 2019 and will be adopted over lifetime of the Plan)

Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) provide long-term strategic planning frameworks and will be replaced by Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs).

Each one of the three Regional Assemblies will prepare their own RSES, with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, of which Monaghan County Council is part, responsible for the preparation of a RSES for the Northern and Western Region. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies will provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework.

2.3.3 Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025

The Draft Monaghan County Development Plan vision is to “The overall purpose of the settlement plans is to set out a shared vision of how the sustainable and coordinated growth and development of the towns in the County can be shaped in a planned manner which will also act as a catalyst for the economic, physical, cultural and environmental development of the towns”.

2.3.4 Environmental Protection Objectives

The Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan is subject to a number of high-level environmental protection policies and objectives with which it must comply. Examples of Environmental Protection Objectives include the aims of the EU Habitats Directive which is to contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of Member States and the purpose of the Water Framework Directive which is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater which, among other things, prevents deterioration in the status of all water bodies and protects, enhances and restores all waters with the aim of achieving good status.

3 Screening for Appropriate Assessment¹

3.1 Introduction to Screening

3.1.1 Background to Screening

This stage of the process identifies any likely significant effects to European Sites from a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans. The screening phase was progressed in the following stages. A series of questions are asked during the Screening Stage of the AA process in order to determine:

- Whether a plan or project can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site.
- Whether the project will have a potentially significant effect on a European Site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, in view of the site's conservation objectives or if residual uncertainty exists regarding potential impacts.

An important element of the AA process is the identification of the "conservation objectives", "Qualifying Interests" (QIs) and/ or "Special Conservation Interests" (SCIs) of European Sites requiring assessment. QIs are the habitat features and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive for which each European Site has been designated and afforded protection. SCIs are wetland habitats and bird species listed within Annexes I and II of the Birds Directive. It is also vital that the threats to the ecological / environmental conditions that are required to support QIs and SCIs are considered as part of the assessment.

Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) have been designed to define favourable conservation status for a particular habitat or species at that site. According to the European Commission interpretation document 'Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC', paragraph 4.6(3) states:

"The integrity of a site involves its ecological functions. The decision as to whether it is adversely affected should focus on and be limited to the site's conservation objectives."

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.

The screening stage of the AA takes account of the elements detailed above with regard to the details and characteristics of the project or plan to determine if potential for effects to the integrity of the European Site are likely. The characteristics of the Draft Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, were constructed through an iterative process, as a result the European Sites which are screened below may differ from those of high-level plans, due to refinements in the methods/project details available.

¹ This NIR for the Proposed Material Alterations is part of the ongoing AA process that is being undertaken alongside the preparation and adoption of the Plan. It will be considered alongside other documentation prepared as part of this process – in totality, before adoption – once the details of the final Draft Plan to be adopted are known.

3.1.2 Desktop Studies

The ecological desktop study completed for this AA of the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan comprised the following elements:

- Assessment of the original Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 and associated reports (including the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan);
- Assessment of all submissions made to the Draft Plan;
- Identification of European Sites within 15km with identification of potential pathways links for specific sites (if relevant) greater than 15km from the Draft Plan area;
- Review of the NPWS site synopsis and conservation objectives for European Sites with identification of potential pathways from the Draft Plan area; and
- A series of ecological desktop studies were undertaken in December 2018. This included but is not limited to the collation of information on protected species including Bats, Otters, Bird species (including Annex I species), Annex II habitat types, protected and Red Data Book Flora species, invertebrates and amphibians. The results of these studies are included as part of the AA where they were deemed relevant to the European Sites and their QIs/SCIs.

3.2 Identification of Relevant European Sites

This section of the screening process describes the European Sites which exist within the ZOI of the site. The DoEHLG (2009) Guidance on AA recommends a 15km buffer zone to be considered. A review of all sites within the ZOI has allowed a determination to be made that in the absence of significant hydrological links the characteristics of the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan will not impose effects beyond the 15 km ZOI.

European Sites that occur within 15km of the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan are listed in Table 3.1 and illustrated in Figure 3.1 below. Details on the specific qualifying features and special conservation interests of each European Site are also identified in Table 3.1.

In order to determine the potential for effects from the Draft Plan, information on the qualifying features, known vulnerabilities and threats to site integrity pertaining to any potentially affected European Sites was reviewed. Background information on threats to individual sites and vulnerability of habitats and species that was used during this assessment included the following:

- *Ireland's Article 17 Report to the European Commission "Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland" (NPWS, 2013);*
- *Site Synopses; and*
- *NATURA 2000 Standard Data Forms.*

The conservation objectives of each of the sites where considered, however in general the SSCOs produced by the NPWS do not provide much scope beyond the qualifying features. Since the conservation objectives for the European Sites focus on maintaining the favourable conservation condition of the QIs/SCIs of each site, the screening process concentrated on assessing the potential effects of the Draft Plan against the QIs/SCIs of each site. This assessment also considers ecosystem functionally and the maintenance of the ecological resource requirements for these species.

The Habitats Directive establishes the requirement to assess potential effects of plans/projects on the qualifying interests and conservation objectives (including structure and function) of designated European Sites, and, where relevant, non-qualifying interests that are important to the overall functioning of the site and its conservation objectives under Articles 10 and 12-16. Similarly, Article 4(4) of the Birds Directive identifies a requirement to consider special conservation interest species, pollution and the deterioration of bird habitats, which requires considerations beyond the footprints of designated areas.

The site-specific threats and vulnerabilities of each of the sites are detailed in Appendix I.

