



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo  
Mayo County Council



STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL  
ASSESSMENT  
ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT  
OF THE CASTLEBAR TOWN  
AND ENVIRONS LOCAL AREA  
PLAN 2023-2029

Mayo County Council

prepared under the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental  
Assessment) Regulations 2004. (S.I. 436/2004) as amended  
Following Ministerial Direction

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This report has been prepared by Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd with JBA Ireland with all reasonable skill, care and diligence. Information report herein is based on the interpretation of data collected and has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

This report is prepared for Mayo County Council and we accept no responsibility to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of this SEA Environmental Report

This is the Final Environmental Report that has been prepared as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Castlebar Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2023-2029 (LAP).

It sets out how the SEA has been undertaken and presents the findings of the assessment of the objectives, policies and land-use zonings of the LAP together with its reasonable alternatives.

This Environmental Report complies with the requirements of the Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the SEA Directive) as implemented in Ireland through Statutory Instrument (SI) No.436 of 2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (as amended).

These regulations are a statutory requirement for plans or programmes which could have significant environmental effects, and the assessment process aims to identify where there are potential effects and how any negative effects might be mitigated.

Annex A presents an evaluation of the draft LAP, Annex B presents the SEA Screening of the proposed material alterations to the draft LAP and Chapter 8 of this SEA ER provides an evaluation of the material alterations that were brought forward for full SEA. **Following the adoption of the LAP, a Ministerial Direction was issued and the following changes were made to the Castlebar LAP 2023 - 2029.**

A) Provide a clear core strategy table which sets out the area and quantum of housing to be delivered on lands zoned Town Centre, Existing Residential and New Residential. Appropriate densities shall be applied to demonstrate anticipated yield.

B) Reinstate the following zoning objectives and associated text to that of the draft Local Area Plan:

(i) Material Alterations 10, 12, 14 and 21 – ie the subject lands revert to agriculture from new residential.

(ii) Material Alterations 13 and 17 ie: the subject lands revert to Enterprise and Employment, and Agriculture from New Residential

(ii) Material Alterations 15 and 18 -ie: the subject lands revert to Enterprise and Employment from New Residential

Delete the following zoning objective from the adopted Local Area Plan ie: the subject lands are unzoned:

(i) Lands zoned Enterprise and Employment at Coonagh (Site EE1) located to the southwest of Saleen Lough and to the immediate east of the rail line

And apply all necessary consequential updates to the text of the plan consistent with the foregoing.

These have all been previously assessed under the SEA assessment and can be shown in Annex A and Annex B of this final SEA ER.

### 1.1.1 Material Alterations

The Draft Castlebar Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2023-2029 was placed on public display from Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 to Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023. The draft Plan and accompanying documents were displayed on the County Council's dedicated online public consultation portal at:

<https://consult.mayo.ie/en/consultation/draft-castlebar-town-environs-local-area-plan-2023-2029>

The Draft Castlebar Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2023-2029 comprises a written statement with maps and is accompanied by:

- Appendix 1 - Settlement Capacity Audit.
- An Environmental Report on the likely significant effects on the environment on implementing the Plan - pursuant to the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment [SEA]) Regulations 2004-2011.
- An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report - pursuant to the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).
- A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Report - pursuant to Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

A public notice was published in The Mayo News, The Western People and The Connaught Telegraph on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023 and the Mayo Advertiser on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023 notifying members of the public that a Draft Local Area Plan would be placed on public display from the 28<sup>th</sup> of February to 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2023.

Following consideration of the Draft Castlebar Local Area Plan 2023 -2029 and Chief Executive's Report, Members may accept the Draft LAP without material alterations and make the LAP. Should amendments be made which would constitute material alterations to the Draft LAP, there is a further public display period giving people an opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments only.

Where, following the consideration of the Draft LAP and the Chief Executive's Report, it appears to the Members that the Draft Plan should be accepted or amended, they may, by resolution, accept or amend the Draft and make the LAP accordingly. Where a proposed amendment would, if made, be a material alteration of the Draft LAP, notice of the proposed amendment must be published in inviting submissions from the public.

This is followed by the preparation of a Chief Executive's Report on any submissions or observations received on the proposed amendments. Members may then make the LAP with or without the proposed amendments or with modifications of a minor nature to the proposed amendments as they consider appropriate.

The Proposed Material Alterations were screened for the need to undertake full SEA and a number of these Proposed Material Alterations were determined to require full SEA. The SEA Screening Determination accompanies this SEA Environmental Report and the Proposed Material Alterations document. Annex C to this SEA Environmental Report comprises the SEA Screening Report that was prepared to inform the SEA Screening Determination. Chapter 8 Material Alterations of the draft Castlebar LAP 2023 -2029 presents the assessment of the Proposed Material Alterations that are subject to full SEA. The purpose of the updated SEA ER was to provide an assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed Material Alterations in line with S 12 of the Planning and Development Act, as amended. The updated SEA ER should be read in conjunction with the Material

Alterations Report, the Natura Impact Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which are also on public display.

### 1.1.2 Final LAP


The LAP with material alterations were approved in December 2023 with all Material alterations approved except for the five material alterations below. In summary, MA 6 and MA 7 related to alteration of text associated with the MA22 landuse zoning, whilst MA 9, 22 and 23 related to landuse zoning, as these were rejected the landuse zonings now revert to those as in the draft LAP and assessed in the SEA, AA and SFRA. Please see Chapter 7 of the SEA ER and Annex A of this SEA ER to see evaluation of these landuse zonings.



Please also read the accompanying Natura Impact Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for assessment on the draft LAP and material alterations plus final LAP.

TABLE 1-1 MATERIAL ALTERATIONS REJECTED BY ELECTED MEMBERS AND REVERTING TO DRAFT LAP.

<p>MA 6 <a href="#">MYO-C63-34</a>- (DRAFT LAP SUB NO.)</p>	<p>The Planning Partnership on behalf of Mavenbrook Ltd. and Elected Member Motion</p>	<p><b>EXCLUDED – Amend Table 11.1 by adding the following LUZ objective:</b>  <i>“The objective of the Mixed Use land use is to provide primarily for commercial, tourism, employment, recreational / leisure and low and middle order retail uses, with complementary ancillary uses also considered including an element of residential use.</i></p> <p><i>Permissible uses will be governed by the nature of the development proposed and its location and compatibility in relation to surrounding existing or permitted uses.”</i></p>
<p>MA 7 <a href="#">MYO-C63-34</a>- (DRAFT LAP SUB NO.)</p>	<p>The Planning Partnership on behalf of Mavenbrook Ltd. and Elected Member Motion</p>	<p><b>EXCLUDED – Amend Table 11.2 by adding the following LUZ objective:</b>  <b>“Permitted in Principle -</b>  <i>Conference Centre, Enterprise Unit/Workshop, Hostel, Hotel, Leisure Centre/Gym, Nursing Home/Retirement Village/Residential Care, Office, Park &amp; Stride Facility, Primary Care Centre, Health Centre and Clinics, Dentist/Doctor Surgery, Professional Services, Restaurant/Café, Retail Warehousing, Service Station, Utility Structures, Veterinary Surgery and Warehousing”</i></p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><b>“Open for Consideration –</b>  <i>Apartments, B&amp;B/Guesthouse, Bank/Financial Institution, Betting</i></p>



		<p><i>Office, Caravan Park/Campervan Park/Camp Site/Glamping (Tourism), Car Parking, Cash &amp; Carry Wholesale Outlet, Chemist/Pharmacy, Childcare Facilities – Crèche, Nursery and Playschool, Cinema/Theatre, Community Facility (hall, centre or recreational use), Dance Hall/ Disco/ Night Club, Data Centre, Drive Through Restaurant, Education – excluding a night-time use, Education – night-time education use, Education – third level education use, Education – training centre, Funeral Home, Garden Centre, Hospital, Industry – Light, Library, Licenced Premises (Public House), Logistic, Storage &amp; Distribution Units, Mart/ Co-operative, Motor Sales/ Service, Open Space (Public), Place of Worship, Plant/ Tool Hire, Playing Pitches/Sports Club, Residential – Multiple (two or more units), Residential – Single, School/Third Level Education, Shop/Retail (Comparison), Shop/Retail (Convenience), Shopping Centre/Supermarket and Take Away.”</i></p>
<p>MA 9 <a href="#">MYO-C63-2 (Draft Plan Sub No)</a></p>	<p>Martin &amp; Helen Gaughan and Elected Members Motion</p>	<p><b>EXCLUDED – Rezone Lands from Agriculture to New Residential:</b></p> <p><b><u>FINAL ZONING = AGRICULTURE</u></b></p> 
<p>MA 22 <a href="#">MYO-C63-34</a></p>	<p>The Planning Partnership on behalf of Mavenbrook Ltd and Elected Members Motion</p>	<p><b>EXCLUDED – Rezone Lands from Recreation &amp; Amenity, Open Space and New Residential to Mixed Use</b></p> <p><b><u>FINAL ZONING = RECREATION &amp; AMENITY, OPEN SPACE AND NEW RESIDENTIAL</u></b></p>

		
<p>MA 23  <a href="#">MYO-C63-36</a></p>	<p>Patrick Gallagher</p>	<p><b>EXCLUDED – Rezone Lands from Agriculture to Existing Residential</b></p> <p><b><u>FINAL ZONING = AGRICULTURE</u></b></p> 

## 1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Under Directive 2001/42/EC - Assessment of Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, certain plans and programmes require an environmental assessment. This is known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. Article 1 of this Directive states that its objective is:

‘to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.’

## 1.3 Scale, nature and duration of plan

Figure 1.1 shows the outline of Castlebar within the wider context of County Mayo. The proposed Local Area Plan will effectively replace the existing Local Area Plan, namely the Castlebar and Environs Development Plan 2008-2014 as adopted by Mayo County Council on 13th October, 2008.

Mayo County Council is commencing the preparation of a Local Area Plan (LAP) for Castlebar town and its environs. The purpose of this LAP is to set out a land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area incorporating a framework for the development of transportation, housing, retail, heritage, employment, social and community facilities.

The new LAP will consider the current context of Castlebar, in terms of population trends, socio economic factors, land use changes, the need for distribution of facilities and amenities, availability of services and infrastructure, along with heritage and environmental considerations.

The LAP must be consistent with the objectives of the higher order plans, including the County Development Plan, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Region and the National Planning Framework.

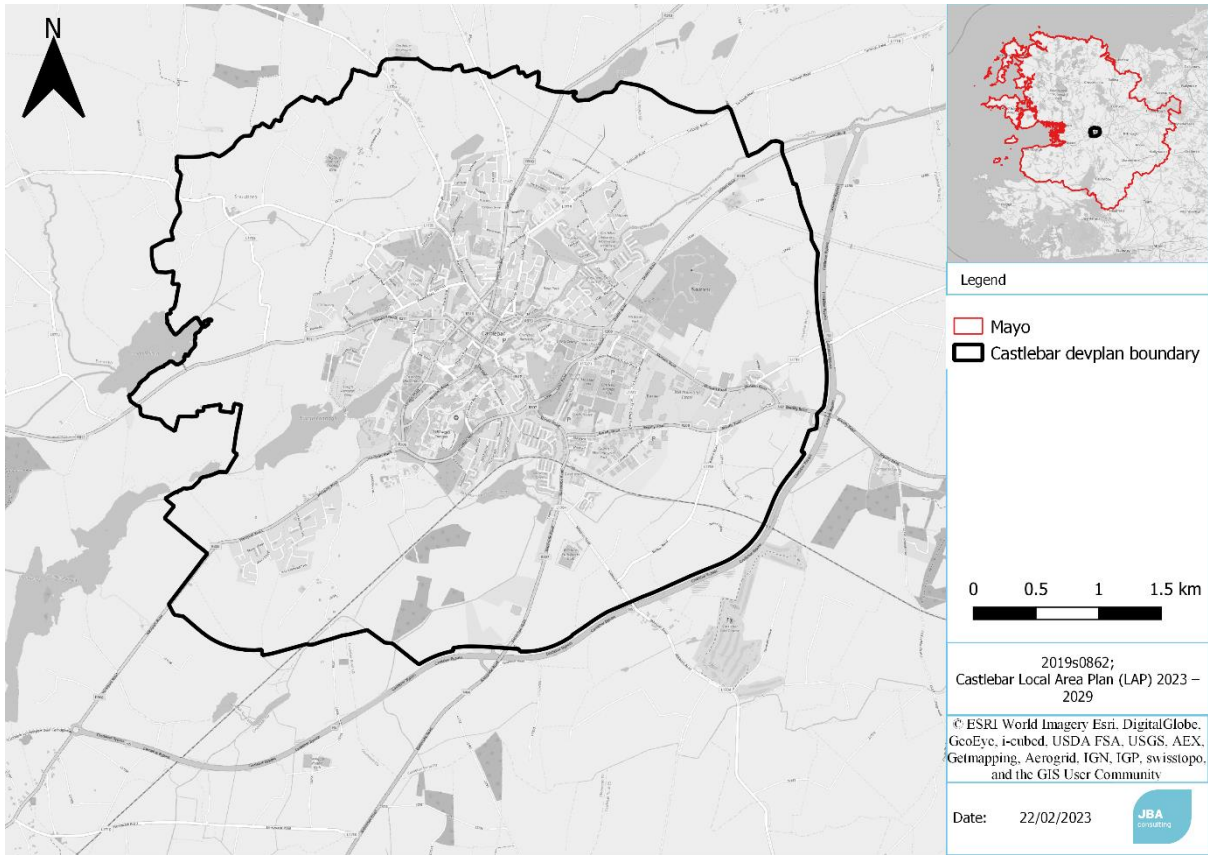
The RSES seeks to support and grow the role of Castlebar, in tandem with the town of Westport, as a driver of economic development for County Mayo and wider region. Castlebar is a Key Town in the RSES.

As part of the new plan, a new zoning map will be prepared to take account of current and future population needs of Castlebar, subject to environmental and other planning considerations.

The Core Strategy of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 provides for a population allocation of 2,347 persons for Castlebar over the plan period, which equates to approximately 917 new houses. Mayo County Council are required to identify and reserve an appropriate amount of land in the correct locations to meet housing and population targets.

The current town and environs plan promotes a housing supply to meet the varied needs of the community and to provide an acceptable standard of living. Future housing supply in the town must be provided in a sustainable manner, aligning with the provisions of the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan, and having regard to established and sustainable settlement patterns and the natural environment.

Figure 1-1 Castlebar Plan Area



## 1.4 Structure and preparation of this Environmental Report

Regulations contained in Schedule 2A of Statutory Instrument (S.I.) 436 of 2004(as amended) details the information to be contained in an Environmental Report. The following **Table 1.1** lists the information required and details where this information is contained in this Environmental Report.

TABLE 1-2 INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE CONTAINED IN AN SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT.

Schedule 2B of Statutory Instrument 435 of 2004	Addressed in this SEA ER
(a) an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans	Chapter One Introduction and Chapter Two Methodology outlines contents and main objectives Chapter Three details the relationship with other relevant plans
(b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	Chapter Four Baseline Environment provides this information
(c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Chapter Four Baseline Environment provides this information
(d) any Issues and Threats problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as	Chapter Four Baseline Environment provides this information

areas designated pursuant to the Birds Directive or Habitats Directive	
(e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, European Union or national level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation	Chapter Five: SEA Objectives provides this information
(f) the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors	Chapter Seven, Significant Effects on the Environment provides this information
(g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan	Chapter Eight, Mitigation Measures provides this information
(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information	Chapter Six, Alternatives Considered provides this information and difficulties encountered are listed at the end of Chapter Two, Baseline Environment.
(i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring of the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan	Chapter Nine Monitoring provides this information
(j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	This is provided as a separate document to this Environmental Report but is also available

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the SEA methodology in detail and outlines the steps required for SEA. The methodology used to carry out the SEA of the plan reflects the requirements of the SEA regulations and available guidance on undertaking SEA in Ireland, including:

The following guidelines will be used in this SEA:

- SEA Methodologies for Plans and Programmes in Ireland – Synthesis Report Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2003;
- Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment – Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities - published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2004;
- Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI 436 and SI 435 of 2004);
- Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 201 of 2011);
- Planning and Development (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (S.I. No 200 of 2011);
- SEA Process Checklist Consultation Draft 2008, EPA 2008;
- Circular Letter PSSP 6/2011 Further Transposition of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Guidance on integrating climate change and biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment European Union 2013;
- SEA Resource Manual for Local and Regional Authorities, Draft Version, 2013;
- Integrating Climate Change into Strategic Environmental Assessment in Ireland – A Guidance Note, EPA, 2015;
- Developing and assessing alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment, EPA, 2015;
- SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans - EPA Recommendations and Resources (2020).
- Good practice guidance on Cumulative Effects Assessment in SEA, EPA, 2020
- Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statements and Monitoring, EPA, 2020.