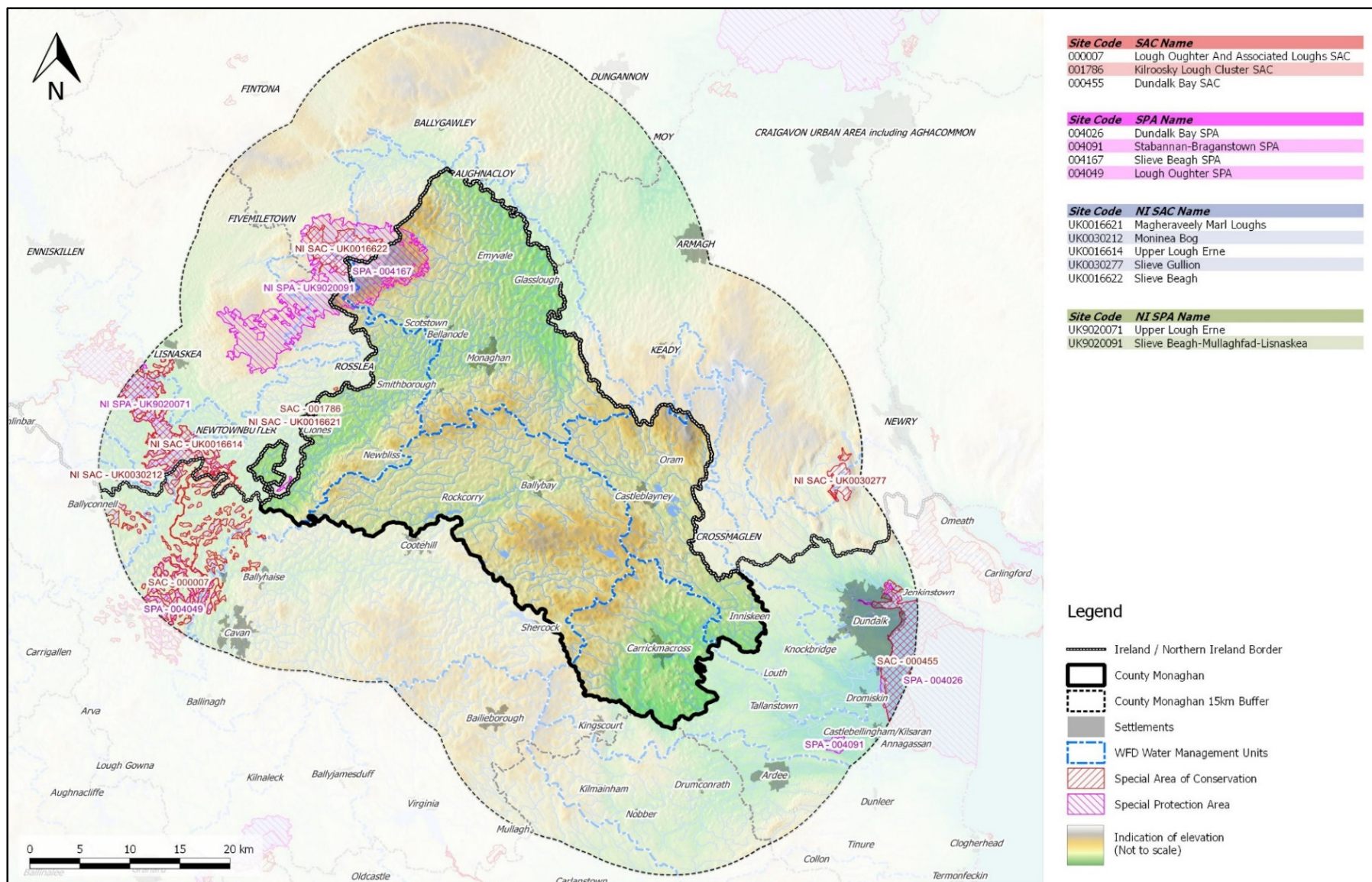


Figure 3.1 European Sites within 15 km of the Draft Plan boundary

Table 3.1 European Sites within 15 km of the Draft Plan boundary

Site Code	Site Name	Distance km	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests of Special Conservation Interests)
001786	Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC	Within	Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara spp.</i> [3140] Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] Alkaline fens [7230] White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) [1092]
004167	Slieve Beagh SPA	Within	Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082]
UK0016621	Magheraveely Marl Loughs SAC	0	White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) [1092] Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> * [7210] Alkaline fens [7230] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara spp</i> [3140]
UK0016622	Slieve Beagh SAC	0	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] European dry heaths [4030]
UK9020071	Upper Lough Erne SPA	0	Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Albifrons flavirons</i>) [A395]
UK9020091	Slieve Beagh Mullaghfad Lisnaskea SPA	0	Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082]
000007	Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC	0.88	Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> - type vegetation [3150] Bog woodland [91D0] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]
UK0016614	Upper Lough Erne SAC	1.29	Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> - type vegetation [3150] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>)* [91E0] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]
004049	Lough Oughter SPA	8.55	Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]
004026	Dundalk Bay SPA	9.10	Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]
000455	Dundalk Bay SAC	10.37	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]
004091	Stabannan-Braganstown SPA	11.23	Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043]
UK0030277	Slieve Gullion SAC	11.61	European dry heaths [4030]
UK0030212	Moninea Bog SAC	12.76	Active raised bogs * [7110]

3.3 Assessment Criteria

3.3.1 Is the Plan Necessary to the Management of European Sites?

Under the Habitats Directive, Plans that are directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site do not require AA. For this exception to apply, management is required to be interpreted narrowly as nature conservation management in the sense of Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive. This refers to specific measures to address the ecological requirements of annexed habitats and species (and their habitats) present on a site(s). The relationship should be shown to be direct and not a by-product of the plan, even if this might result in positive or beneficial effects for a site(s).

The primary purpose of the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan is not the nature conservation management of the sites, but to provide a framework for the planned, co-ordinated and sustainable development in the Monaghan area. Therefore, the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan are not considered by the Habitats Directive to be directly connected with or necessary to the management of European designated sites.

3.3.2 Elements of the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan with Potential to Give Rise to Effects

This assessment is part of an overall AA Process that is being undertaken alongside the Plan preparation and adoption process. The original Draft Plan was subject to a full NIR, which detailed policies and objectives contained within the Draft Plan that reduced and/or minimised potential effects arising from the Plan on the ecological integrity of any European Site. The purpose of this assessment is to identify any potential effects that may arise from the Proposed Material Alterations.

Chapter Number	Potential effects to ecological processes
Chapter 1	The Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 1 are the text based changes that relate to the planning hierarchy and commitments to align with national and regional strategies. These alterations relate to the context that is provided for Plan provisions and have no sources for effects to ecological processes.
Chapter 2	The Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 2 are the text based changes to provide clarity to the Core Strategy and direct reference to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment that is being undertaken as part of the Plan preparation process. These alterations relate to the context that is provided for Plan provisions and have no sources for effects to ecological processes.
Chapter 3	The Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 3 are the text based changes to provide clarity to the scope of Policy HSP4. This alteration relates to the context that is provided for Plan provisions and has no sources for effects to ecological processes.
Chapter 4	The Proposed Material Alteration No. 2 in Chapter 4. 4 broadens the scope of the text to include forestry and the associated effects. Forestry has potential to introduce significant adverse effects to ecological processes. All other Proposed Material Alterations in this chapter relate to text based changes to provide clarity within the text and policies to align with the tourism objectives of Ireland's Ancient East. These alterations have no sources for effects to ecological processes.
Chapter 5	The Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 5 relate to the development of infrastructure such as a 3 rd level education facility and walkway paths and trails. These sources for effects were already considered in the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan, and they will be considered again at later stages of the Plan preparation process. There are no additional sources for effects to ecological process that have not already been considered with respect to all relevant European Sites.
Chapter 6	The Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 6 relate to the promotion of Kavanagh County as a cultural destination and the conservation of built heritage. There are no additional sources for effects to ecological process that have not already been considered with respect to all relevant European Sites.
Chapter 7	Chapter 7 relates to transport infrastructure. The development of road infrastructure has already been considered by the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan. The proposed alterations relate to clarification of texts and additional policies relating to infrastructural requirements as ' <i>consequences of the UK leaving the EU</i> '. Proposed Material Alteration No. 2 in Chapter 7 identifies specific road realignment works that introduce refined and additional locations for potential sources for effects that were not fully considered in the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan.
Chapter 8	The Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 8 relate to the environment, energy and climate change. Article 6(3) of the habitats directive identifies the need to identify potential significant effects. The Proposed Material Alteration No. 5 in Chapter 8 introduces a policy that has potential to further contribute towards the protection of the ecological integrity of European Sites. This alteration introduces Policy WPP19 which aims to prevent fragmentation of watercourses and promote habitat connectivity of waterways in consultation with Inlands Fisheries Ireland.

Chapter Number	Potential effects to ecological processes
	<p>Similarly, the Proposed Material Alteration No. 8 in Chapter 8 introduces text based clarification of the processes by which any potential Wind Energy Development will be assessed which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on nature conservation, ecology, soil, hydrology, groundwater, archaeology, historic structures, public rights of way and walking routes. - Local environmental impacts including noise and shadow flicker. <p>All other Proposed Material Alterations in this chapter relate to text based changes to provide clarity within the text in relation to the existing river basin management plan for compliance with the Water Framework Directive and flood risk management processes. These alterations have no sources for effects to ecological processes.</p>
Chapter 9	<p>The Proposed Material Alteration in Chapter 9 relate to text based changes to provide clarity to the strategic objectives of settlements and identifies a focus on sustainable transport models within the urban development. These sources for effects were already considered in the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan, and they will be considered again at later stages of the Plan preparation process. There are no additional sources for effects to ecological process that have not already been considered with respect to all relevant European Sites.</p>
Chapter 10	<p>Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 10 relate to both text based and land use zoning based provisions. These sources for effects were already considered in the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan, and they will be considered again at later stages of the plan preparation process. There are no additional sources for effects to ecological process that have not already been considered with respect to all relevant European Sites.</p>
Chapter 11	<p>Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 11 relate to land use zoning for Carrickmacross. There are no additional sources for effects to ecological process that have not already been considered with respect to all relevant European Sites. The maps were reviewed in relation to the distances to European Sites and no direct land take will occur due to these Proposed Material Alterations.</p>
Chapter 12	<p>Proposed Material Alterations in Chapter 12 provides additional clarity to the provision of tourism facilities at Lough Muckno. Alterations to the land use zoning maps for Castleblaney are also proposed to be altered. The sources for effects associated with the provisions to which the alterations relate were already considered in the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan, and they will be considered again at later stages of the Plan preparation process. There are no additional sources for effects to ecological process that have not already been considered with respect to all relevant European Sites.</p>
Chapter 13	<p>Alterations to this Chapter relate to text clarifications and future phasing of the Ulster Canal Greenway Network.</p> <p>Alteration No. 6 from this Chapter introduces additional sources for effects that were not fully considered in the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan. Policy CP 07 now provides for <i>'complementary developments along the route of the Ulster Canal, including the development of the proposed Ulster Canal Greenway network'</i>.</p>
Chapter 14	<p>Alterations proposed to the land use zoning for Ballybay present no additional sources for effects to ecological process that have not already been considered with respect to all relevant European Sites. The maps were reviewed in relation to the distances to European Sites and no direct land take will occur due to these Proposed Material Alterations.</p>
Chapter 15	<p>Development management standards (many of which relate to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management) would contribute towards the achievement of the Plan's overall vision and aims.. Proposed Material Alterations to this Chapter have no sources for effects to ecological processes.</p>
Chapter 16	<p>The Alteration to this Chapter relates to residential development, land management and possible future rezoning. Any future rezoning under the County Development Plan would be required to be subject to relevant levels of AA. There are no additional sources for effects to ecological processes arising from this Alteration.</p>
Other amendments including to those to appendices and the SEA Environmental Report	<p>These changes that are detailed in the Proposed Material Alteration documents provide context for Plan provisions and therefore have no sources for effects to European Sites.</p>

Proposed Material Alterations in Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 and in the SEA Environmental Report do not introduce any additional sources for effects to the ecological integrity of European Sites that were not already considered in the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan as part of the ongoing AA process. The Proposed Material Alterations that introduce additional sources for effects to ecological processes are identified as:

- Chapter 4, No. 2;
- Chapter 7, No. 2;
- Chapter 8, No. 5;
- Chapter 8, No. 8; and

- Chapter 13, No. 6.

Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.

Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 7, No. 2: There are sourced for potential effects introduced by the Proposed Material Alterations with respect to the clarification of the location of road infrastructure and hydrological pathways are present. Further assessment into the location of the additional road realignments are required.

Proposed Material Alteration references Chapter 8, No. 5 and Chapter 8, No. 8: These Proposed Material Alterations introduce additional clarity to the process by which wind energy developments will be assessed within the County and further contribute towards the protection of aquatic habitats that is already provided for by other Draft Plan provisions (WPP19).

Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 13, No. 6: This alteration provides for additional development within the Clones settlement area which is directly adjacent to the Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC. There are direct pathways for effects to hydrological receptors. Proposed Material Alterations in chapters 4, 7, 8 and 13 are given more detailed consideration in sections below as they involve additional sources for effects such as forestry, greenways infrastructure, tourism, wind energy development and intensification of road works.

3.3.3 Identification of Potential Effects and Screening of Sites

This section documents the final stage of the screening process. It has used the information collected on the sensitivity of each European Site and describes any potential effects to the integrity of European Sites resulting from the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan. This assumes the absence of any controls, conditions, or mitigation measures. In determining the potential for effects, a number of factors have been considered. Firstly, the sensitivity and reported threats to the European Site. Secondly, the individual elements of the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan and the potential effect they may cause to the site were considered. The elements of the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan with potential to cause effect to the integrity of European Sites are presented in Table 3.2 below.

Sites are screened out based on one or a combination of the following criteria:

- Where it can be shown that there are significant pathways such as hydrological links between activities of the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan, and the site to be screened;
- Where the site is located at such a distance from Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan that effects are not foreseen; and
- Where it is that known threats or vulnerabilities at a site cannot be linked to potential impacts that may arise from the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan.

The elements detailed above were considered with specific reference to each of the European Sites identified in Section 3.2, and the SSCOs, with respect to the potential effects identified in Section 3.3.2.

Sources considered in the compilation of Table 4.1:

- NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC [001786]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Slieve Beagh SPA [004167]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- DEARA NI (2015) Conservation objectives Magheraveely Marl Loughs SAC [UK0016621]. Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.
- NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Slieve Beagh SPA [004167]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- DEARA NI (2015) Conservation objectives Upper Lough Erne SPA [UK9020071]. Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.
- DEARA NI (2015) Conservation objectives Slieve Beagh Mullaghfad Lisnaskea SPA [UK9020091]. Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

- NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC [000007]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- DEARA NI (2015) Conservation objectives Upper Lough Erne SAC [UK0016614]. Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.
- NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Lough Oughter Complex SPA [004049]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Dundalk Bay SPA [004026]. Version 1.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives for Dundalk Bay SAC [000455]. Version 1.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Stabannan-Braganstown SPA [004091]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- DEARA NI (2015) Conservation objectives Slieve Gullion SAC [UK0030277]. Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.
- DEARA NI (2015) Conservation objectives Moninea Bog SAC [UK0030212]. Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Table 3.2 Screening of European Sites within 15 km of the Draft Plan boundary

Site Code	European Site	Distance (km)	Potential effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
001786	Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC	Within	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations that introduce additional sources for effects to ecological processes are identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4, No. 2; • Chapter 7, No. 2; • Chapter 8, No. 5; • Chapter 8, No. 8; and • Chapter 13, No. 6. <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 7, No. 2: There are sourced for potential effects introduced by the Proposed Material Alterations with respect to the clarification of the location of road infrastructure and hydrological pathways are present. Further assessment into the location of the additional road realignments is required.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration references Chapter 8, No. 5 and Chapter 8, No. 8: These Proposed Material Alterations introduce additional clarity to the process by which wind energy developments will be assessed within the County and further contribute towards the protection of aquatic habitats that is already provided for by other Draft Plan provisions (WPP19).</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 13, No. 6: This alteration provides for additional development within the Clones settlement area which is directly adjacent to the Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC. There are direct pathways for effects to hydrological receptors.</p>	Yes	Yes
004167	Slieve Beagh SPA	Within	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations that introduce additional sources for effects to ecological processes are identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4, No. 2; • Chapter 7, No. 2; • Chapter 8, No. 5; • Chapter 8, No. 8; and • Chapter 13, No. 6. <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 7, No. 2: There are sourced for potential effects introduced by the Proposed Material Alterations with respect to the clarification of the location for road infrastructure along the N54 and N12. However, there are no pathways for effects between the SAC and these proposed realignment work areas.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration references Chapter 8, No. 5 and Chapter 8, No. 8: These Proposed Material Alterations introduce additional clarity to the process by which wind energy developments will be assessed within the County and further contribute towards the protection of aquatic habitats that is already provided for by other Draft Plan provisions (WPP19).</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 13, No. 6: This alteration provides for additional development within the Clones settlement area which is over 10km from the SPA boundary and there are no hydrological pathways between the settlement and the SPA. Therefore, this alteration does not introduce any additional sources for effects to the ecological integrity of this SPA.</p>	Yes	Yes

Site Code	European Site	Distance (km)	Potential effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
UK0016621	Magheraveely Marl Loughs SAC	0	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations that introduce additional sources for effects to ecological processes are identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4, No. 2; • Chapter 7, No. 2; • Chapter 8, No. 5; • Chapter 8, No. 8; and • Chapter 13, No. 6. <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 7, No. 2: There are sourced for potential effects introduced by the Proposed Material Alterations with respect to the clarification of the location for road infrastructure along the N54 and N12. However, there are no pathways for effects between the SAC and these proposed realignment work areas.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration references Chapter 8, No. 5 and Chapter 8, No. 8: These Proposed Material Alterations introduce additional clarity to the process by which wind energy developments will be assessed within the County and further contribute towards the protection of aquatic habitats that is already provided for by other Draft Plan provisions (WPP19).</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 13, No. 6: This alteration provides for additional development within the Clones settlement area which is over 10km from the SPA boundary and there are no hydrological pathways between the settlement and the SPA. Therefore, this alteration does not introduce any additional sources for effects to the ecological integrity of this SPA.</p>	Yes	Yes
UK0016622	Slieve Beagh SAC	0	<p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 7, No. 2: There are sourced for potential effects introduced by the Proposed Material Alterations with respect to the clarification of the location for road infrastructure along the N54 and N12. However, there are no pathways for effects between the SAC and these proposed realignment work areas.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration references Chapter 8, No. 5 and Chapter 8, No. 8: These Proposed Material Alterations introduce additional clarity to the process by which wind energy developments will be assessed within the County and further contribute towards the protection of aquatic habitats that is already provided for by other Draft Plan provisions (WPP19).</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 13, No. 6: This alteration provides for additional development within the Clones settlement area which is over 10km from the SAC boundary and there are no hydrological pathways between the settlement and the SAC. Therefore, this alteration does not introduce any additional sources for effects to the ecological integrity of this SAC.</p>	Yes	Yes
UK9020071	Upper Lough Erne SPA	0	<p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 7, No. 2: There are sourced for potential effects introduced by the Proposed Material Alterations with respect to the clarification of the location for road infrastructure along the N54 and N12. However, there are no pathways for effects between the SAC and these proposed realignment work areas.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration references Chapter 8, No. 5 and Chapter 8, No. 8: These Proposed Material Alterations introduce additional clarity to the process by which wind energy developments will be assessed within the County and further contribute towards the protection of aquatic habitats that is already provided for by other Draft Plan provisions (WPP19).</p>	Yes	Yes