### 2.2 Stages in the SEA process

The steps involved in SEA are as follows:

- Screening (determining whether or not SEA is required).
- Scoping (determining the range of environmental issues to be covered by the SEA).
- The preparation of an Environmental Report (**current stage**)
- The carrying out of consultations.
- The integration of environmental considerations into the Plan or Programme.

- The publication of information on the decision (SEA Statement).

## 2.3 Screening

The SEA Regulations state that SEA is mandatory for certain plans including City/county development plans. Therefore, the SEA process commenced at Scoping stage outlined below.

## 2.4 Scoping

The purpose of the SEA Scoping report is to identify the scope of the SEA and ensure that relevant data and environmental topics are included in the SEA. The Scoping report was issued to the statutory environmental authorities on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

**Table 2.1** below summarises the main issues raised by consultees and the SEA response to same.

**Table 2-1 Summary of SEA Scoping Submissions and SEA response to same**

Consultee	Main Points	SEA response
<b>Geological Survey Ireland (GSI)</b>	<p>GSI the national earth science agency and a division of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications provide independent geological information and advice and gather various data for that purpose. GSI recommend using these various data sets (see website for data availability) when conducting the EIAR, SEA, planning and scoping processes. This data can add to the content and robustness of the SEA process. With this in mind please find attached a list of our publicly available datasets that may be useful to the environmental assessment and planning process. We recommend that you review this list and refer to any datasets you consider relevant to your assessment.</p>	<p>Notes</p> <p>Datasets reviewed and incorporated where appropriate</p>
	<p><b>Geoheritage</b>                      GSI is in partnership with the NPWS, DHLGH to identify and select important geological and geomorphological sites throughout the country for designation as geological NHAs. The audit of CGSs of County Mayo was completed in 2014, revised in 2019 and published in November 2020. The full report details can be found at <a href="http://dcca.gov.ie">The Geological Heritage of County Mayo (dcca.gov.ie)</a>. Our records show that there are CGSs in the vicinity of the Westport, Castlebar &amp; Ballina LAPs. Mayo County Council should be aware there may be potential impacts on the integrity of the current CGSs envisaged by potential developments, such as road schemes, should these sites not be assessed as constraints. Ideally, the sites should not be damaged or integrity impacted or reduced in any manner due to the proposed development. However, this is not always possible, and in this situation appropriate mitigation measures should be put in place to minimize or mitigate potential impacts. Where the integrity cannot be preserved, we would ask that careful consideration be given in design to accommodating preservation of, for example, road cutting faces and access to the site during construction to record the exposures to strengthen our knowledge and datasets.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted and incorporated in the SEA</p>
	<p><b>Culture and Tourism</b>                      Over the past number of years geology has become a large part of Irish tourism. Ireland currently has three UNESCO Global Geoparks, and a number of other geotourism projects including the Joyce Country and Western Lakes aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark project in South Mayo/North Galway, which is located within a short drive from Westport and Castlebar. These Geoparks, along with other tourism initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Ancient East, and Irelands Hidden Heartlands have bolstered tourism in various parts of Ireland and helped to increase its levels in areas that were previously not as popular with tourists. In 2020, GSI's Geoheritage Programme submitted comments to Fáilte Ireland regarding how best to include and promote the geological heritage of Clew Bay within the Draft Clew Bay Destination &amp; Experience Development Plan (DEDP). As the diverse and varied geology of Clew Bay and County Mayo is of international importance and significance, we are happy to provide support in relation to how best to present and promote the geological heritage of Mayo and Clew Bay within the wider development of the Clew Bay DEDP.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>



<p><b>We would encourage geology and geoheritage to be a significant part of any tourism initiative and could be included as part of the Tourism &amp; Recreation theme within the three LAPs pre-draft LAP Issues Papers.</b></p>	
<p><b>Groundwater</b>  GSI's Groundwater and Geothermal Unit <a href="http://Groundwater.gsi.ie">Groundwater (gsi.ie)</a>, provides advice, data and maps relating to groundwater distribution, quality and use, which is especially relevant for safe and secure drinking water supplies and healthy ecosystems. Proposed developments need to consider any potential impact on specific groundwater abstractions and on groundwater resources in general. GSI recommend using the groundwater maps on <a href="http://Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources (arcgis.com)">Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources (arcgis.com)</a> which should include: wells; drinking water source protection areas; the national map suite - aquifer, groundwater vulnerability, groundwater recharge and subsoil permeability maps. <b>For areas underlain by limestone, please refer to the karst specific data layers (karst features, tracer test database; turlough water levels (gwlevel.ie)).</b> Background information is also provided in the Groundwater Body Descriptions. Please read all disclaimers carefully when using Geological Survey Ireland data.  <a href="http://GWClimate.gsi.ie">GWClimate (gsi.ie)</a> is a groundwater monitoring and modelling project that aims to investigate the impact of climate change on groundwater in Ireland. This is a follow on from a previous project (GWFlood) and the data may be useful in relation to Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and management plans. Maps and data are available on <a href="http://Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources (arcgis.com)">Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources (arcgis.com)</a>  It should be noted that there are karst features in areas of the Castlebar LAPs. The Groundwater Vulnerability map indicates variable vulnerability within the LAP areas.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Maps used for preparation of the groundwater baseline section in chapter 4 of this ER.</p> <p>Noted and incorporated</p>
<p><b>Geological Mapping</b>  Geological Survey Ireland maintains online datasets of bedrock and subsoils geological mapping that are reliable and accessible. GSI would encourage use of these data which can be found at <a href="http://Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources (arcgis.com)">Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources (arcgis.com)</a>, in your future assessments.</p>	<p>Noted and included – see note above</p>
<p><b>Geotechnical Database Resources, Geothermal Energy</b>  GSI continues to populate and develop our national geotechnical database and viewer with site investigation data submitted voluntarily by industry.</p>	<p>Noted and recommendation note.</p>
<p><b>Natural Resources (Minerals/Aggregates)</b>  GSI is of the view that the sustainable development of our natural resources should be an integral part of all development plans from a national to regional to local level to ensure that the materials required for our society are available when required. GSI highlights the consideration of mineral resources and potential resources as a material asset which should be explicitly recognised within the environmental assessment process.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p><b>Geochemistry of soils, surface waters and sediments</b>  GSI provides baseline geochemistry data for Ireland as part of the Tellus programme. Baseline geochemistry data can be used to assess the chemical status of soil and water at a regional scale and to support the assessment of existing or potential impacts of human activity on environmental chemical quality.</p>	<p>Noted and included in Chapter 4 of this ER</p>
<p><b>Marine and Coastal Unit</b></p>	<p>Noted</p>

	Our marine environment is hugely important to our bio-economy, transport, tourism and recreational sectors. It is also an important indicator of the health of our planet. GSI's Marine and Coastal Unit in partnership with the Marine Institute, jointly manages INFOMAR <a href="#">Home</a>   <a href="#">Infomar</a> ,	Not relevant to this LAP
	Enc: Table - Geological Survey Ireland's Publicly Available Datasets Relevant to Planning, EIA and SEA processes	noted and incorporated in the processes
<b>Development Applications Unit, Dept. Housing, Local Government and Heritage</b>	This submission outlines heritage-related observations/recommendations co-ordinated by the DAU under the stated headings.	Noted
	<b>Nature Conservation</b> The Dept. make the following observations in its role as a statutory authority with overarching responsibility for nature conservation and the nature directives (i.e., the Birds and Habitats Directives). The observations are not exhaustive but are intended to assist the planning authority in meeting its obligations in relation to nature conservation, European sites, biodiversity and environmental protection in the process of reviewing and preparing the Local Area Plans.	Noted
	<b>Government policy on nature conservation</b> Government policy on nature conservation is clearly set out in the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 (NBAP), which has the clear objective to “mainstream biodiversity into decision making”, for all public authorities and to move towards no net loss of biodiversity. It also requires Local Authorities to develop policies and objectives for the protection and restoration of biodiversity. It is crucial that consideration is given to coherent protection and enhancement of biodiversity at a regional as well as local level. National policies that recognise the importance of incorporating biodiversity protection and nature conservation into land use plans at an early stage are namely; The National Planning Framework (NPF) 2018, Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-32, National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021, All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 and the National Peatlands Strategy 2015. As a signatory to the United Nations (UN) Convention on Biological Diversity Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, Ireland’s policies are reflected in a vision where “biodiversity and ecosystems in Ireland are conserved and restored, delivering benefits essential for all sectors of society and that Ireland contributes to efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems in the EU and globally.” All of these polices, and strategies contain explicit commitments to sustainable development, no net loss of biodiversity and a low carbon society. The Department refers to the overarching environmental regional policy objectives (RPOs) of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) (2020 – 2032) notably RPO5, “The Assembly supports the integration of biodiversity considerations in a positive, proactive and precautionary way and promotes the protections of the environment and biodiversity conservation as key principles of this strategy”.	Noted  Integrated in SEA as appropriate.
	<b>Ecological Assessments</b> Environmental assessments should be carried out in parallel with the Plan making process to ensure integrated biodiversity impact assessment. The SEA process should take place in consultation with the teams working on the draft	Noted and agreed

	<p>Plans and Appropriate Assessment as each process can help inform the other to ensure that the objectives and policies in the draft Plans will have no significant effects on the natural heritage of the Castlebar and Environs. Preferably, no areas should be identified or targeted for development (e.g., through land use zoning or other strategies) without basic information on the ecological sensitivities of the lands in question, including a habitat map (Heritage Council, 2021), i.e., the precautionary principle should apply and no areas should be committed to development in the absence of basic ecological information so as to avoid potential conflicts. Reference: Heritage Council (2011) Best practice guidance for habitat survey and mapping. <a href="http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Wildlife/Habitat_Survey_Guidance/Habitat_Survey_Guidance_Heritage_Council_2011_2.pdf">www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Wildlife/Habitat_Survey_Guidance/Habitat_Survey_Guidance_Heritage_Council_2011_2.pdf</a></p>	
	<p><b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</b>  The objective of SEA is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. Please refer to the EPA’s website for a complete and up-to-date list of relevant SEA guidance <a href="http://www.epa.ie/monitoringassessment/assessment/sea/resources/">http://www.epa.ie/monitoringassessment/assessment/sea/resources/</a>.  - EPA, 2016. <i>Scoping Guidance Document</i>.  - EPA, 2015. <i>Integrating Climate Change into Strategic Environmental Assessment in Ireland - A Guidance Note</i>  - EPA 2013. <i>Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment Practitioner’s Manual</i>. An SEA guidance note to assist integration of climate change adaptation and mitigation into plans, programmes and strategies.  Each SEA should examine the effects of policies, objectives and any indicative maps or zonings, as well as cumulative impacts with other plans and projects both within and outside of the Plan areas.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed</p> <p>SEA is carried out by a team of with environmental expertise. All the recommendations are already integrated as a part of the SEA process.</p>
	<p>The Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna section of the SEA should be undertaken by or in conjunction with a suitably qualified ecologist, and in conjunction with preparation of the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to ensure full integration of biodiversity issues and concerns, particularly in relation to nature conservation sites, rare and protected species, habitats that are rare or of high ecological value, and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive. The EPA’s Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment best practice guidance is of relevance in this regard.  Each Environmental Report is required to contain information on the environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be affected significantly by the plan. For biodiversity, flora and fauna, the scope of the SEA should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All nature conservation sites, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ European sites. These are sites of international importance for nature conservation and form part of Ireland’s contribution to the Natura 2000 network within the EU. Available information includes: locations, site synopses, Natura 2000 standard data forms, SAC datasheets, qualifying interests (SACs), special conservation interests (SPAs), conservation objectives, and Statutory Instruments (SPAs).</li> <li>○ Natural Heritage Areas. These are sites of national importance for nature conservation established under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, and legally protected under the Wildlife Acts, 1976-2018. Available information includes: locations, site synopses and Statutory Instruments.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>All comments in relation to biodiversity, flora and fauna baseline section are noted and will be included in chapter 4 of this report as appropriate</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Proposed Natural Heritage Areas, undesignated sites that are not covered by other nature conservation designations. They are known to be of importance for biodiversity but have not yet been fully evaluated.</li> <li>• Available information on habitats, including results of habitat surveys (including NPWS datasets on habitats/habitat complexes and conservation objective supporting data, and the Council’s own surveys within the plan areas), and habitat indicator mapping (available from Teagasc/EPA)</li> <li>• Available information on rare and protected species and their habitats (including datasets on rare and protected species from NPWS and the National Biodiversity Data Centre)</li> <li>• All watercourses, surface water bodies and associated wetlands, including floodplains and flood risk areas</li> <li>• Other sites of high biodiversity value or ecological importance, e.g., BirdWatch Ireland’s ‘Important Bird Areas’ (Crowe et al., 2009) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Crowe, O., Tierney, N. and Wheeldon, R. 2009. Distribution, extent and status of Ireland’s Important Bird Areas. BirdWatch Ireland.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Local biodiversity areas (LBAs), including those identified as a result of Heritage Plan or Biodiversity Plan actions or projects</li> <li>• Ecological networks and corridors, and stepping stones</li> </ul>	
	<p>The Environmental Report is required to contain environmental protection objectives. For biodiversity, flora and fauna, these should integrate with the objectives and obligations of other directives such as the Habitats and Birds Directives (e.g., Habitats Directive Article 6(2), 10, 12-16), and the Birds Directive Article 4(4)), the Water Framework Directive and the Floods Directive, and with the Wildlife Acts, 1976-2018, National Biodiversity Plan and the aims and objectives of the county’s own Heritage Plan and Biodiversity Plan.</p> <p>Strategic environmental objectives should be included for all nature conservation sites (not just European sites), protected species and ecological corridors and stepping stones as outlined above.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed Please see section 5 for Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna SEOs. ‘Stepping stone’ not used but ‘ecological connectivity’ &amp; wildlife corridors’</p>
	<p>Water quality environmental objectives need to take into account the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The water quality requirements of target species such as salmon, lamprey species, shad species, white-clawed crayfish, fish prey of otter, and (if with a relevant subbasin) freshwater pearl mussel.</li> <li>- The minimum quantity and physical quality of water required for breeding, survival and movement of target species, especially during summer drought periods. Also, the minimum water levels in source sites for water abstraction if these are at a distance from the settlement (e.g., upland lakes). Optimum temperature and pH of receiving waters, where there are discharges from industrial or municipal water treatment plants, should be specified.</li> <li>- The quality of wastewater discharges, taking into account whether development proposed in the plans will cause the capacity of treatment systems to be exceeded, should be specified.</li> <li>- The objectives should be integrated with those specified to comply with the relevant River Basin District Management Plan (Water Framework Directive).</li> </ul>	<p>The water quality environmental objectives are noted but this will be more appropriately considered within the monitoring regime. The issues for potential concern are noted and included in the relevant Key Issue section of chapter 4.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The extent to which SUD Systems have been incorporated into developments, and the degree of flood attenuation in the drainage from the settlements.</li> <li>- The extent of wetland habitats (including floodplains), as these are an important source of biodiversity and should be protected under the plans.</li> </ul> <p><b>Issues of potential concern</b></p> <p>The following are of potential concern in relation to the Local Area Plans: water supply and abstraction; wastewater and discharges; flood alleviation and prevention; existing and new infrastructure, particularly roads, powerlines and telecommunications; and amenity and recreation provision where this could impact nature conservation sites and/or sensitive species. Note that if any walks or trails are proposed within SAC/SPA sites (and NHA), these will require assessment prior to their inclusion in the plan</p>	
	<p><b>Appropriate Assessment including screening</b></p> <p>The Council is responsible for carrying out screening for appropriate assessment and for determining whether it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the final plans on their own and in combination with other plans and projects, will have a significant effect on a European site in view of its conservation objectives. This must be carried out before the plans may be adopted, and best scientific knowledge and the precautionary principle should be applied in reaching such a determination, i.e., where there is uncertainty or a lack of data or information, it should not be assumed that significant effects will not result. The Department recommends referral to the recent guidance note by the OPR on AA screening, Practice Note PN01 “Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management”, (March 2021) <a href="https://opr.iw.ie/view-planning-practice-file/Mw">https://opr.iw.ie/view-planning-practice-file/Mw</a> .</p> <p>An appropriate assessment and the preparation of an NIS may be required for some of the individual Plans. This must include a determination under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive as to whether the proposed Plans and their policies would adversely affect the integrity of the European sites.</p> <p>The following are key considerations in relation to NIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for an NIS follows on from a screening for appropriate assessment which is carried out by the Competent/Public Authority. While an authority’s screening may be informed by a report prepared on its behalf by a consultant or contractor, the screening decision itself is the legal responsibility of the authority in question;</li> <li>• The NIS should be a scientific assessment that presents relevant evidence, data and analysis, not just narrative, commentary, unsubstantiated statements, lists, tables, etc.;</li> <li>• Best scientific knowledge and objective information, which are specified in legislation in relation to screening, are also required to prepare an NIS;</li> <li>• The relevant environmental baseline and trends should be taken into account, bearing in mind changes and in-combination effects which have occurred since site designation;</li> </ul>	<p>Noted and agreed</p> <p>A NIR is being prepared and it’s findings will be integrated into this environmental report.</p>

- If an NIS is required, it should address the entire plan, not just the discrete elements of the Plan that are considered in the screening to be likely to cause significant effects, as the relevant legislation refers to assessments of “the Plan”;
- The NIS should focus on the likely significant effects of the plan on European sites in view of their conservation objectives, whether generic or site specific. Of particular importance are the attributes and targets established for each Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest, and the objective to maintain or restore the site to favourable conservation condition;
- The NIS should also have regard to the current conservation condition of the site and the scientifically analyse whether the plan may or will cause further deterioration to it. The integrity of a site can be defined by the conservation objectives and conservation status of the site.
  - DEHLG, 2010. Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. after European Commission, 2001. Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
- Examination of the potential or existing effects of the plan, and the resources and services on which it is reliant, must be undertaken to identify what European sites, and which of their conservation objectives, are potentially at risk. In combination effects must also be taken into account of the likely effects of the Plan in combination with other plans and projects;
- This examination is also required to determine a ‘zone of influence’ or ‘zone of impact’ of the plan area, if this concept is used. It should be noted that the 15km distance for plans in existing guidance is an indicative figure and, as stated in the Guidance (DEHLG, 2010), its application and ecological validity should be examined and justified in each specific case;
- The scientific basis on which sites and conservation objectives are included or excluded from assessment and analysis should be presented;
- The scientific basis on which plan objectives and other plan elements are included or excluded from more detailed assessment and analysis should be presented. This should apply to all parts of the plan and all objectives;
- Where plan level mitigation measures are put forward, the necessary analysis should be presented to demonstrate that these will be effective in avoiding or removing risks of adverse effects on the integrity of European sites, or in managing future proposals where adverse effects may be unavoidable;
- The NIS and plan level mitigation measures should go beyond altering the wording of objectives to say that future assessment is required;
- Plan-level mitigation must be demonstrated to be effective in addressing and ameliorating the full range of any adverse effects on the conservation objectives and integrity of European sites that would arise from the plan, or that already exist and may be perpetuated or worsened by the implementation of the plan;
- All parts of the plan, including zoning and land use designations, and associated maps and strategies, should be subject to assessment and should be compliant with the Habitats and Birds Directives, and the 2011 Regulations. In the case of non-statutory strategies or other reports, these may only be incorporated into the plan, or given effect

	<p>by the plan, if demonstrated to be compliant with Article 6 on their own, and in combination with the plan itself, and with other plans and projects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NIS should reach a clear and precise conclusion as to the implications of the plan for the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites;</li> <li>• On the basis of the NIS and any other relevant supporting information, a public authority must then make its own determination as to whether the plan may or will adversely affect the integrity of a European site/s. This responsibility may not be delegated to a third party.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Appropriate Assessment Guidance</b> Public authorities and agents/consultants acting on their behalf are advised to have regard to the following Guidance. List provided.</p>	Noted and agreed- see NIR
<p><b>Environmental Coordinator</b> Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine</p>	<p>No reference to Castlebar only to Westport and Ballina plan areas</p>	Noted

## 2.5 Baseline Data

The baseline data assists in describing the current state of the environment, facilitating the identification, evaluation and subsequent monitoring of the effects of the plan. It helps identify Issues and Threats in and around the plan area and in turn these can be quantified (for certain environmental parameters) or qualified. This highlights the environmental issues relevant to each SEA parameter and ensures that the plan implementation does not exacerbate such problems. Conversely this information can also be used to promote good environmental practices and opportunities for environmental enhancement, thereby improving environmental quality where possible.

Baseline data was gathered for all parameters.

Other data was gathered from the SEA ER of the North and Western Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, NPWS, Birdwatch Ireland, Bat Conservation Ireland, National Biodiversity Centre, Irish Water, the EPA, Met Eireann and other sources as appropriate. Footnotes throughout the document, particularly in Chapter Four present the reference and source.

The SEA has also used a Geographical Information System (GIS) in the following ways:

- To provide baseline information on a range of environmental parameters;
- To assist in assessment of alternatives;
- To help assess in-combination or cumulative impacts, and
- To provide maps to illustrate environmental parameters in the SEA Environmental Report.

## 2.6 Approach to assessment of significant environmental impacts

The principal component of the SEA involves a broad environmental assessment of the LAP. A methodology that uses the concept of expert judgement, public consultation, GIS and matrices, both to assess the environmental impact and to present the conclusions has been adopted in this SEA.

Key to assessing the above is setting a specific set of environmental objectives for each of the environmental topics. The objectives are provided in Chapter Five and include all aspects of the environment such as Cultural heritage, Population and Human health, and Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna.

The assessment described within this Environmental Report aims to highlight the potential conflicts, if they are present, between the policies, objectives and landuse zonings of the draft LAP with the Strategic Environmental Objectives. Furthermore, the assessment examines the potential impact arising from the plan's implementation on sensitive environmental receptors.

The SEA Directive requires that information be focused upon **relevant aspects** of the environmental characteristics of the area likely to be **significantly affected** by the plan and the likely change, both positive and negative, where applicable.

Chapter Eight provides a discussion, where relevant, on the significance and type of the identified impact in accordance with current guidelines.

A key part of the SEA process has been the integration of the draft LAP, the SEA, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The SEA legislation and guidelines highlight the importance of the integration between the preparation of the draft LAP and the SEA, AA and SFRA processes. The iterative nature of the SEA process is such that the plan is informed by environmental considerations throughout the preparation of the plan. The Natura Impact Report and SFRA are separate documents to the Environmental Report both of which accompany this draft LAP.



## 2.7 Mitigation

Section (g) of Schedule 2B of the SEA Regulations requires information on the mitigation measures that will be put in place to minimise/eliminate any significant adverse impacts due to the implementation of the plan. Chapter Eight of this SEA ER highlights the mitigation measures that will be put in place to counter identified significant adverse impacts due to the plans' implementation.

The LAP plan has been prepared having regard to the environmental protection objectives already within the draft plan and the iterative process between SEA and plan preparation. However, some unavoidable residual issues may remain and therefore mitigation measures are required. Chapter Eight details the mitigation measures necessary to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing the LAP.

## 2.8 Monitoring

Article 10 of the SEA Directive sets out the requirement that monitoring is to be carried out of the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan in order to identify at an early stage any unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action. Chapter Nine presents the monitoring requirements for the plan.

## 2.9 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

JBA have undertaken a Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) of the draft LAP in accordance with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG and OPW, 2009) as amended by Circular PL2/2014 (August 2014).

The SFRA will inform and influence the draft plan making process with the SEA integrating both findings from the Habitats Directive Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment processes.

## 2.10 Habitats Directive Assessment

The Habitats Directive requires, *inter alia*, that plans and programmes undergo AA screening to establish the likely or potential effects arising from implementation of the plan. If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant or uncertain then the plan must undergo Stage 2 AA. The preparation of the LAP, SEA and AA are taking place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed both the SEA and the plan itself. The SEA has also applied the methodology for Integrated Biodiversity Assessment where relevant (EPA, 2015).

## 2.11 Data gaps

Data gaps are present in terms of recent human health and population information. More broadly, understanding the interactions between climate change, weather events, and impacts on water and biodiversity in particular are complex. Sectoral climate change adaptation plans have been referenced and used to fill these data gaps where possible.

The SEA ER has used an ecosystems services modelling approach to attempt to address these data gaps particularly in terms of understanding the role and inter-relationships between environmental parameters including water resources, biodiversity and human health.

## 3 Relationship to relevant plans and programmes

### 3.1 Introduction

Under the SEA Directive, the relationship between the draft LAP and other relevant plans and programmes must be taken into account. A review of the relevant plans and programmes has been prepared as part of the SEA ER. The preparation of the draft LAP must be considered within the context of a hierarchy of policies, plans and strategies which include international, national, regional and local level policy documents. These documents set the policy framework within which the draft plan will operate. A list of the key relevant international, national, regional and county policies to be included in the review are provided below in Sections 3.2 to 3.4; Section 3.5. **Table 3.1** identifies key principles that will inform the SEA process arising from this review and how they relate to the EPA Themes in the State of Ireland's Environment as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

**Figure 3-1 Hierarchy of Spatial Planning**



A list of the key relevant international, national, regional and county policies to be included in the review are provided below in Sections 3.2 to 3.4; Section 3.5 Table 3. 5 identifies key principles that will inform the SEA process arising from this review and how they relate to the EPA Themes in the State of Ireland's Environment as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### 3.2 National Plans and Programmes

- Project 2040 National Planning Framework (2018) -review has commenced
- 3<sup>rd</sup> National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021
- Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan 2023 -2027
- The Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2022
- Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plans 2018
- National Mitigation Plan
- Climate Action Plan 2022
- National Adaptation Framework 2018
- Sectoral Climate Change Adaptation Plans 2019
- Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines, EPA (2016)
- National Landscape Strategy (2015-2025)
- Heritage Ireland 2030

- National River Basin District Management Plan (2018). 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of River Basin Management Plan under preparation
- Irish Water's Capital Investment Programme
- Water Services Act (2007)
- Water Services (Amendment) Act (2012)
- Irish Water Services Strategic Plan SEA and AA (2015)
- Draft Water Services Management Plan
- Irish Water Capital Investment Programme (2017-2021)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages), 2009
- Geological Heritage Sites Designation (under the Wildlife Amendment Act 2000)
- National CFRAMS Programme
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (and Technical Appendices) for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, OPW), 2009
- National Climate Change Strategy (2007-2012)
- Sectoral Planning Guidelines for Climate Change Adaptation, (2018)
- National Adaptation Framework, (2018)
- National Renewable Electricity Policy Framework (in preparation)
- Grid 25 Implementation Strategy
- National Hazardous Waste Management Plan
- Food Harvest/ FoodWise 2025
- National Forestry Programme
- Draft National Marine Spatial Plan
- Seafood Operation Programme
- Strategic Aquaculture Programme
- Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth
- Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future, A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020
- National Broadband Plan
- Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)
- National Monuments Act 1930 with subsequent amendments
- Architectural Heritage Protection - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011)
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)
- Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan
- State of the Environment Report 2016
- National Bioenergy Plan
- 10 Year Tourism Strategy
- National Greenway Strategy
- Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- National Policy Position on Climate Action
- Low Carbon Development Plan

### 3.3 Regional and County Plans and Programmes

- Northern and Western Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy 2020-2032;
- Mayo County Local Economic and Community Plan 2015 -2021;

- Mayo County Heritage Plan 2020-2025 (preparation)
- Mayo County Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015 – new plan to be integrated to County Heritage Plan;
- Noise Action Plan 2018-2023
- County Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024

Table 3-1-Principles arising from plan, policy and programme review<sup>1</sup> and their relationship to the EPA State of Ireland’s Environment and Sustainable Development Goals

SEA Topic	Principles/Implications	Links to EPA Themes and Sustainable Development Goals
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	Guiding Principle: Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	Nature and Wild Places. Restore and Protect Water Quality Implementation of Legislation. Climate change. SDG Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	Guiding Principle: Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	Environment, Health and Well-being. Sustainable Economic Activities Restore and Protect Water Quality. Implementation of Legislation. Climate Change SDG 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages. SDG 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. SDG 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. SDG 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
<b>Water</b>	Guiding Principle: Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	Restore and Protect Water Quality. Nature and Wild Places. Implementation of Legislation. Climate Change SDG 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for everyone SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
<b>Land and Soil</b>	Guiding Principle: Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	Nature and Wild Places. Implementation of Legislation SD Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. SD Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat

<sup>1</sup> The Guiding Principles have been sourced from the SEA ER of the Northern and Western RESS 2020-2032

SEA Topic	Principles/Implications	Links to EPA Themes and Sustainable Development Goals
		desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
<b>Air</b>	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	Implementation of Legislation. Climate Change. Environment, Health and Well-being SD Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation
<b>Climate</b>	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impact	SD Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns SD Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
<b>Material Assets</b>	Guiding Principle: Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	Implementation of Legislation. Climate Change SD Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation SD Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns SD Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	Guiding Principle: Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development.	Environment, Health and Well-being. Sustainable Economic Activities. Implementation of Legislation SDG 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. SD 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
<b>Landscape</b>	Guiding Principle: Protect and enhance landscape character	Environment, Health and Well-being. Sustainable Economic Activities Climate Change SDG 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. SD Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

## 4 Environmental Baseline

### 4.1 Introduction

This section of the Environmental Report examines the relevant significant characteristics of the current state of the environment in relation to Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Population, Human Health, Water, Air Quality, Climatic Factors, Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, Landscape, Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services, the interrelationship between these factors and the evolution of same in the absence of the LAP 2023-2029. The baseline description is focused primarily on the plan area of Castlebar, however, given the shared boundaries with neighbouring local authorities, there is potential for transboundary environmental impacts on water quality, biodiversity etc. In line with the SEA Directive, the potential significant aspects of the environment likely to be affected by the LAP 2023-2029 have been described and compiled using available datasets and the scoping process.

### 4.2 UN Sustainable Development Goals

Ireland is a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals are a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. All countries are encouraged to develop national responses to the SDGs and incorporate them into planning and policy and these will inform the plan preparation process.