Site Code	European Site	Distance (km)	Potential effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
			Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 13, No. 6: This alteration provides for additional development within the Clones settlement area which has pathways for effects to hydrological receptors.		
UK9020091	Slieve Beagh-Mullaghfad-Lisnaskea SPA	0	<p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 7, No. 2: There are sourced for potential effects introduced by the Proposed Material Alterations with respect to the clarification of the location for road infrastructure along the N54 and N12. However, there are no pathways for effects between the SAC and these proposed realignment work areas.</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration references Chapter 8, No. 5 and Chapter 8, No. 8: These Proposed Material Alterations introduce additional clarity to the process by which wind energy developments will be assessed within the County and further contribute towards the protection of aquatic habitats that is already provided for by other Draft Plan provisions (WPP19).</p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 13, No. 6: This alteration provides for additional development within the Clones settlement area which is over 10km from the SPA boundary and there are no hydrological pathways between the settlement and the SPA. Therefore, this alteration does not introduce any additional sources for effects to the ecological integrity of this SPA.</p>	Yes	Yes
000007	Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC	0.88	Eutrophication and residential pressures have been identified as threats for this lake by the NPWS. Sources for these effects are present within the Plan. Given the distances between the SAC and the Monaghan Boundary, and the nature of the Proposed Material Alterations detailed above. The Proposed Material Alterations do not introduce any sources for effects to the SAC that were not already considered by the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan.	No	No
UK0016614	Upper Lough Erne SAC	1.29	The site-specific threats, sensitivities and vulnerabilities of this SAC identified by DAERA are associated with forest management and land use. In general, the qualifying interest features are sensitive to water quality effects. Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity. Therefore, following the precautionary principal, stage 2 is required.	No	Yes
004049	Lough Oughter SPA	8.55	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations introduce no additional sources for effects that would adversely affect the SCIs of this SPA.</p> <p>The NPWS have not identified any site-specific threats and have published generic conservation objectives. Therefore, the assessment focuses on the ecological resource requirements and sensitivities for the SCI's. There will be no land take or direct interactions between the SPA and Plan. Birds are vulnerable to disturbance through anthropogenic activities, however the SNH² have shown that distances beyond 1km are more than enough to buffer against effects. Therefore, there are no pathways for effects to the sensitivities of the special conservation interests of the SPA, and the conservation objectives are not under threat.</p>	No	No
004026	Dundalk Bay SPA	9.10	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations introduce no additional sources for effects that would adversely affect the SCIs of this SPA.</p> <p>The NPWS have not identified any site-specific threats and have published generic conservation objectives. Therefore, the assessment focuses on the ecological resource requirements and sensitivities for the SCI's. There will be no land take or direct interactions between the SPA and Plan. Birds are vulnerable to disturbance through anthropogenic activities, however the SNH² have shown that distances beyond 1km are more than enough to buffer against effects. Therefore, there are no pathways for effects to the sensitivities of the special conservation interests of the SPA, and the conservation objectives are not under threat.</p>	No	No

² SNH (2007) A Review of Disturbance Distances in Selected Bird Species

Site Code	European Site	Distance (km)	Potential effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
000455	Dundalk Bay SAC	10.37	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations introduce no additional sources for effects that would adversely affect the QIs of this SAC.</p> <p>No Site-Specific threats were identified by the NPWS. Estuarine habitats and mud/sand flats are vulnerable to changes in sediment conditions and water quality. As there is a hydrological link there are pathways for effects. The potential sources for effects within the plan and the distance between the sites is sufficient to buffer against potential significant adverse effects. There is potential for in combination effects due to the hydrological pathway.</p> <p>The effects identified above were considered in the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan and mitigation measures were incorporated into the existing Draft Plan. This assessment is part of an ongoing assessment process to ensure each phase of the plan preparation process has due consideration to the ecological integrity of European Sites. There are no additional sources for effects to this SAC that were not already considered.</p>	No	No
004091	Stabannan-Braganstown SPA	11.23	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations introduce no additional sources for effects that would adversely affect the QIs of this SAC.</p> <p>The NPWS have not identified any site-specific threats and have published generic conservation objectives. Therefore, the assessment focuses on the ecological resource requirements and sensitivities for the SCI's. There will be no land take or direct interactions between the SPA and Plan. Birds are vulnerable to disturbance through anthropogenic activities, however the SNH² have shown that distances beyond 1km are more than enough to buffer against effects. Therefore, there are no pathways for effects to the sensitivities of the special conservation interests of the SPA, and the conservation objectives are not under threat.</p>	No	No
UK0030277	Slieve Gullion SAC	11.61	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations introduce no additional sources for effects that would adversely affect the QIs of this SAC.</p> <p>The DAERA identify site specific threats such as modification of cultivation practices, grazing, forest exploitation etc. European Dry Heath is sensitive to localised effects such as trampling, fire, and/or invasive species. Given the distances and types of potential effects identified within the characteristics of the plan, there will be no direct localised effects to the QI's or SSCO's of the site. The spread of invasive species from the plan area to the site is not likely. Land use practices will not be affected, and air Bourne pollutants are not known to cause significant effects over extensive distances such as this, especially in urban environments due to the downward washing effects of buildings. Therefore, are no pathways or sources for significant adverse effects.</p>	No	No
UK0030212	Moninea Bog SAC	12.76	<p>The Proposed Material Alterations introduce no additional sources for effects that would adversely affect the QIs of this SAC.</p> <p>Active raised bogs are sensitive to localised effects such as changes to hydraulic condition. Given the distances and types of potential effects identified within the characteristics of the plan, there will be no direct localised effects to the QI's or SSCO's of the site. Land use practices will not be affected, and air Bourne pollutants are not known to cause significant effects over extensive distances such as this, especially in urban environments due to the downward washing effects of buildings. The Site is within the Woodford River Basin³, upstream of Monaghan County. Therefore, are no pathways or sources for significant adverse effects.</p>	No	No

³ <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

3.4 Other Plans and Programs

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combinations with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely impact upon European Sites. Table 3.3 outlines plans or projects that may interact with the Draft Plan to cause in-combination effects to European Sites. The plans or projects are listed according to a spatial hierarchy of National, Regional/Local Projects and Plans, include the following:

- National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
- Grid 25
- Energy Policy framework 2007-2020, Governments White Paper
- Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016
- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region 2010 - 2022
- Cavan County Development Plan 2014-2020
- Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019
- Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021
- Dungannon & South Tyrone Area Plan
- Fermanagh Area Plan 2007
- Armagh Area Plan
- Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Area Plan
- Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan 2014 – 2020
- Kells Development Plan 2013-2019

Given the uncertainties that exist with regard to the scale and location of developments facilitated by the Draft Plan, it is recognised that the identification of in-combination effects is limited and that the assessment of in-combination effects will need to be undertaken in a more comprehensive manner at the project level.

Table 3.3 Plans or projects within the Zone of Influence of the Draft Plan that may have in-combination effects European Sites