FIGURE 4-1 UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)



### 4.3 Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

Natural Capital refers to the stock of natural resources that combine to yield a flow of benefits to people. Ecosystems provide a series of services for human wellbeing either directly (as food, medicinal extracts, and fuel), and indirectly by providing clean air and water. The true value of biodiversity and benefits derived from ecosystem services cannot be limited to a financial value, as many interdependencies between biodiversity, natural ecosystems and their benefits to human beings have not been fully understood<sup>2</sup>. **Figures 4.2. to 4.3.** present key ecosystem services at plan level<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> *Ecosystems Services, Mapping and Assessment* | National Parks & Wildlife Service

<sup>3</sup> NPWS Pilot Ecosystem Mapping Project

FIGURE 4-2 ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: CARBON IN SOIL

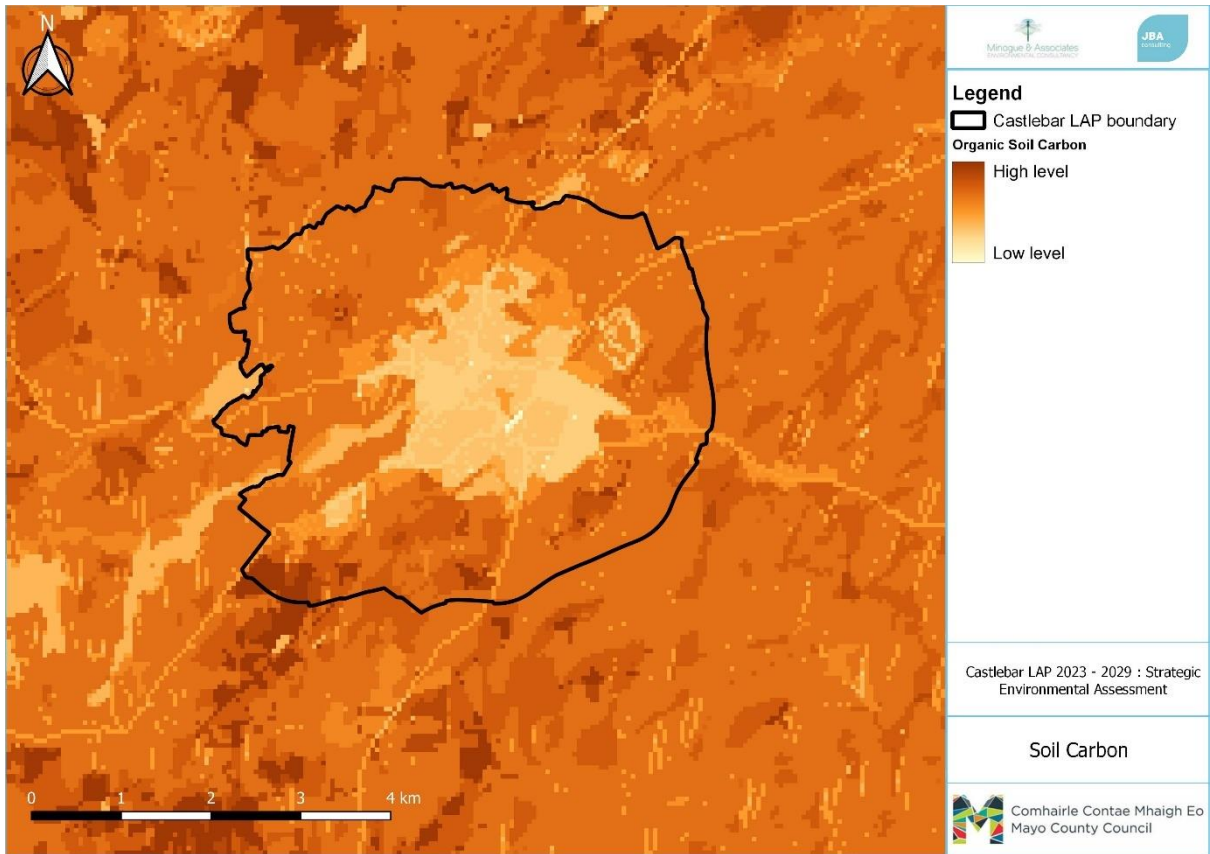
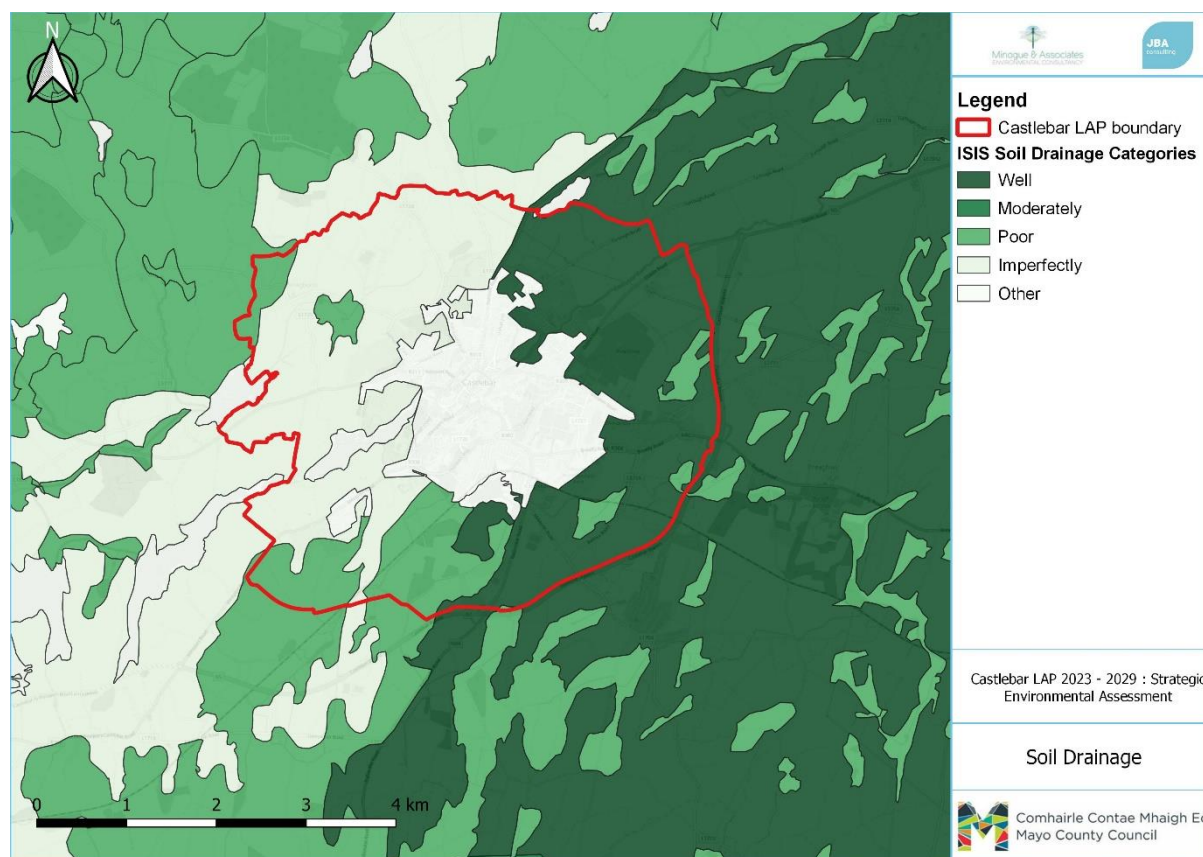




FIGURE 4-3 ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: SOIL DRAINAGE



### 4.3.1 Green and Blue Network

Green spaces are key in terms of natural capital and ecosystem services. Green and Blue infrastructure can also contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation with co benefits in terms of biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and human health<sup>4</sup>. There is strong policy support in the to protect and enhance recreation and amenity space reinforced through the recognition of the importance of the same throughout the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>5</sup>. The Green Network supports the linkage between various multifunctional spaces, that include:

- Blue Spaces of the plan area’s rivers, lakes
- Protected Spaces of ecological and biodiversity importance
- Green Spaces of woodland parks
- Open Spaces including recreational and amenity and agricultural zoned lands
- Community Spaces, that afford direct access to nature and amenities (such as greenways) to the community

## 4.4 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

The Plan area supports a rich biodiversity, with many natural and semi-natural habitats and a range of species and flora. Lough Lannagh and Saleen Lough are located in close proximity to the town centre as well as the Castlebar River, which winds through the centre of the town, which form part of the Moy Catchment. The Castlebar River holds important salmonid populations and provided a direct

<sup>4</sup> Spatial Planning & Climate Action Delivering a Low Carbon & Climate Resilient Future Workshop Report Feb 2021 CARO

<sup>5</sup> “COVID-19 and Sheer Wellbeing 2020 Access to and Use of Blue/Green Spaces in Ireland during a Pandemic,” 19.

pathway to the River Moy SAC, which is currently at moderate status and at risk. The surrounding landscape is rich in peatbogs and Annex I heathlands and fens. Other habitats, although not protected are important for providing links between the protected habitats, allow migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild plants and mammals. Examples include scrub, hedgerows, tree lines, and gardens etc. Natural heritage in the plan area includes a wide range of natural features that make an essential contribution to the environmental quality, ecological biodiversity, climate resilience through nature-based solutions landscape character, visual amenity and recreational activities of the town.

#### 4.4.1 Overview of High Value Biodiversity and Designations

Ecologically sensitivities that contain rare and threatened habitats and species of national and international importance within Castlebar town include the following<sup>6</sup>:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Newport River SAC, Clew Bay Complex SAC, Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC, Towerhill House SAC, Ballinafad SAC, Bella Turlough SAC, Moore Hall (Lough Carra) SAC and River Moy SAC
- Special Protection Area (SPA): Lough Mask SPA, Lough Conn, Lough Carra SPA and Lough Cullin SPA
- Natural Heritage Area (NHA): Cunnagher More Bog (North) and Croaghmoyle Mountain (North-west)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA): Altconey Bog, Owenduff/Nephin Complex, Clew Bay Complex, Knappagh Woods, Brackloon Woods, Mweelrea/Sheffry/Enriff Complex, Moore Hall (Lough Carra), Lough Carra/Mask Complex, Lough Manan, Towerhill Lake, Mountpleasant School Turlough, Slishmeen Turlough, Lough Bay (Carrowmore), Balla Turlough, Ballinafad, Coolbarreen Lough, Ardogommon Wood, Kinlooy Lough, Dambaduff Lough, Carrowmore Lough, Lough Conn and Lough Cullin, and Moy Valley
- Extensive spread of Annex I Habitats – wet heath and alkaline fen
- Extensive peat bogs surrounding settlement
- Medium-high contribution to potential ecological networks
- Low-medium Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Scattered forestry
- Salmonid Waters: Castlebar River

#### 4.4.2 European Sites

A full assessment of the Castlebar Local Area Plan 2023-2029 against the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the designated sites is undertaken throughout the appropriate assessment process which has been undertaken in conjunction with the Plan preparation and SEA processes and is presented in the Natura Impact Report. **Figures 4.4 and 4.5** presents a map of all SACs and SPAs within 15km of the plan area.

#### 4.4.3 Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas

Under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000), Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) are designated to conserve and protect nationally important plant and animal species and their habitats. They are also important for the conservation of nationally important landforms, geological or geomorphological features. Article 10 of the Habitats Directive together with the Habitats Regulations 2011; place a high degree of importance on these sites as features that connect European sites. **Figure 4.6 and 4.7** presents these sites.

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<sup>6</sup> “Draft RSES-NWRA SEA Environmental Report.”

FIGURE 4-4 SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION WITHIN 15KM FROM THE PLAN AREA

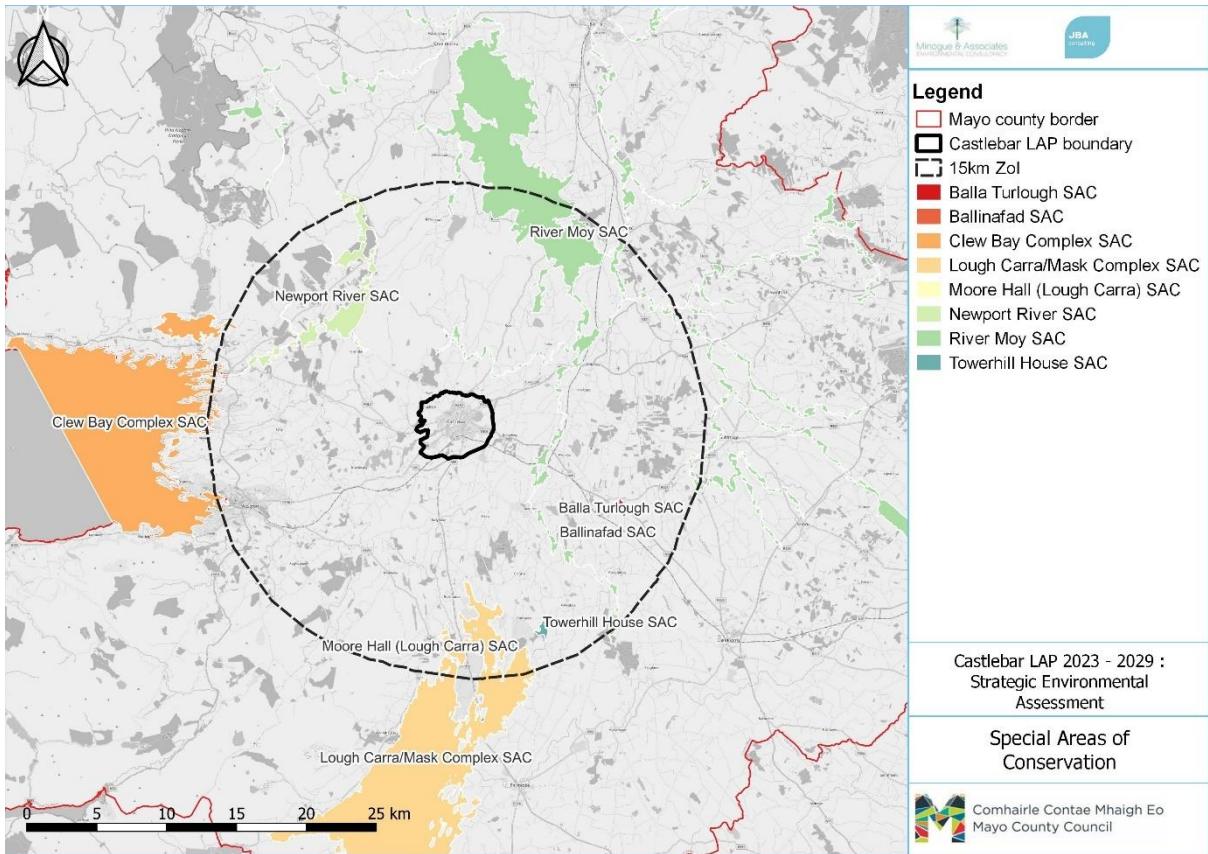


FIGURE 4-5 SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS WITHIN 15KM FROM THE PLAN AREA