Plan or project	Overview	Possible significant effects from plan/project	Is there a risk of in-combination effects	Possible significant in-combination effects
Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework	The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between.	This Framework was subject to SEA and AA which incorporated robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to minimise effects.	Potential in-combination effect may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs. Provision of infrastructure/development may result in: Habitat loss Alteration of hydrology Deterioration in water quality Disturbance during construction / operation	No, Potential effects arising from the Proposed Material Alterations are determined to be negligible. The AA process undertaken for the Draft Plan to date has facilitated the preparation of a Draft Plan that will contribute towards the protection of the integrity of European Sites. In combination effects will not be significant.
Grid 25	Grid25 is a high-level strategy outlining how EirGrid intends to undertake the development of the electricity transmission grid in the short, medium and longer terms, to support a long-term sustainable and reliable electricity supply. The Grid25 strategy thereby seeks to implement the provisions of the 2007 Government White Paper on Energy - "Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland" in terms of development of electricity transmission infrastructure. The Grid25 Implementation Programme (IP) is a practical strategic overview of how the early stages of Grid25 are intended to be implemented.	This plan was subject to SEA and AA which incorporated robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to minimise effects.	Potential in-combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new electrical infrastructure or where associated development occurs. Provision of infrastructure/development may result in: Habitat loss Alteration of hydrology Deterioration in water quality Disturbance during construction / operation	No, Potential effects arising from the Proposed Material Alterations are determined to be negligible. The AA process undertaken for the Draft Plan to date has facilitated the preparation of a Draft Plan that will contribute towards the protection of the integrity of European Sites. In combination effects will not be significant.
Energy Policy framework 2007-2020, Governments White Paper	This policy states that the Government is committed to delivering a significant growth in renewable energy as a contribution to fuel diversity in power generation with a 2020 target of 33% electricity consumption	This plan was subject to SEA and AA which incorporated robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to minimise effects.	Potential in-combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new wind energy infrastructure or where new associated development occurs. Provision of infrastructure/development may result in: Habitat loss Alteration of hydrology Deterioration in water quality Disturbance during construction / operation	No, Potential effects arising from the Proposed Material Alterations are determined to be negligible. The AA process undertaken for the Draft Plan to date has facilitated the preparation of a Draft Plan that will contribute towards the protection of the integrity of European Sites. In combination effects will not be significant.
Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016	This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term.	This plan was subject to SEA and AA which incorporated robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to minimise effects.	Potential in-combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new water and waste water infrastructure and capacity. Meeting additional potable water demands and waste water treatment demands arising from the proposed increase in population has the potential to adversely affect, in the case of abstractions from and effluent discharges to surface waters, the ecological status of surface waters and, in the case of groundwater abstractions, the quantitative status of groundwater. Such demands would occur in-combination with those in adjoining counties. Adverse effects on the ecological status of surface waters and on the quantitative status of groundwater would have the potential to impact upon protected species and habitats. Provision of infrastructure and increases in capacity may result in:	No, Potential effects arising from the Proposed Material Alterations are determined to be negligible. The AA process undertaken for the Draft Plan to date has facilitated the preparation of a Draft Plan that will contribute towards the protection of the integrity of European Sites. In combination effects will not be significant.

Plan or project	Overview	Possible significant effects from plan/project	Is there a risk of in-combination effects	Possible significant in-combination effects
			Habitat loss Alteration of hydrology Deterioration in water quality Disturbance during construction / operation	
Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010 – 2022, to be replaced by Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy	<p>Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) provide long-term strategic planning frameworks and will be replaced by Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs).</p> <p>Each one of the three Regional Assemblies will prepare their own RSES, with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, of which Monaghan County Council is part, responsible for the preparation of a RSES for the Northern and Western Region. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies will provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework.</p>	The Guidelines were subject to SEA and AA which incorporated robust mitigation measures into the Guidelines to minimise effects.	Potential in-combination effects may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure or where new development occurs. Provision of infrastructure/development may result in: Habitat loss Alteration of hydrology Deterioration in water quality Disturbance during construction / operation	No, Potential effects arising from the Proposed Material Alterations are determined to be negligible. The AA process undertaken for the Draft Plan to date has facilitated the preparation of a Draft Plan that will contribute towards the protection of the integrity of European Sites. In combination effects will not be significant.
Cavan CDP 2014-2020 Meath CDP 2013-2019 Louth CDP 2015-2021 Dungannon & South Tyrone Area Plan Fermanagh Area Plan 2007 Armagh Area Plan Banbridge / Newry and Mourne Area Plan	<p>The County Development Plan provides for the proper planning and sustainable development of the administrative area of the Council.</p> <p>The Strategy supports a plan led approach to wind energy development in County Monaghan and sets out a) Strategic Areas, b) Acceptable in Principle Areas, and c) areas Open for Consideration.</p>	This plan was subject to SEA and AA which incorporated robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to minimise effects.	Potential in-combination impacts may arise where there is a requirement to provide for new infrastructure. Provision of infrastructure may result in: Habitat loss Alteration of hydrology Deterioration in water quality Disturbance during construction / operation	No, Potential effects arising from the Proposed Material Alterations are determined to be negligible. The AA process undertaken for the Draft Plan to date has facilitated the preparation of a Draft Plan that will contribute towards the protection of the integrity of European Sites. In combination effects will not be significant.
Cavan Town & Environs Development Plan 2014 – 2020 Kells Development Plan 2013-2019	Overall strategies for the proper planning and sustainable development of the administrative area of the relevant Local Authorities and their local areas.	These plans were subject to SEA and AA which incorporated robust mitigation measures into the plan itself to minimise effects.	Monaghan shares its boundary with a number of counties. Furthermore, a number of European sites are located in more than one county. Similar development plans are in existence throughout the region, accordingly these plans acting alone or in combination can have a cumulative impact on European sites located within County Monaghan. Provision of infrastructure or where new development occurs may result in: Habitat loss Alteration of hydrology Deterioration in water quality Disturbance during construction / operation	No, Potential effects arising from the Proposed Material Alterations are determined to be negligible. The AA process undertaken for the Draft Plan to date has facilitated the preparation of a Draft Plan that will contribute towards the protection of the integrity of European Sites. In combination effects will not be significant.

3.5 Conclusion

The likely effects that could arise from the Proposed Material Alterations to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 have been examined in the context of several factors that could potentially affect the integrity of any European Site. On the basis of the findings of this Screening for AA, it is concluded that the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan:

- Are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site; and
- May have significant impacts on European Sites.

Therefore, applying the precautionary principle and in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, a Stage 2 AA is required (see Section 4 of this report).

4 Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment

4.1 Introduction

The main objective of the Stage 2 AA is to determine whether the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan would result in significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any European Site with respect to the site's structure, function, and/or conservation objectives.

The Stage 1 AA Screening presented above has identified Seven European Sites with potential to be affected by the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan (see Table 4.1). Therefore, taking a precautionary approach, Stage 2 AA is required. The potential adverse effects considered at this stage will either be effects occurring as a result of the implementation of the Proposed Material Alterations alone or in-combination with other plans, programmes, and/or projects.

Detailed information relevant to the sites that has been reviewed to inform the AA includes the following:

- *NPWS Site Synopsis*
- *Natura 2000 Standard Data Form*
- *Conservation Objectives and supporting documents*

Table 4.1 European Sites potentially affected by the Proposed Material Alterations

Coastal & Marine	Lakes, Rivers, & Aquatics Vegetation	Caves, woodland, & Bats	Bog Habitats	SPA
-	Upper Lough Erne SAC	-	Slieve Beagh SAC	Upper Lough Erne SPA
-	-	-	Magheraveely Marl Loughs SAC	Slieve Beagh-Mullaghfad-Lisnaskea SPA
-	-	-	Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC	Slieve Beagh SPA

4.2 Characterisation of European Sites Potentially Affected

The AA Screening identified seven European Sites with pathway receptors for potential effects. Therefore, it is necessary to characterize each of these sites and the sensitivities of their QIs, SCIs or their conservation objectives.

Appendix I characterises each of the qualifying features of the seven European Sites brought forward from Stage 1 (Table 4.1). These are described in context of each of the sites' vulnerabilities in each of these sites' characterisations were derived from the NPWS website⁴.

⁴ NPWS (2016), last accessed 11th December 2018; <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>

4.3 Identifying and Characterising Potential Significant Effects

The following parameters are described when characterising impacts (following CIEEM (2016; 2018), EPA (2002) and NRA (2009)):

Direct and Indirect Impacts - An impact can be caused either as a direct or as an indirect consequence of a proposed development.

Magnitude - Magnitude measures the size of an impact, which is described as high, medium, low, very low or negligible.

Extent - The area over which the impact occurs – this should be predicted in a quantified manner.

Duration - The time for which the effect is expected to last prior to recovery or replacement of the resource or feature.

- Temporary: Up to 1 Year;
- Short Term: The effects would take 1-7 years to be mitigated;
- Medium Term: The effects would take 7-15 years to be mitigated;
- Long Term: The effects would take 15-60 years to be mitigated; and
- Permanent: The effects would take 60+ years to be mitigated.

Likelihood – The probability of the effect occurring taking into account all available information.

- Certain/Near Certain: >95% chance of occurring as predicted;
- Probable: 50-95% chance as occurring as predicted;
- Unlikely: 5-50% chance as occurring as predicted; and
- Extremely Unlikely: <5% chance as occurring as predicted.

The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidelines for ecological impact assessment (2016) define: an ecologically significant impact as an impact (negative or positive) on the integrity of a defined site or ecosystem and/or the conservation status of habitats or species within a given geographic area; and the integrity of a site as the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, which enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.

The Habitats Directive requires the focus of the assessment at this stage to be on the integrity of the site as indicated by its Conservation Objectives. It is an aim of NPWS to draw up conservation management plans for all areas designated for nature conservation. These plans will, among other things, set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest within a site.

SSCOs have been prepared for a number of European Sites. These detailed SSCOs aim to define favourable conservation condition for the qualifying habitats and species at that site by setting targets for appropriate attributes which define the character habitat. The maintenance of the favourable condition for these habitats and species at the site level will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

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

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

Generic Conservation Objectives for SACs have been provided as follows:

- *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.*

One generic Conservation Objective has been provided for SPAs as follows:

- *To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.*

4.3.1 Identification of Potential Effects

Potential impacts from the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan which have, alone and/or in combination, been identified to result in adverse effects upon the QI's/SCI's or integrity of European Sites. Ecological impact assessment of potential impacts on European Sites is conducted utilizing a standard source-pathway-resource process; where, all three elements of this mechanism must be in place to establish an effect arising.

As outlined in the European Commission Environment DG document "*Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*", impacts that could potentially occur through the implementation of the LAP can be categorised under several headings:

- Loss / reduction of habitat area (e.g. due to the development of new projects)
- Disturbance to Key Species (e.g. increased public access to protected sites, or during the construction phase of infrastructure projects)
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Reduction in species density
- Changes in key indicators of conservation value such as decrease in water quality / quantity (e.g. through inadequate wastewater treatment, run-off of pollutants during construction and operation of developments, agricultural runoff)

Each of these elements is considered below with reference to the QI's/SCI's of all of the European Sites brought forward from Stage 1 of the AA process. A detailed analysis of each site individually can be found below in Table 4.2.

The Proposed Material Alterations contributes towards the framework for sustainable development within Monaghan County Development Plans. The Plan also prescribes particular locations (site specific) of developments of infrastructure. Overall, the Plan, in combination with other plans and programmes, underpins the development of housing, tourism, communities and the town center with supporting transport, water, energy, and communication infrastructure within Monaghan County.

4.3.1.1 Reduction of Habitat Area

The distributions of European Sites within the Monaghan County border are restricted to the outskirts and border of the Plan area. There are no European Sites within the settlement zones identified by the plan or the infrastructure developments within the Proposed Material Alterations. There are provisions within the Draft Plan to ensure that projects resulting from the implementation of the plan will not result in any direct loss of habitat quality or area (Table 4.2).

4.3.1.2 Fragmentation

Habitat fragmentation can occur through several vectors such as the direct removal of habitat or the modification of habitat features to reduce their functionality. The installation of light features can introduce a barrier to the free movement of species such as bats due to the increased predation risk in the vicinity. Measures to control potential such barriers to movement have been included in the plan; Policies LP1, LP2 and LP3 ensure that any light pollution source is minimised. The distribution of European Sites in Monaghan County is limited to the outskirts, and borders of the County. Therefore, fragmentation within the County with respect to European designated sites is not relevant in this

incidence. Additionally, the Proposed Material Alterations introduce a policy that promotes the continuity of aquatic habitat features:

WPP19 *To prevent river fragmentation and to encourage, where possible, the connectivity or the re-connectivity of fisheries waters in consultation with Inland Fisheries Ireland.*

4.3.1.3 Disturbance to Key Species

Disturbance effects are caused by any activity that has potential to alter the movement patterns/distribution of species. Disturbance effects can relate to direct disturbance through human activity/movement or noise pollution. The Draft Plan accounts for noise pollution effects through its policies and objectives affording protection to European Sites by ensuring any projects that arise from the implementation of the plan avoid or minimise noise in compliance with the levels Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and associated Environmental Noise Regulations 2006. Other disturbance effects could relate to a reduction in habitat quality due to anthropocentric sensitivities for species such as the hen harrier. Policies to ensure the protection of habitat quality have been built into the Plan (Table 4.2). Any significant development will be required to submit an appropriate Construction and Environmental Management Plan in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 15.30 of Chapter 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 (Policy CEMP1); these include:

- Measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris;
- Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels;
- Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater;
- Disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil;
- A water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains,
- Details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan;
- If peat is encountered, a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan is required;
- Measures adopted during construction to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed);
- Appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases; and
- Details of appropriate mitigation measures for lighting specifically designed to minimise impacts to biodiversity.

These measures are robust to ensure that any sensitive habitat features, or species will be identified, and only compliant applications will be granted. All the policies related to positive effects for Biodiversity are detailed in Table 4.2.

The Proposed Material Alterations introduce potential additional effects to biodiversity through Forestry. Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.

Potential effects arising due to these policies will be alleviated through the following policy which will be inserted into the Draft Plan:

Policy AGRP7: *To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.*

4.3.1.4 Reduction in species density

There are no identified risks to habitat quality or habitat fragmentation due to the distribution of European Sites within Monaghan County. Therefore, the population densities of the qualifying interest

and special conservation interest species of the European Site are not under threat by the Draft Plan. The policies and objectives within the Draft Plan are robust to ensure the ecological integrity of the European Sites to ensure they can maintain current population densities. The Proposed Material Alterations do not introduce any sources for effects to species densities.

4.3.1.5 Changes of Indicators of Conservation Value

Water quality is the primary macro indicator of conservation value. The existing Plan contains many robust policies and objectives to ensure the protection of both surface and ground water quality. Development within the vicinity of groundwater or surface water dependant European Sites will not be permitted where there is potential for a likely significant impact upon the groundwater or surface water supply to the European Sites. Additionally, the policies provide broader scope to ensure the protection of the wider landscape associated with riparian zones and habitats sensitive to hydrological interactions; such as Policy HS20. The Proposed Material Alterations introduces additional clarity in relation to the river basin management plan for the County under the water framework directive and introduces additional measures to protect water quality (Policy WPP19, detailed above).

Table 4.2 Characterisation of Potential Effects⁵ Proposed Material Alterations

Site Code	European Site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features	Potential Adverse Effects Arising from the Proposed Material Alterations brought forward from Stage 1	Residual Effects Once Mitigated
001786	Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC	Within	Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara spp.</i> [3140] Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] Alkaline fens [7230] White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) [1092]	<p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.</p> <p>Potential effects arising due to these policies will be alleviated through the following policy which will be inserted into the Draft Plan:</p> <p>Policy AGRP7: <i>To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.</i></p> <p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 7, No. 2 and Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 13, No. 6: Introduce sourced for potential effects with respect to road infrastructure, and developments with hydrological pathways to the Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC. However, the Draft Plan contains mitigation measures that ensure no project will be permitted under the Plan that could result in significant adverse effects to the ecological integrity of this site; such as:</p> <p>Policy HLP12 <i>To resist development in or adjacent to any Natura 2000 site (SPA or SAC) where it would result in the deterioration of that habitat or any species reliant on it. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate that any such development will not adversely impact on the qualifying interest of such sites subject to the preparation of an appropriate assessment exercise under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive</i></p> <p>Policy HLP13 <i>To resist development in or adjacent to an NHA or pNHA (listed in Appendix 8) where it would result in the deterioration of that habitat or detrimentally impact on any species reliant on it. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate that any such development will not adversely impact on the conservation of such areas.</i></p> <p>Policy HLP14 <i>To ensure that all proposed developments comply with the DoECLG publication "Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland- Guidance for Planning Authorities 2010"</i></p> <p>Policy HLP15 <i>Any plan or projects that could have a significant adverse impact (either by themselves or in combination with other plans and projects) upon the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site will not be permitted. Policy</i></p> <p>HLP16 <i>Any plan or project which is likely to impact on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site shall be screened for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and where pertinent a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement) shall be undertaken in order to make a determination. Natura 2000 sites outside the county and located within 15km of the proposed development site should also be screened for Appropriate Assessment. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) shall incorporate a written statement which sets out mitigation measures to prevent the risk of invasive species onto a Natura 2000 site.</i></p> <p>Policy HLP17 <i>Development within the vicinity of groundwater or surface water of dependent Natura 2000 sites (Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC) will not be permitted where there is potential for a likely significant impact upon the groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 site. Where appropriate, the applicant shall demonstrate with hydro geological evidence, that the proposed development will not adversely affect the quality or quantity of groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 sites.</i></p> <p>Policy HLP12 <i>To resist development in or adjacent to any Natura 2000 site (SPA or SAC) where it would result in the deterioration of that habitat or any species reliant on it. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate that any such development will not adversely impact on the qualifying interest of such sites subject to the preparation of an appropriate assessment exercise under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive</i></p> <p>The Draft Plan already contains robust policies to ensure water quality is maintains such as:</p>	None

⁵ On the QIs/SCIs of the European Sites brought forward from Stage 1 with regard to the SSCOs of the sites as provided by the NPWS.