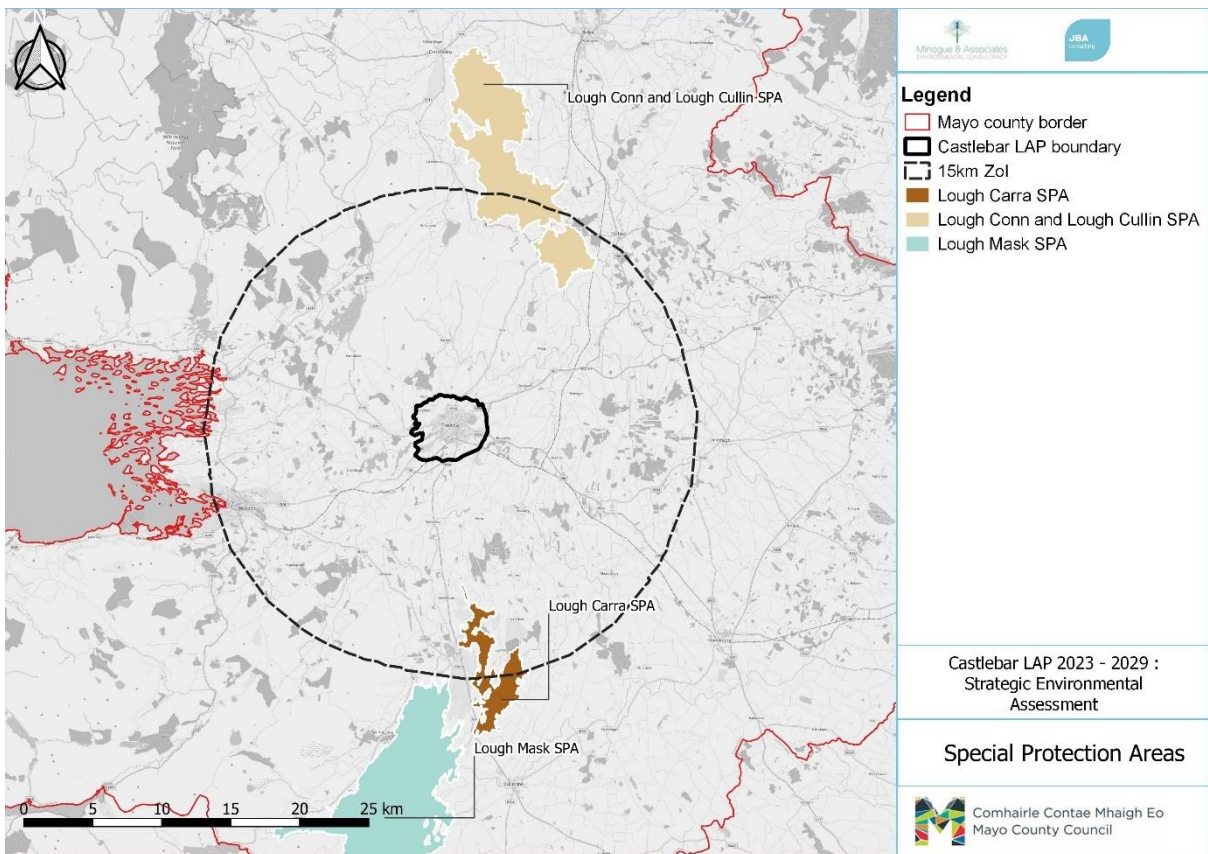
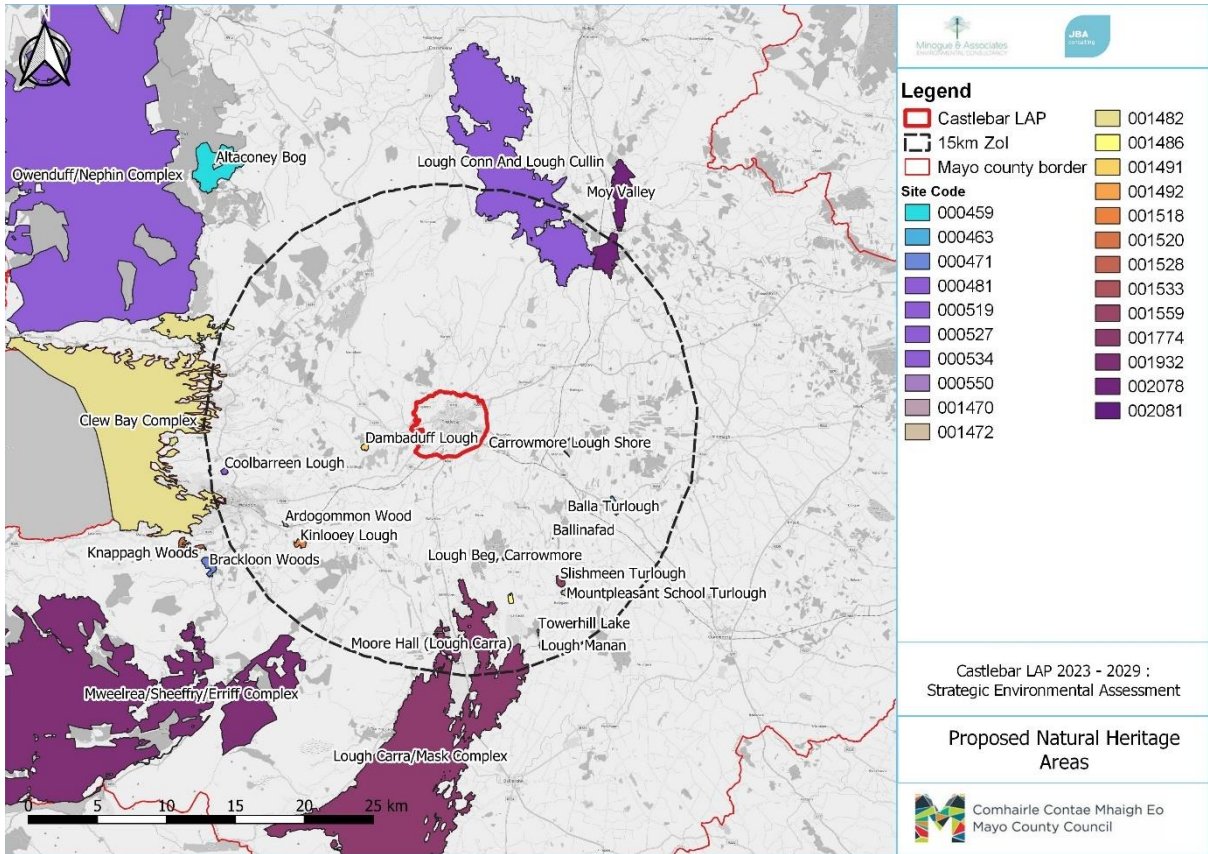




FIGURE 4-6 NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS IN THE PLAN AREA



FIGURE 4-7 PROPOSED NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS IN THE PLAN AREA



#### 4.4.4 Land Cover Mapping: CORINE

The CORINE land cover map for Castlebar indicates the core of the plan area is a mix of Continuous Urban Fabric and Discontinuous Urban Fabric. The core area is flanked by Industrial and Commercial Units to the east and Inland Marshes to the south-east. The majority of the land cover is classified as Pastures, with patches of Land Principally occupied by agriculture with significant areas of natural vegetation.

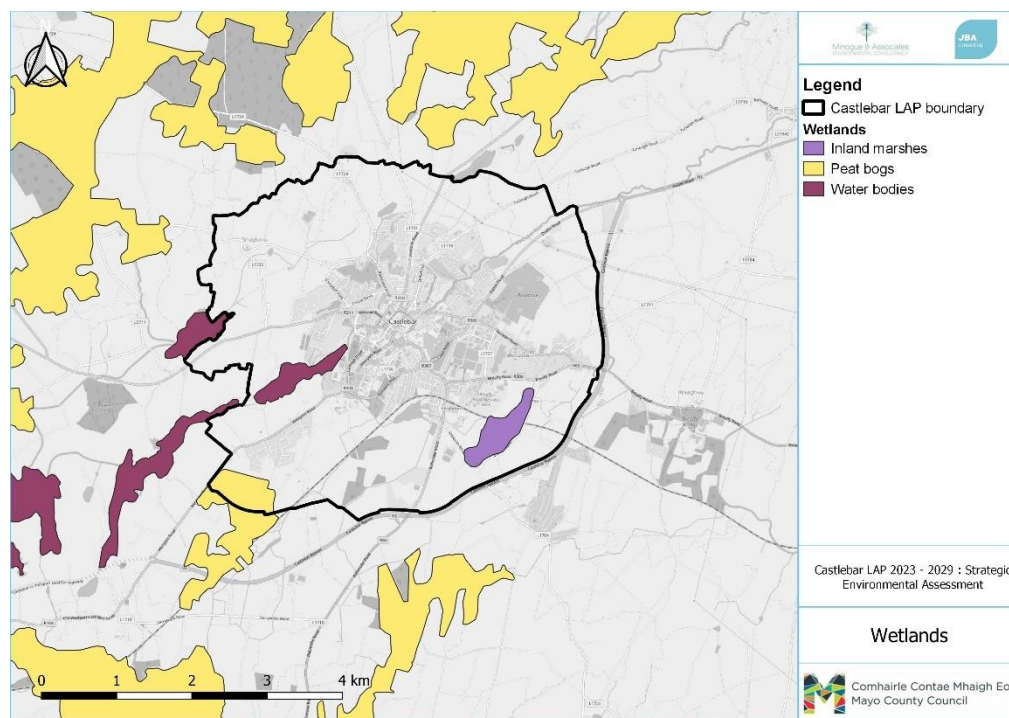
#### 4.4.5 Ecological Networks

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive recognises the importance of ecological networks as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife, including for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna. Within and surrounding Castlebar, the ecological networks are made up of components including the water bodies of the Castlebar River, Islandeady Lough, along with the various woodlands, parks and gardens within and surrounding the plan area and lands under agricultural use and hedgerows.

#### 4.4.6 Wetlands

The value of wetlands includes their function in improving water quality, for floodwater storage whereby they can slow down the force of flood and storm waters as they travel downstream; habitat for wildlife; biodiversity support and provision of recreational and cultural heritage services. The role of wetlands is recognized as forming a vital element in addressing climate change effects by acting as carbon storage. **Figure 4.8** presents a map of the wetlands present in the plan area, based on the Wetland Survey of Ireland database<sup>7</sup>.

FIGURE 4-8 WETLANDS IN THE PLAN AREA



<sup>7</sup> [www.wetlandsurveyireland.com](http://www.wetlandsurveyireland.com) Foss & Crushell. Accessed 8/9/2021

#### 4.4.7 Invasive Species

There are records of invasive species in Castlebar, including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*). Assessment of Grids M19 and M18 from the records of Biodiversity Ireland indicated that the Zebra Mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*) and the American Mink (*Mustela vison*) are present in the area.

#### 4.4.8 Key issues- Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

The key issues to consider for biodiversity, flora and fauna include the following:

- Reduction in water quality can impact water dependant habitats. Therefore, site selection and the appropriate environmental assessment will be vital to ensure that the integrity of these habitats are not impacted.
- The plan should promote the need to protect non-designated aspects of biodiversity such as ecological corridors and linkages, and ensure control and manage measures for invasive species.
- Other biodiversity, flora and fauna resources to be protected include:
  - Hedgerows and Treelines
  - Amenity Development and Greenways
  - Public Buildings
  - Bats
  - Lighting
  - Green Network and Zoning
  - Ecological Records & Assessments
  - Monitoring the impacts of the plan on biodiversity

### 4.5 Population and Human Health

#### 4.5.1 Population

Castlebar is the largest town in Co. Mayo, with a population of 12,068 (2016) (See **Figure 4.9** for population density in the plan area) and is the main administrative, public health, education and commercial centre in the county. The town provides over 9000 jobs and hosts a range of industrial/enterprise businesses and has a strong focus on commerce and the manufacturing industry. Castlebar Town Centre historically has been the focal point of commercial activity, but has slowly seen a shift in retail activity with the emergence of online-retail. The main public health function in Castlebar and surrounding environs is the Mayo University Hospital and the primary care centre.

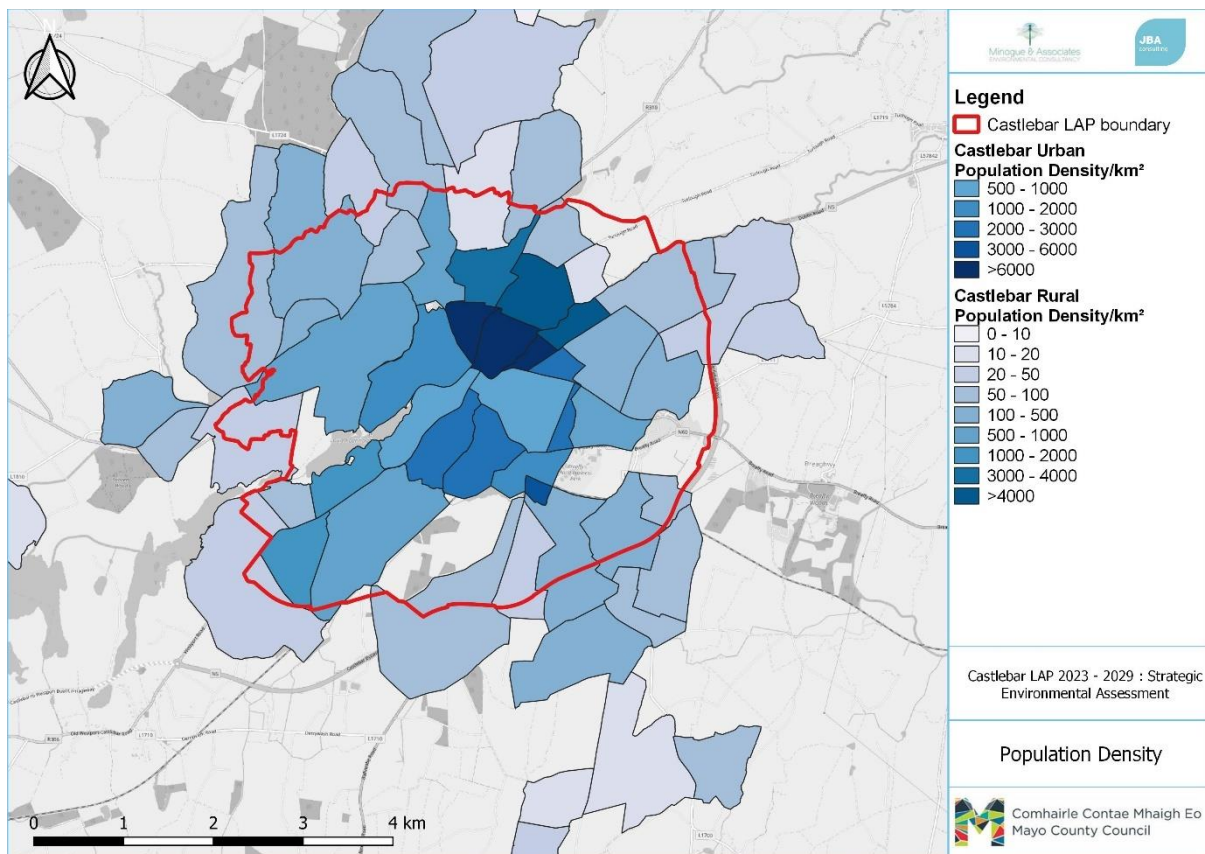
The current town and environs plan promotes a housing supply to meet the varied needs of the community and to provide an acceptable standard of living. Future housing supply in the town must be provided in a sustainable manner, aligning with the provisions of the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan, and having regard to established and sustainable settlement patterns and the natural environment. The potential exists for compact urban growth and regeneration within the town core particularly the former Imperial Hotel, the old Military Barracks as well as significant tracts



of land directly adjacent to the main streets have the potential to bring about transformative change in Castlebar.

Community infrastructure plays a vital role in contributing to the quality of life for all. The physical environment should develop in such a way that it facilitates the healthy functioning of sustainable community and cultural life. Services and amenities including crèches, schools, amenities, recreation and other community facilities should be provided in tandem with residential development. The provision of an adequate level and distribution of community facilities and amenities in Castlebar that meet the current and future needs of the local community will be a priority in the new Local Area Plan. The core strategy of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 provides for a population allocation of 2,347 persons for Castlebar over the plan period, therefore equating to approximately 917 new houses. Mayo County Council are required to identify and reserve an appropriate amount of land in appropriate locations to meeting housing and population targets.

FIGURE 4-9 POPULATION DENSITY CASTLEBAR



#### 4.5.2 Human Health

In terms of human health, where people live have a profound effect on their health. A key area for consideration of human health will be the interaction between environmental aspects such as water, landscape, biodiversity, air, energy and human beings. Air Quality is summarized in Section 4.7.1, noise is summarized below:

The Environmental Noise Directive (END) (2002/49/EC) requires that each member state take action, with a view to preventing and reducing environmental noise where necessary, particularly where exposure levels can induce harmful effects on human health and to preserving environmental acoustic quality where it is good.

The assessment of impacts on human health will reference other sections of the SEA as relevant along with considering aspects such as the Industrial Emissions Directive, Seveso and Flood Risk Assessments.

### 4.5.3 Key Issues- Population and Human Health

The following issues were identified via the pre-draft consultations

- Encouraging and improving well-being through new and improved recreational spaces, cycling and pedestrian routes.
- Implement measures reducing fast food within the town and support healthy food options and help prevent childhood and adult obesity. The HSE recommends the consideration of provision of free water facilities in Castlebar.
- Provide a diverse variety of housing types to offer people a range of lifestyle, affordability, designate age-friendly settlement in the town centre. Ensure adequate emergency accommodation is available in Castlebar. Improve all facilities for all groups of society.
- It is essential that MCC adapts to the dominance of online e-commerce by implementing measures tackling vacant units, reassessment of housing/retail zonings for the new plan and cater for remote working hubs etc.

## 4.6 Soil and Geology

### 4.6.1 Soils

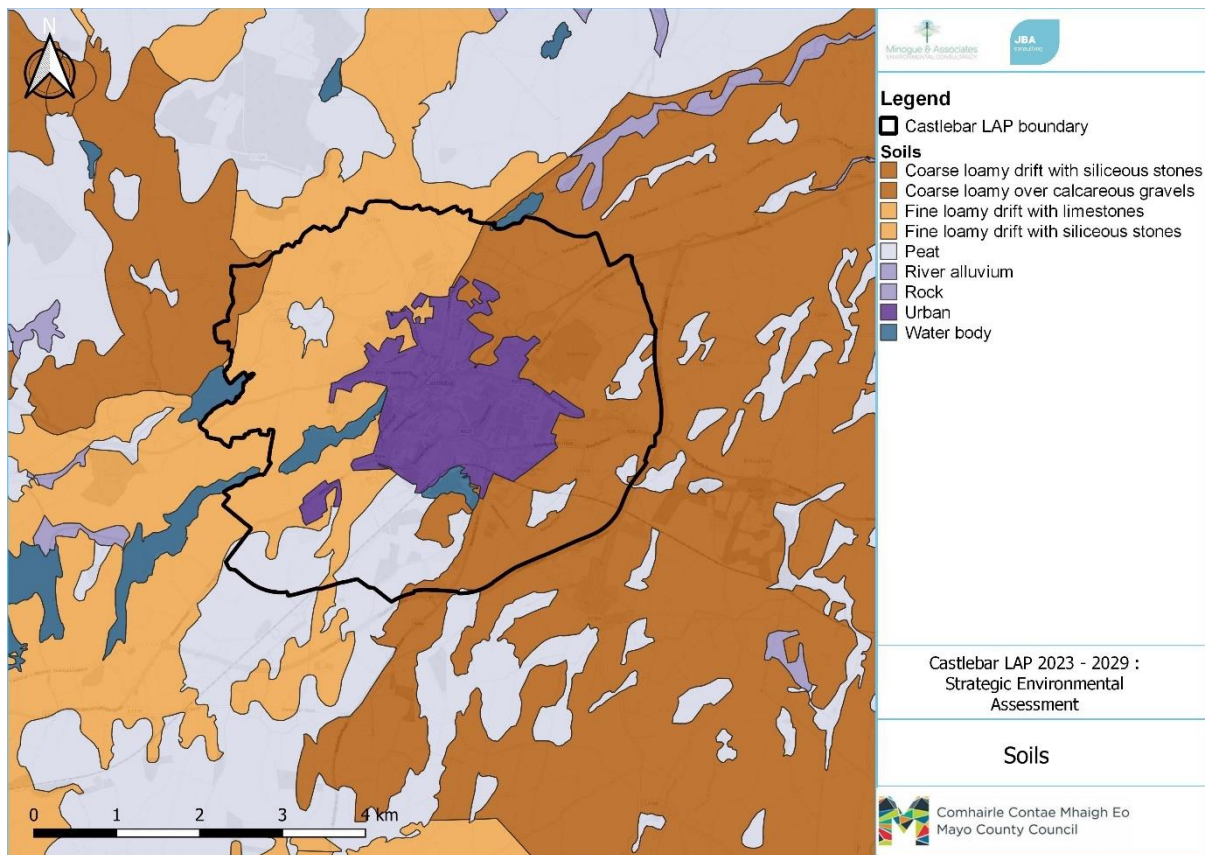
Urban soils comprise the core of the plan area. Patches of peat scattered throughout the north-west and north-east, with a larger concentration of the same in the south of the plan area. The remainder of the plan area is split into approximately equal proportions of coarse loamy drift with combinations of siliceous stones and calcareous gravels to the east, and fine loamy drift with limestones and siliceous stones towards the west. **Figure 4.10** depicts the distribution of soil types across Castlebar.

The soils and habitats of Castlebar have been influenced by its underlying geology. The majority of the plan area is underlain by Visian limestone and calcareous shale, with palaeogene basic intrusive rocks, Visian sandstone, mudstone and evaporite, and Neoproterozoic metasedimentary rocks - Dalradian across the north and east of the plan area.

The proposed EU Directive 2004/35/EC Directive offers protection to soil and indicates that this may be achieved through the rehabilitation of brown field sites, thus, reducing the pressure on development of green field site. It also states that soil should be used in a sustainable manner in order to ensure that it is available for future generations to come.



FIGURE 4-10 SOIL MAP FOR PLAN AREA



#### 4.6.2 Geological Heritage

The Geological heritage audit<sup>8</sup> for Castlebar includes the audited site MO028 Castlebar Westport Drumlins (a rolling drumlin landscape between Castlebar and Westport). The Moneen Quarry is characterised by Limestone Rock Deposits and is mined for construction purposes (aggregates for concrete, hardcore, earthworks/fill). The following sites are identified by GSI for the plan and adjacent areas:

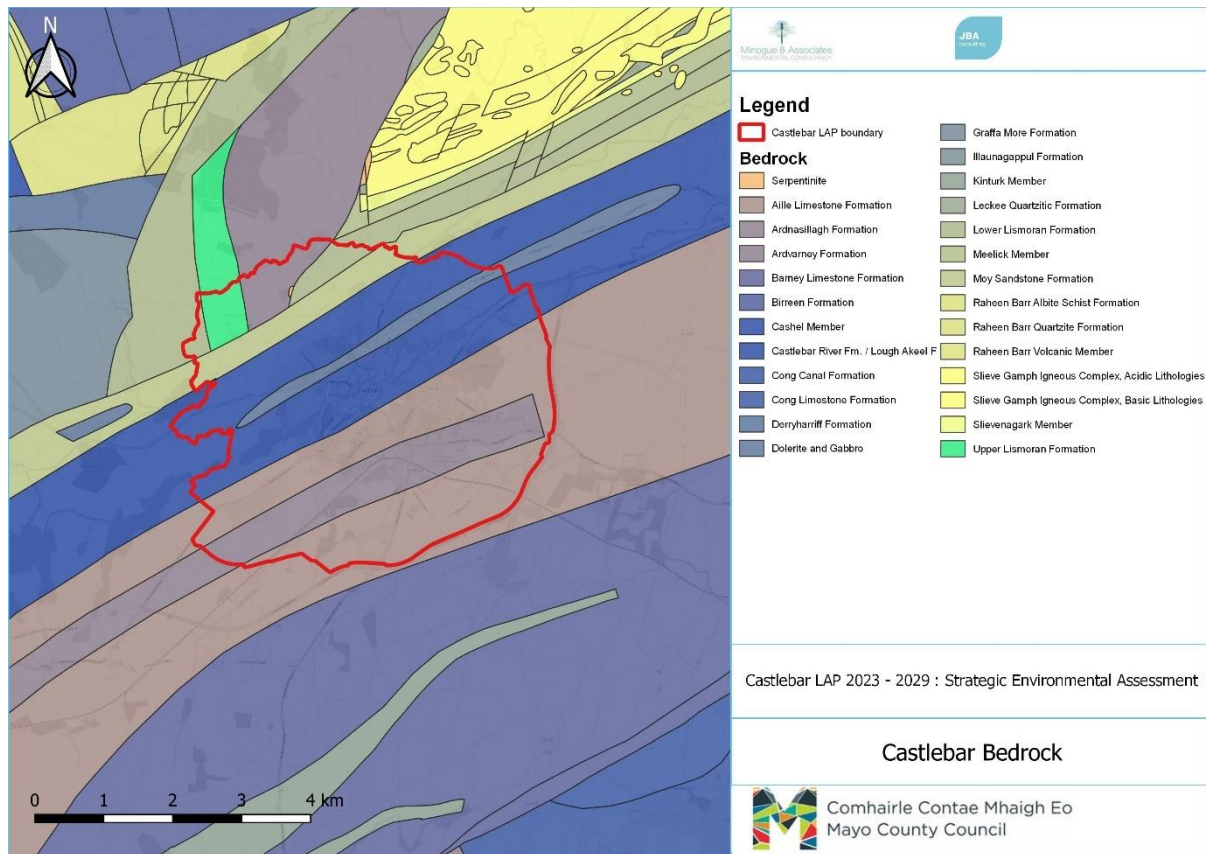
- Clew Bay, Co. Mayo (GR 95001, 289737), under IGH themes: IGH7 Quaternary, IGH13 Coastal Geomorphology. A west-facing embayment, some 12km wide from north to south, with numerous drumlin islands, spits and sand bars around the inner margins of the bay. The sequence forms one of the best examples of a ‘drowned’ drumlin landscape in the country. The site is of international significant because it documents re-equilibration of the ice margin following deglaciation of the continental shelf, which is a major event in the deglaciation of the North Atlantic area. The site requires designation as a geological NHA. Link to Site Report: MO032.
- Castlebar Westport Drumlins, Co. Mayo (GR 114120, 287356), under IGH themes IGH7 Quaternary. A low-lying landscape of undulating drumlins between Castlebar and Westport, to the north and south of the N5 road and railway line. The drumlins are formed on a variety of bedrock types and ages that include Dalradian metamorphic rocks, Devonian Old Red Sandstone and Lower Carboniferous limestone and sandstone. The drumlins are Quaternary in age and form part of the Clew Bay drumlin field. Link to Site Report: MO028.

<sup>8</sup> [Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.arcgis.com)

- River Moy, Co. Mayo (GR 128034, 312458), under IGH theme: IGH14 Fluvial and Lacustrine Geomorphology. A long, lowland river, famous for angling, that exhibits excellent meandering and drains a catchment area of over 2000km<sup>2</sup> flowing into the Moy River estuary at Ballina. Link to Site Report: MO089.

Figures 4.11 present the bedrock maps for the plan area and environs respectively.

FIGURE 4-11 BEDROCK GEOLOGY OF PLAN AREA



### 4.6.3 Geohazards

Geohazards can cause widespread damage to landscapes, wildlife, human property and human life. In Ireland, landslides, flooding and coastal erosion are the most prevalent of these hazards. There are no landslides recorded in Castlebar.

### 4.6.4 Geothermal Energy

Geothermal energy harnesses the heat beneath the surface of the Earth for heating applications and electricity generation, and has proven to be secure, environmentally sustainable and cost effective over long time periods. Geothermal applications can range in depth from a few metres below the surface to several kilometres. Ireland has widespread shallow geothermal resources for small and medium-scale heating applications. Majority of the plan area is suitable for both domestic and

Geothermal energy harnesses the heat beneath the surface of the Earth for heating applications and electricity generation, and has proven to be secure, environmentally sustainable and cost effective over long time periods. Geothermal applications can range in depth from a few metres below the surface to several kilometres. Ireland has widespread shallow geothermal resources for small and

medium-scale heating applications. Much of Castlebar plan area has been mapped as Suitable with Suitability Class rating of 4<sup>9</sup>.

#### 4.6.5 Key Issues- Soil and Geology

- Much of the plan area comprises an urban environment.
- Reuse of existing buildings and brownfield land development.
- Supporting and maintaining carbon storage associated with soil.
- Potential soil contamination associated with historic land use activities.
- Reducing soil sealing.
- Greenfield site pressures and demands.

### 4.7 Water Resources and Flooding

#### 4.7.1 Water Framework Directive (WFD)

Ireland is required to produce a river basin management plan under the Water Framework Directive and the current plan is from 2018-2021. The plan sets out the actions that Ireland will take to improve water quality and achieve ‘good’ ecological status in water bodies (rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters) by 2027.

The plan area is contained in the Moy & Killala Bay Catchment (ID: 34), which is drained by the River Moy and all streams entering tidal water in Killala Bay between Benwee Head and Lenadoon Point. The relevant sub-catchment is Castlebar\_SC\_010 (ID: 34\_22). An overview of the sub catchment profile is provided in the following table<sup>10</sup>.

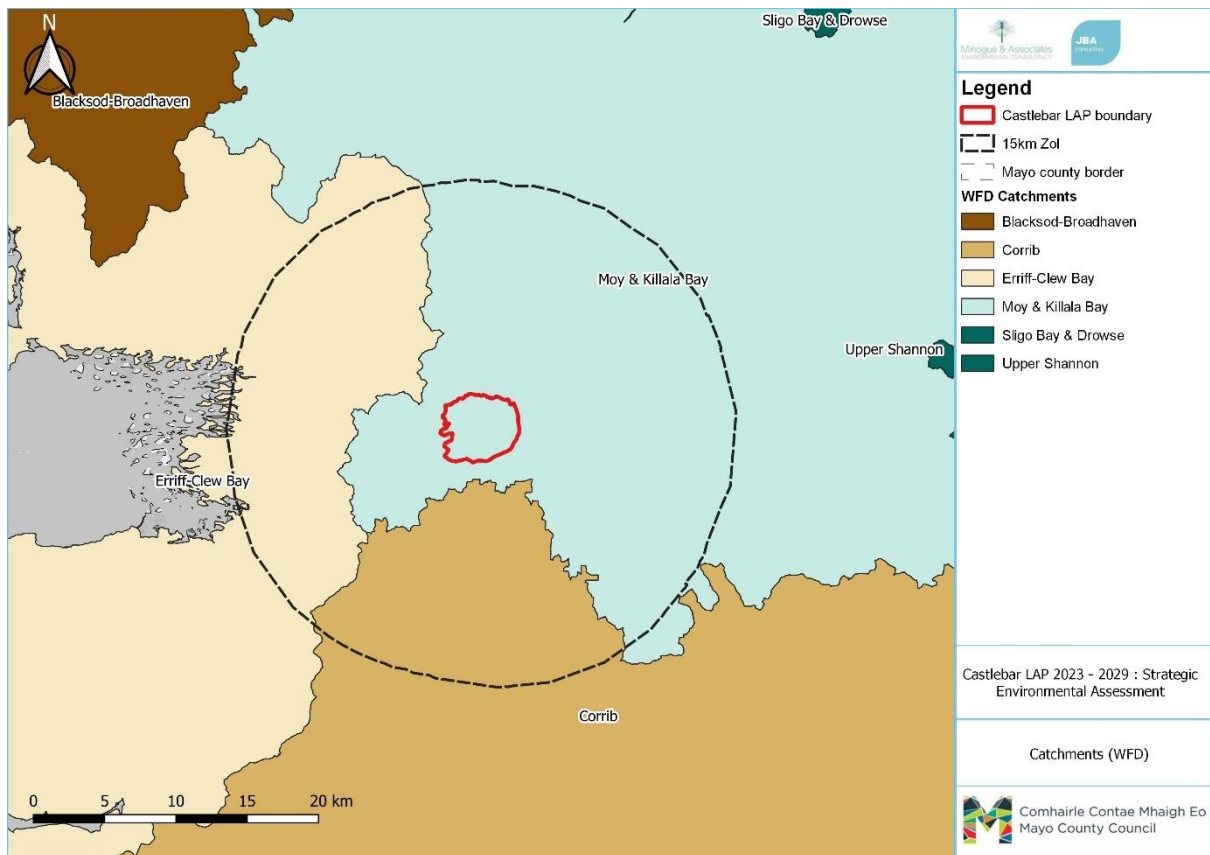
**Table 4-1 Profile of sub-catchment Castlebar\_SC\_010 (ID: 34\_22)**

Code	Name	Type	WFD Risk	Significant pressure
IE_WE_34_403	Castlebar	Lake	At Risk	Yes
IE_WE_34C010180	CASTLEBAR_010	River	At Risk	Yes
IE_WE_34C010300	CASTLEBAR_020	River	At Risk	Yes
IE_WE_34_376	Islandeedy	Lake	Under review	Yes

<sup>9</sup> <https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=9ee46bee08de41278b90a991d60c0b9e>

<sup>10</sup> [https://catchments.ie/wp-content/files/subcatchmentassessments/34\\_22%20Castlebar\\_SC\\_010%20Subcatchment%20Assessment%20WFD%20Cycle%202.pdf](https://catchments.ie/wp-content/files/subcatchmentassessments/34_22%20Castlebar_SC_010%20Subcatchment%20Assessment%20WFD%20Cycle%202.pdf)