Site Code	European Site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features	Potential Adverse Effects Arising from the Proposed Material Alterations brought forward from Stage 1	Residual Effects Once Mitigated
				<p>WPP11: Development within the vicinity of groundwater or surface water dependant Natura 2000 sites will not be permitted where there is potential for a likely significant impact upon the groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 site. Where appropriate, the applicant shall demonstrate with hydro geological evidence, that the proposed development will not adversely affect the quality or quantity of groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>WPP3: To protect known and potential groundwater reserves in the county. In assessing applications for developments, the planning authority will consider the impact on the quality of water reserves and will have regard to the recommended approach in the Groundwater Protection Response Schemes published by GSI. The employment of the methodology identified in the 'Groundwater Protection Scheme Reports for County Monaghan public supply sources' (available at www.gsi.ie) and 'Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater' (available at www.epa.ie) will be required where appropriate.</p> <p>WPP4: Require submission of a water protection plan and detailed site drainage plans with all planning applications. Maps of sensitive areas waters, a Water Protection Plan Checklist (Appendix 16 of the Monaghan CDP) and latest water body status information at www.catchments.ie will assist in the preparation of plans at application stage.</p> <p>SDP1: To require best practice in the design, construction and operation of expanding and new developments to ensure minimum effects on the aquatic environment. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems designed to ensure both water quality protection and flood minimisation should be included in developments for commercial, industrial, residential, intensive agricultural, public and institutional premises with significant roof or hard surface areas and multiple residential developments. For guidance refer to Monaghan County Councils Storm Water Technical Guidance Document 2017.</p> <p>SDP2 To ensure that new development is adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems as appropriate to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of existing waterways.</p> <p>SDP3: To require that planning applications are accompanied by a comprehensive SUD's assessment that addresses run-off quantity, run-off quality and its impact on the existing habitat and water quality.</p> <p>SDP4: To ensure that all storm water discharges shall be restricted onsite attenuation and or other measures to the pre-development levels (green field) in all new developments. All attenuated storage volumes must take in to consideration climate change. Guidance is available from The Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study Technical Document, Volume 5.</p> <p>SDP5: To require all run off from new developments in towns/villages to be restricted to the pre-development levels (green field) by storm water attenuation on site and use of SUDs (sustainable urban drainage systems), as a measure to assist in flood avoidance. For guidance refer to Monaghan County Councils Storm Water Technical Guidance Document 2017.</p> <p>Policy CEMP1: To require all large-scale planning applications to submit an appropriate Construction and Environmental Management Plan in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 15.30 of Chapter 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025.</p>	
004167	Slieve Beagh SPA	Within	Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082]	<p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.</p> <p>Potential effects arising due to these policies will be alleviated through the following policy which will be inserted into the Draft Plan:</p> <p>Policy AGRP7: To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.</p>	None

Site Code	European Site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features	Potential Adverse Effects Arising from the Proposed Material Alterations brought forward from Stage 1	Residual Effects Once Mitigated
				This Assessment is part of an ongoing AA being undertaken throughout the Draft Plan preparation process. The Proposed Material Alterations Chapter 4 PMA No. 2 was the only alteration identified with additional sources for effects to this European Site (detailed above). The NIR prepared for the Draft Plan considered all other sources within the Draft Plan. A final assessment will be undertaken on the Plan to be adopted at adoption considering all Draft Plan, Proposed Material Alteration and AA material prepared to date.	
UK0016 621	Magheraveely Marl Loughs SAC	0	White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) [1092] Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davalliana</i> * [7210] Alkaline fens [7230] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara spp</i> [3140]	Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes. Potential effects arising due to these policies will be alleviated through the following policy which will be inserted into the Draft Plan: Policy AGRP7: <i>To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.</i> This Assessment is part of an ongoing AA being undertaken throughout the Plan preparation process. Proposed Material Alteration Chapter 4 PMA No. 2 was the only alteration identified with additional sources for effects to this European Site (detailed above). The NIR prepared for the Draft Plan considered all other sources within the Draft Plan. A final assessment will be undertaken on the Plan to be adopted at adoption considering all Draft Plan, Proposed Material Alteration and AA material prepared to date.	None
UK0016 622	Slieve Beagh SAC	0	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] European dry heaths [4030]	Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes. Potential effects arising due to these policies will be alleviated through the following policy which will be inserted into the Draft Plan: Policy AGRP7: <i>To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.</i> This Assessment is part of an ongoing AA being undertaken throughout the Draft Plan preparation process. Material Alteration Chapter 4 PMA No. 2 was the only alteration identified with additional sources for effects to this European Site (detailed above). The NIR prepared for the Draft Plan considered all other sources within the Draft Plan. A final assessment will be undertaken on the Plan to be adopted at adoption considering all Draft Plan, Proposed Material Alteration and AA material prepared to date.	None
UK9020 071	Upper Lough Erne SPA	0	Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Albifrons flavirons</i>) [A395]	Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes. Potential effects arising due to these policies will be alleviated through the following policy which will be inserted into the Draft Plan: Policy AGRP7: <i>To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.</i>	None

Site Code	European Site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Features	Potential Adverse Effects Arising from the Proposed Material Alterations brought forward from Stage 1	Residual Effects Once Mitigated
				This Assessment is part of an ongoing AA being undertaken throughout the Draft Plan preparation process. Proposed Material Alteration Chapter 4 PMA No. 2 was the only alteration identified with additional sources for effects to this European Site (detailed above). The NIR prepared for the Draft Plan considered all other sources within the Draft Plan. A final assessment will be undertaken on the Plan to be adopted at adoption considering all Draft Plan, Proposed Material Alteration and AA material prepared to date.	
UK9020 091	Slieve Beagh-Mullaghfad-Lisnaskea SPA	0	Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082]	<p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.</p> <p>Potential effects arising due to these policies will be alleviated through the following policy which will be inserted into the Draft Plan:</p> <p>Policy AGRP7: <i>To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.</i></p> <p>This Assessment is part of an ongoing AA being undertaken throughout the Draft Plan preparation process. The Proposed Material Alteration Chapter 4 PMA No. 2 was the only alteration identified with additional sources for effects to this European Site (detailed above). The NIR prepared for the Draft Plan considered all other sources within the Draft Plan. A final assessment will be undertaken on the Plan to be adopted at adoption considering all Draft Plan, Proposed Material Alteration and AA material prepared to date.</p>	None
UK0016 614	Upper Lough Erne SAC	1.29	<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> in the British Isles [91A0]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)* [91E0]</p> <p>Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]</p>	<p>Proposed Material Alteration reference Chapter 4, No. 2: Policies AGRP6 and AGRP 8 relate to the promotion of forestry and associated operations such as woodland forestry etc. Forestry and land use change are known threats to biodiversity and have potential to introduce significant pressures in relation to ecological processes.</p> <p>Potential effects arising due to these policies will be alleviated through the following policy which will be inserted into the Draft Plan:</p> <p>Policy AGRP7: <i>To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.</i></p> <p>This Assessment is part of an ongoing AA being undertaken throughout the Draft Plan preparation process. The Proposed Material Alteration Chapter 4 PMA No. 2 was the only alteration identified with additional sources for effects to this European Site (detailed above). The NIR prepared for the Draft Plan considered all other sources within the Draft Plan. A final assessment will be undertaken on the Plan to be adopted at adoption considering all Draft Plan, Proposed Material Alteration and AA material prepared to date.</p>	None

5 Mitigation Measures

5.1 Introduction

This section outlines measures that need to be incorporated into the Proposed Material Alterations or the Draft Plan in order to mitigate against potential effects to European Sites as identified above.

The Draft Plan is being prepared in an iterative manner whereby the Draft Plan and AA documents have informed subsequent versions of the other. These mitigation measures also considered all submissions made during the public consultation during the Plan making process.

In order to demonstrate that there will be no adverse effects from implementation of the Draft Plan, mitigation measures have been devised to be incorporated into the text of the Plan and Proposed Material Alterations, described below.