FIGURE 4-12 WFD CATCHMENT(S) IN CASTLEBAR PLAN AREA



#### 4.7.2 Surface Water Bodies

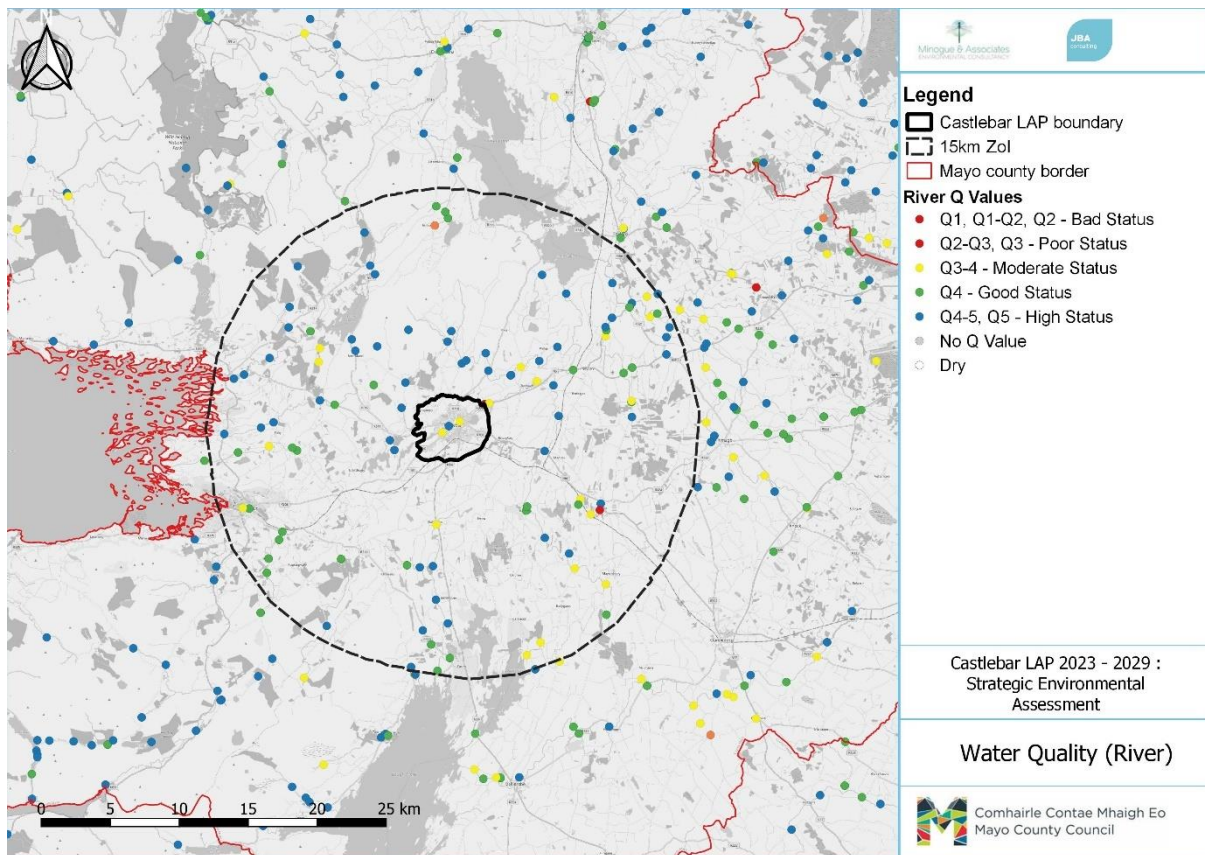
The Castlebar SC\_010 subcatchment contains the Castlebar River and Lakes Islandeady and Castlebar, in addition to Lough Lannagh and Saleen Lough. Castlebar River (010 and 020) is considered to be At Risk under the Water Framework Directive, with poor ecological status. The main pressures identified for this waterbody include urban run-off and wastewater, agriculture, hydromorphology, extractive industry and domestic waste-water. The Castlebar Lake is under pressure from agriculture, domestic waste water and invasive species (Zebra Mussel). The Castlebar River originates in the Castlebar Lakes and is a tributary to the River Moy. It is an important spawning ground for salmon and trout.

An upgrade to the Lough Mask Water Treatment (WTP) is due to be completed by 2023, which will be sufficient for the proposed population increase. There are no known water constraints in Castlebar.

The Q-values of surface water bodies within the plan area are mapped on **Figure 4.13** as shown below.



FIGURE 4-13 Q VALUES OF SURFACE WATER BODIES IN CASTLEBAR



### 4.7.3 Groundwater

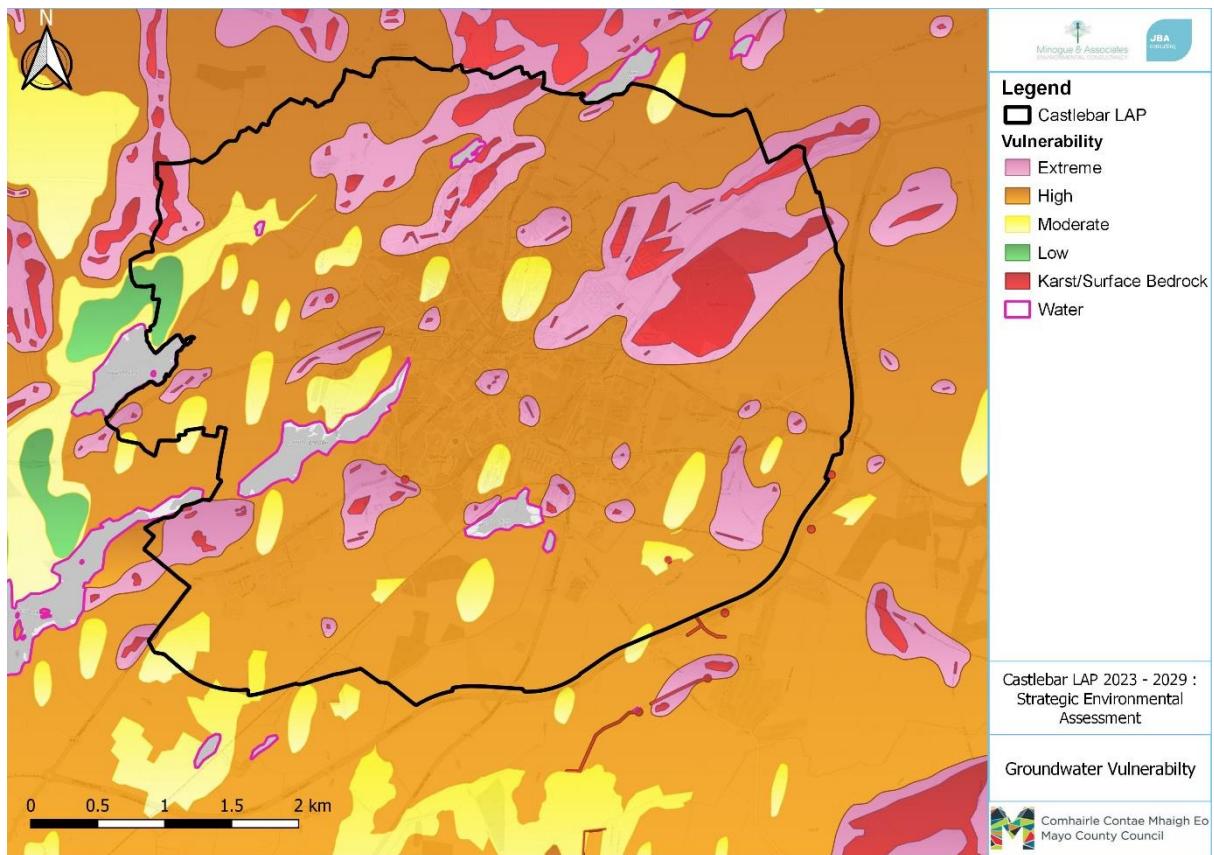
The quality of groundwater in the plan area is classified as good following a reliable assessment in accordance with Annex V of the WFD. In addition to this Directive and associated transposed regulations to protect and restore, wherever necessary, groundwater, additional legal instruments are also in existence which strengthen and support the WFD ultimate goal with respect to groundwater.

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates aquifers according to their vulnerability to pollution. Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter underground water. **Figure 4.14** highlights areas of extreme to high vulnerability. The diverse geology of the plan area, results in considerable parts of the plan area being classified as high or extreme vulnerability.

The Groundwater data viewer indicates; a 'Regionally Important Aquifer - Karstified (conduit)' underlies the Castlebar LAP. It should be noted that there are karst features in areas of the Castlebar LAPs.

The Groundwater Vulnerability map indicates variable vulnerability within the LAP areas. We would therefore recommend use of the Groundwater Viewer to identify areas of High to Extreme Vulnerability and 'Rock at or near surface', in your assessments, as any groundwater-surface water interactions that might occur would be greater in these areas.

FIGURE 4-14 GROUNDWATER VULNERABILITY IN PLAN AREA

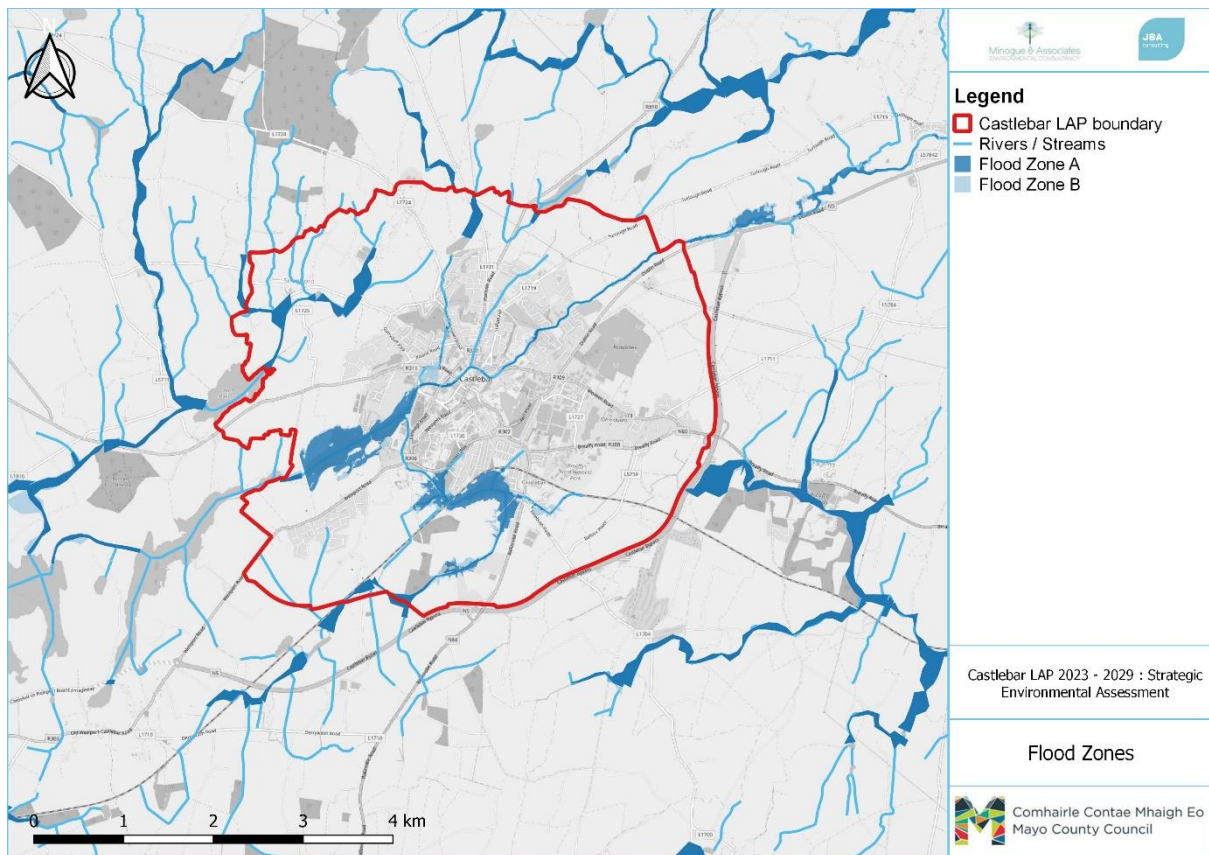


#### 4.7.4 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DoEHLG 2009) provide a methodology to incorporate flood risk identification and management into land use strategies. It also requires the alignment and integration of flood risk into the SEA process. Potential flood issues in the plan area are an important consideration in the preparation of the draft LAP 2023-2029. Therefore, the plan has been guided by the information on flood risk currently available and has been informed by the currently up to date flood risk information including Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) studies.

Fluvial flooding in Castlebar has been identified in the vicinity of the Saleen Lough and Lough Lannagh and in a narrow corridor along the Castlebar River which flows through the centre of the town. This affects relatively few properties but there are areas of flooding which are currently undeveloped and within the development limits of the town. These need to be managed in accordance with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines. The CFRAM flood maps for Castlebar provide the full flood extents for fluvial flooding in the town. Site selection and flood prevention measures are therefore important when growing Castlebar, especially if growth is planned in the south, to ensure no flood risk impacts and avoid inappropriate development.

FIGURE 4-15 STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT



#### 4.7.5 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Potentially viable structural flood relief measures have been investigated for this community as part of the OPW FRMP. However, it was determined that the benefits accruing from these measures would not justify the costs of structural works at this time. The current level of risk will be reviewed, along with all areas, on a regular basis into the future. The existing Arterial Drainage Scheme will be maintained under the Arterial Drainage Act 1945 and the Amendment of the Act 1995. A Network Development Plan is currently being prepared for Castlebar which will help inform zoning, the wastewater network has been extended to include Breaffy village, there are no know major constraints in Castlebar’s wastewater network.

#### 4.7.6 Key Issues- Water Resources and Flooding

- Climate change and reduce our carbon footprint to help achieve the national target of zero emissions by 2050 and a target of 7% per annum between 2021 and 2030.
- Flood risk management and appropriate measures.
- Nature based solutions, green and blue network to support water management, flood risk and provide co benefits to other environmental receptors.
- Control/avoid introduction of alien and invasive species.

The following recommendations were made in the pre-draft consultation process:



- Address the impacts of climate change by adapting Irish Water assets to be resilient to climate change and mitigate climate change impacts by reducing carbon footprint.
- The inclusion of policies/objectives on the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Green/Blue Infrastructure in new developments and retrofitted into existing developed areas.

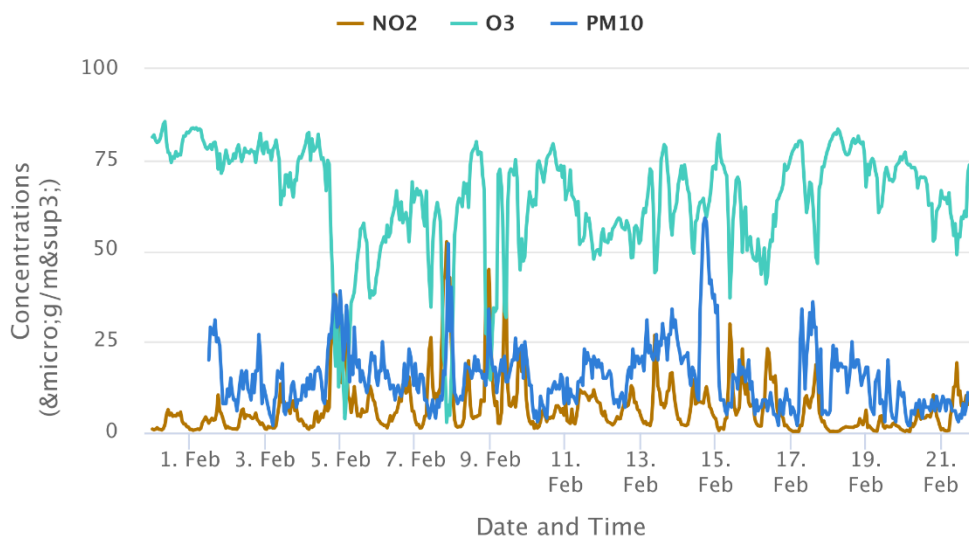
## 4.8 Air Quality and Climatic Factors

### 4.8.1 Air Quality

The quality of air is a crucial factor in determining the health of an ecosystem. Polluted air impacts the natural environment, affecting the quality of fresh water, soil, and ecosystems, as well as damage to the built environment.

The Castlebar monitoring station is located on the grounds of the EPA office on the outskirts of Castlebar. Air quality index on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023 was recorded to be 2 (good). Particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), ozone and nitrogen oxides are measured at this site. The past three weeks measurements for are presented below and show considerable variations .

Air Quality Levels at Castlebar, Co. Mayo



### 4.8.2 Climate Change

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 sets out the national objective of transitioning to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy in the period up to 2050. The recent Climate Action and Low Carbon (Amendment) Act 2021 provides for a statutory a “National Climate Objective” that commits to pursue and achieve the transition to a climate-resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally-sustainable and climate-neutral economy. Climate is a key indicator with influences on all other indicators. Table 4.3 shows the impacts that climate change is expected to have nationally.



The County Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019-2024) sets out the county’s short- and medium-term objectives for its response to climate risks. Adaptation to climate change through land-use planning is a key consideration and will be informed by guidance, including EPA Guidance on Climate Change and SEA. The management of areas prone to flooding will be addressed in the upcoming LAP, accompanied by measures to adapt to climate change by transitioning to a low-carbon and climate-resilient town with a particular emphasis on the reduction in energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions. The next Climate Change Adaption Plan will be on a statutory basis with the next period for 2024 onwards.