5.2 Mitigation measures within the Proposed Material Alterations

The additional measures included in the Proposed Material Alterations that afford protection to ecological processes that were not contained within the NIR prepared for the Draft Plan include the following:

<p>Process details to ensure wind energy developments are assessed in a robust manner: The assessment of wind energy development proposals will include consideration of the following as appropriate;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitivity of the landscape and adjoining landscapes to wind energy projects. - Scale, size and layout of the project, any cumulative effects due to other projects and the degree to which impacts are highly visible over extensive areas. - Visual impact on protected views and prospects, designated scenic landscapes as well as local visual impacts. - Impact on nature conservation, ecology, soil, hydrology, groundwater, archaeology, historic structures, public rights of way and walking routes. - Local environmental impacts including noise and shadow flicker. - The visual and environmental impacts of associated development such as access roads, plant and grid connections. - The implications of extensive cabling beneath the public road.
<p>Protect connectivity of aquatic systems WPP19 To prevent river fragmentation and to encourage, where possible, the connectivity or the re-connectivity of fisheries waters in consultation with Inland Fisheries Ireland.</p>
<p>Protect against potential effects from forestry Policy AGRP7: To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites and scenic routes within forest sites and nature designations from pollution or injury.</p>

Table 5.1 Draft Plan Measures that afford protection to European Sites

Environmental Component	Potentially Significant Adverse Effects, if unmitigated	Mitigating Measures, including
All	All	<p>Regulatory framework for environmental protection and management HLP14 To cumulatively contribute towards, in combination with other users and bodies, the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management, including compliance with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended by 2014/52/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) – and relevant transposing Regulations.</p>
	All	<p>Corridor and Route Selection Process Section 7.15 The following Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken for relevant new infrastructure: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental constraints and opportunities (such as existing linear infrastructure) will assist in the identification of possible route corridor options; - Potentially feasible corridors within which infrastructure could be accommodated will be identified and these corridors assessed. The selection of the preferred route corridor will avoid constraints and meet opportunities to the optimum extent, advised by relevant specialists; and - In addition to the constraints identified above, site-specific field data may be required to identify the most appropriate corridors. <p>Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potentially feasible routes within the preferred corridor will be identified and assessed. The selection of preferred routes will avoid constraints and meet opportunities to the optimum extent, advised by relevant specialists, taking into account project level information and potential mitigation measures that are readily achievable; - In addition to the constraints identified above, site specific field data may be required to identify the most appropriate routes; and <p>In addition to environmental considerations, the identification of route corridors and the refinement of the route lines is likely to be informed by other considerations.</p>
	All	<p>Construction and Environmental Management Plan Section 15.30 Significant planning applications will be required to submit a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures indicated in any lower tier Environmental Impact Assessment or Appropriate Assessment. CEMPs typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development. The following information and issues should be included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Location of the sites and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse, b) Location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities, c) Details of site security fencing and hoardings, d) Details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction, e) Details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage, f) Measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network, g) Measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris, h) Alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public right of way during the course of site development works, i) Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels, j) Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater, k) Disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil, l) A water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains, m) Details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan. n) If peat is encountered, a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan is required. o) Measures adopted during construction to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed). p) Appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases. q) Details of appropriate mitigation measures for lighting specifically designed to minimise impacts to biodiversity. <p>Policy CEMP1: To require all significant planning applications to submit an appropriate Construction and Environmental Management Plan in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 15.30 of Chapter 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025.</p>

Environmental Component	Potentially Significant Adverse Effects, if unmitigated	Mitigating Measures, including
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna; • Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and • Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species. 	<p>Also see measures under soil, water and material assets below.</p> <p>Policy AAP1: All projects and plans arising from this plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A plan or project will only be authorized after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or 2. The Plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network; or 3. The Plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network. <p>National Parks and Wildlife Service and Integrated Management Plans Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for European sites involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans. The NPWS's current priority is to identify site specific conservation objectives; management plans may be considered after this is done. Where Integrated Management Plans are being prepared for European sites (or parts thereof), the NPWS shall be engaged with in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Plan and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations, including those of local communities.</p> <p>Biodiversity Action Plan HLP2 To adopt and implement in partnership with all relevant stakeholders the objectives and actions detailed in the Biodiversity Action Plan and any relevant action plan.</p> <p>Designated Sites Legislation HLP3 To contribute as appropriate towards the protection of designated sites in compliance with relevant EU Directives and applicable National Legislation.</p> <p>Protection of European Sites HLP4 No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).</p> <p>Ecological Corridors GIP6 To contribute towards the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, rivers, streams, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure GIP7 To encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of green infrastructure that recognises the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of open space amenities - Sustainable management of water - Protection and management of biodiversity - Protection of cultural heritage - Protection of protected landscape sensitivities. <p>Protection of Riparian Zone and Waterbodies and Watercourses WPP16 To protect waterbodies and watercourses from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in riverine and wetland areas as appropriate.</p> <p>Drainage or Reclamation of Wetlands WLP3 To implement the relevant parts of the Planning and Development (Amendment) (PMA No. 2) Regulations 2011 and the European Communities (Amendment to Planning and Development) Regulations 2011 which require planning permission to be applied for where the area impacted by works relating to the drainage or reclamation of a wetland exceeds 0.1 hectares or where such works may have a significant effect on the environment. Such planning applications would need to be supported by an Appropriate Assessment where necessary.</p>

Environmental Component	Potentially Significant Adverse Effects, if unmitigated	Mitigating Measures, including
		<p>Light Sensitive Species LP3 To require that lighting fixtures should provide only the amount of light necessary for personal safety and should be designed so as to avoid creating glare or emitting light above a horizontal plane. Lighting fixtures should also have minimum environmental impact and protect light sensitive species such as bats.</p> <p>Non-designated habitats and biological diversity HLP5 To recognize that nature conservation is not just confined to designated sites and acknowledge the need to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve the biological diversity.</p> <p>Non-native invasive species ISP2 To support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control and manage the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water. Where the presence of non-native invasive species is identified at the site of any proposed development or where the proposed activity has an elevated risk of resulting in the presence of these species, details of how these species will be managed and controlled will be required.</p> <p>National Peatlands Strategy HLP6 To support the implementation of any relevant recommendations contained in the National Peatlands Strategy.</p> <p>Increases in Visitor Numbers to Semi-Natural Areas Policy TMP15 To seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that new any projects, such as greenways, are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian zones.</p>
Air and Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emissions to air including greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions. 	<p>Air Quality AQP1 Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI PMA No. 180 of 2011) (or any updated/superseding documents). Promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU Ambient Air.</p> <p>Air Quality, Greenhouse Gases, Noise and Energy AQP2 To contribute toward compliance with air quality legislation; greenhouse gas emission targets; management of noise levels; and reductions in energy usage.</p> <p>Climate Adaptation and Mitigation CCP10 Support and facilitate European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation as detailed in the National Mitigation Plan, National Adaptation Framework and relevant Sectoral Adaptation Plan(s).</p> <p>Green Infrastructure GIP7 To encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of green infrastructure that recognises the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of open space amenities - Sustainable management of water - Protection and management of biodiversity - Protection of cultural heritage - Protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

6 Conclusion

Stage 1 AA Screening of Proposed Material Alterations and Stage 2 AA of certain Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 has been carried out. Implementation of the following Proposed Material Alterations has the potential to result in effects to the integrity of any European Sites, if unmitigated:

- Chapter 4, No. 2;
- Chapter 7, No. 2;
- Chapter 8, No. 5;
- Chapter 8, No. 8; and
- Chapter 13, No. 6.

The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and conservation objectives of the European Sites have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures in the Draft Plan that will prioritise the avoidance of effects in the first place and mitigate effects where these cannot be avoided. In addition, lower level plans and projects arising through the implementation of the Plan will themselves be subject to AA when further details of design and location are known.

A final assessment will be undertaken on the Plan to be adopted at adoption considering all Draft Plan, Proposed Material Alteration and AA material prepared to date.

In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects was considered in the assessment and the mitigation measures incorporated into the Plan are sufficiently robust to ensure there will be no significant adverse effects as a result of the implementation of the Proposed Material Alterations either alone or in-combination with other plans/projects.

Having incorporated mitigation measures, it is concluded that the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 are not foreseen to give rise to any significant effects on designated European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects⁶. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species for which these sites have been designated.

⁶ Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

- a) no alternative solution available,
- b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan, project etc. to proceed; and
- c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.