**Table 4-3 Climate Change Effects (National)**

Impact	Description
<b>Sea Level Rise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sea levels are expected to increase for all Irish coastal areas. Projected changes in sea level will magnify the impacts of changing storm surge and wave patterns in coastal areas.</li> <li>• Decrease in mean and extreme wave heights by the end of the century.</li> <li>• Increase in magnitude and intensity of storm wave heights</li> </ul>
<b>Wind</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increase in the intensity of extreme windstorms is expected.</li> <li>• Decrease in wind speeds for summer and increases for winter rainfall events is likely.</li> </ul>
<b>Phenology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increase in the duration of the growing season is likely with spring occurring earlier.</li> <li>• Projections indicate that bud burst will continue to advance until at least 2100.</li> </ul>
<b>Precipitation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increase in seasonality in precipitation can be expected with significant decreases projected for spring and summer and increases for winter.</li> <li>• An increase in the occurrence of extreme rainfall events is likely.</li> </ul>
<b>Surface Air Temperature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average surface air temperatures are expected to increase everywhere and across all seasons.</li> <li>• An increase in the intensity and duration of heatwaves is expected.</li> <li>• Increasing seasonality in hydrological regimes can be expected with decreased summer and increased winter flows likely.</li> <li>• Flood risk will increase due to a combination of higher river-flows and increases in extreme precipitation events.</li> </ul>
<b>Hydrology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing seasonality in hydrological regimes can be expected with decreased summer and increased winter flows likely.</li> <li>• Flood risk will increase due to a combination of higher river-flows and increases in extreme precipitation events.</li> </ul>

#### 4.8.3 Key Issues - Air and Climatic Factors

- The LAP should identify pollution hotspots in the locality and aim to reduce pollution through local actions.
- The plan should align with national climate action commitments as well as relevant sectoral, regional and local adaptation/mitigation plans.
- The LAP should take into account the relevant aspects and key actions of the EPA document *‘Ireland’s Environmental – An Assessment 2020’* and the UN Sustainable Goals when preparing the LAP as this will ensure alignment with Ireland’s environmental protection ambitions.
- Castlebar should aim to become a carbon neutral town and the new plan should set specific targets on reducing greenhouse gases through a range of measure such as reducing energy demands in civic buildings, promoting Castlebar as a sustainable energy community through

increased usage of renewable energy, encourage energy audits for local industry, implement suds and avoid development in flood areas.

## 4.9 Material Assets

Material assets are defined as the critical infrastructure essential for the functioning of society. This section presents the baseline as it relates to transport, waste management, water services infrastructure and energy. The Environmental Report will examine effects on material assets, such as existing infrastructure and services including transportation, water supply, waste-water treatment and discharge, waste management, electricity and telecommunications etc.

### 4.9.1 Water and Wastewater

It is envisaged that there is adequate WWTP capacity to meet the 2027 County Development Plan population targets for Castlebar, to license compliant standards

#### Wastewater Networks <sup>11</sup>

Uisce Éireann and Mayo County Council are continually progressing sewer rehabilitation activities, capital maintenance activities, etc. Uisce Éireann and Mayo County Council will continue to monitor the performance of the networks to ensure that the most urgent works are prioritised as required.

A Network Development Plan has been drafted for Castlebar, which will help inform how zoned sites within the town could be serviced. In recent years, the wastewater network in Castlebar was extended to include Breaffy village. Although some localised constraints exist, there are no known major constraints in Castlebar's wastewater network

#### Water Supply Infrastructure

Castlebar is supplied by Lough Mask Regional Water Supply. While capacity is constrained at present, an upgrade is underway to increase capacity at Lough Mask Water Treatment Plant. The ongoing works will ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the population targets of the Draft Plan and are due to be completed in 2024. In the medium-long term, a further upgrade of the treatment plant will be required. The North-West Regional Water Resources Plan is currently being finalised following public consultation and will identify plan-level approaches to address the identified needs in the region, which includes Castlebar, in a sustainable manner.

#### Water Networks

Uisce Éireann and Mayo County Council are continually progressing leakage reduction activities, mains rehabilitation activities and capital maintenance activities. Irish Water and Mayo County Council will continue to monitor the performance of the networks to ensure that the most urgent works are prioritised as required. A Network Development Plan (NDP) has been prepared which will help inform how zoned sites within these settlements could be serviced. A project to upgrade the outlet pipework at Castlebar reservoir is being progressed and will ensure the forecast growth can be facilitated. There are no other known major network constraints in Castlebar.

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<sup>11</sup> New text in relation to wastewater, water treatment and supply is provided due to submission on draft LAP by Uisce Éireann.

Wastewater is currently treated in the north of the settlement at the Castlebar treatment facility, catering for a population equivalent to 17,794. The facility is well within design capacity of 28,000 pe and is passing compliance, and therefore is not of immediate concern.

#### 4.9.2 Energy Infrastructure and Communications

Infrastructure includes a wide variety of services and functions, essential for the delivery of sustainable development in the Castlebar. These include, Water Supply and Drainage, Waste Management, Pollution Management (Air, Noise, Light, Water, Litter, Major Hazards), Electricity Supply and Broadband/Telecommunications Services. There is a need to plan for all these elements so as to ensure that there is adequate availability to support future sustainable development of the town.

#### 4.9.3 Transportation and Sustainable Mobility

The new plan intends to build on existing policy to integrate land use with transportation and community services, promoting the reduction of travel distances and the use of public transport, walking and cycling and reductions in private car usage. The design and layout of new development including the design of open space, reduction in car parking and smart waste management methods to support the transition to a low carbon economy will be prioritised.

In addition, promoting more sustainable forms of travel and activity-based recreation has the potential to minimise air emissions from the transport sector. Greenway development can be beneficial for biodiversity if biodiversity enhancements are built into the linear networks. Upgrading key road networks is supported in the strategy for Castlebar to support growth with improved connectivity, therefore stimulating Castlebar's value as a place to live, visit, work and do business. However, upgrading road networks has the potential to negatively impact air quality and climatic factors with increased numbers of motor vehicles.

It is essential that the new Local Area Plan promotes a more efficient strategic transport system integrated with appropriate use of land to support the sustainable economic, social and physical development of Castlebar as an attractive location for enterprise, investment and a place to live, work and visit. A Local Transport Plan is currently being prepared for Castlebar and will be subject to SEA and AA screening.

#### 4.9.4 Key Issues- Material Assets

The following issues were identified during the pre-draft consultation process and the following recommendations were made:

- All developments should be subject to robust site / route selection and appropriate environmental assessment.
- Infrastructure design of road upgrades should include the provision of bus/cycle lanes to encourage active and sustainable transport modes.

- Pedestrian and cycling facilities should be provided along busy routes to promote a modal shift, also a park and ride facility should be provided to serve the busy routes around the town as well as rural transport scheme which serve the wider hinterlands of Castlebar. Other suggestions include improving public transport infrastructure, specify maximum standards for parking, new developments produce travel plans, encourage school travel plans, provide shower facilities at public buildings in the town.
- MCC should implement waste prevention measures with local and community groups and provide easily accessible public bins and implement an education campaign to highlight food waste management options.
- To ensure plan is consistent with the need for proper planning and sustainable development, adequate critical infrastructure should be in place to serve and future development during the lifetime of the plan.

#### 4.10 Landscape

Landscape sensitivity is a measure of the ability of the landscape to accommodate change or intervention without suffering unacceptable effects to its character and values. Sensitivity ratings are derived from a combination of landscape values and landscape character. Under the categories specified for Landscape Assessment based on the CORINE Land Cover Project, the following are designation of areas in County Mayo<sup>12</sup>:

- Areas designated as vulnerable (the coastline, banks of rivers, shoreline of all lakes, skylines of upland areas, and all headlands and promontories), including Castlebar River
- Areas designated as Sensitive (natural grasslands, peat bogs, moors and heathlands, transitional woodland scrub, beaches, dunes and sands, estuaries, broad-leaved forests, mixed forests, inland and salt marshes, intertidal flats, water courses/bodies, agricultural lands with significant areas of natural vegetation), including peat bogs present in the north and north-east of Castlebar and transitional woodland scrub at the west of Lough Conn, and Castlebar Lough
- Areas designated as normal (pasture lands, coniferous plantations, complex cultivation patterns)
- Areas designated as robust (continuous urban fabric, discontinuous urban fabric, industrial or commercial units, road and rail networks and associated land, sports and leisure facilities), including Castlebar town and Castlebar golf course at Lightford
- Areas designated as scenic routes (mineral extraction sites, dump sites, peat extraction)
- Areas designated as scenic routes
- Areas designated as highly scenic vistas

Regeneration of the town core in Castlebar and land adjacent to the main streets has the potential to improve the visual amenity of the centre, improve quality of life for those residing in these areas and attract further investment. However, as with any developments there is the potential for negative

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.mayo.ie/getmedia/54e093a8-493e-48d1-ba85-d2a899b50eac/Vol-4-Landscape-Appraisal-of-County-Mayo-08.pdf>

impacts such as habitat loss from expanding capacity of commercial estates. As the surrounding landscape is rich in peatbogs and Annex I heathlands and fens, degradation or loss of these sensitive habitats would be significantly detrimental to biodiversity in the area.

High-quality open spaces and amenity areas are essential for a good quality of life and are key components of sustainable communities. Green infrastructure includes nature conservation areas, parks, open space, rivers, floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, farmland and town greenways which support and improve environmental conditions in a way that facilitates environmental, economic and societal benefits.

#### 4.10.1 Key Issues - Landscape

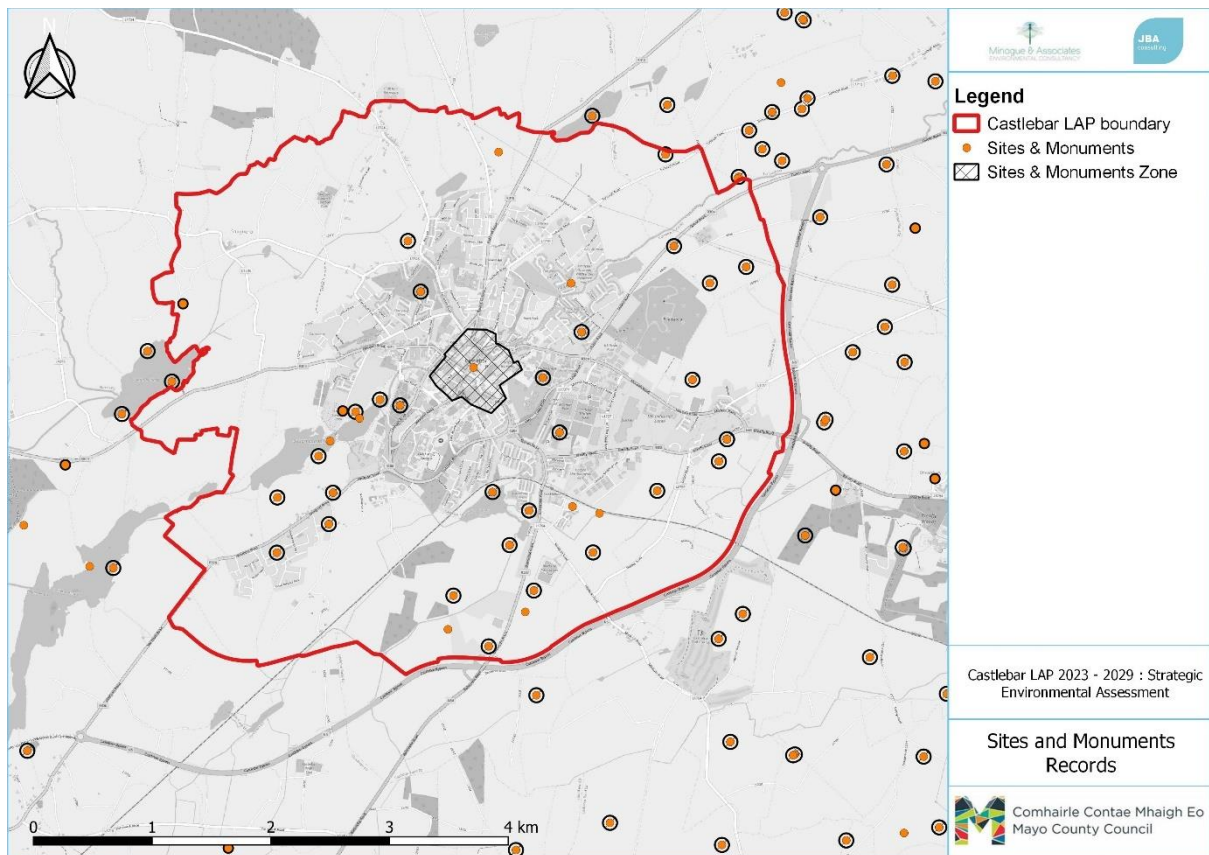
The key issues for landscape in Castlebar include the following:

- Promoting development that respects the city's existing landscapes and incorporate the principles of good urban design that facilitates the functioning of successful places.
- The plan should support compact growth and better integration of transport and land-use planning.
- Protecting key views and vistas.
- A new greening strategy and a pollinator plan should be prepared for Castlebar. Other initiatives are proposed in the submission such as rewilding initiatives, water usage audits of public buildings, creation of town greenspaces etc.
- Enhancing existing landscape features and elements that contribute to local character.
- Integrate green and blue infrastructure considerations where possible.
- Enhancing the public realm and connectivity around the plan area.
- Amenities and services including open space and play areas.

#### 4.11 Cultural Heritage

Castlebar benefits from a legacy of 18th, 19th and 20th century buildings including townhouses on Ellison Street, civic and institutional buildings such as the Military barracks, and ecclesiastical buildings such as the Church of Ireland on The Mall and the Catholic Church on Upper Chapel Street. Under the current Town and Environs Plan the town has 85 Protected Structures. The town also has a rich archaeological heritage which is evidenced through the numerous Recorded Sites and Monuments which confirm early settlement in the area (See **Figure 4.16**).

FIGURE 4-16 SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD



#### 4.11.1 Key Issues- Cultural Heritage

- Enhancing cultural and linguistic heritage
- Recognition of intangible cultural heritage and practices

The following recommendations were made in relation to cultural heritage in the pre-draft consultation process:

- Protection and enhancement of built heritage – Information points and self-guided tours are needed and could include the old Humbert Inn, The Linenhall, Staball Hill, Old Bacon, Hat Factories, McHale Park etc.
- New welcome signage and sculptural work representing Castlebar origins should be erected on the N5 roundabout. Overall, there is a lack of artistic projects in public spaces, more artist works such as murals etc. should be showcased. Improving the Castlebar River running through the town should be explored and any future residential apartment developments should incorporate urban gardens

## 4.12 Inter-relationships

The SEA Directive requires that the interrelationship between the SEA environmental topics must be taken into account. All SEA topics interact and influence to a degree. Significant inter-relationships are presented below in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4-1 INTERRELATIONSHIPS

BFF	●	●	●	●	●	●	
PHH	●	●	●		●	●	●
W	●	●	●	●	●	●	
G & S	●	●	●		●	●	
CF & AQ	●	●	●		●	●	●
L & S	●	●	●		●	●	
CH	●	●	●		●	●	
MA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
					CF & AQ		
	BFF	PHH	W	G & S	AQ	L & S	CH



## 5 Strategic Environmental Objectives

### 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the SEA Objectives is to ensure that the assessment process is transparent and robust and that the Castlebar Town and Environs LAP 2023-2029 considers and addresses potential significant environmental effects. These objectives are derived from the principles identified through the plan, policy and programme review in Chapter Three. These SEOS formed part of the SEA Scoping report issued to statutory authorities. There were no scoping submission recommendations for the SEOs listed below. The SEOs formulated for this SEA for the Draft Castlebar Town and Environ Local Area Plan 2023-2029 area are broadly in line with those of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and are set out in Table 5.1.

**TABLE 5.1 SEOS FOR CASTLEBAR LAP 2023-2029 IN LINE WITH THE MCDP 2022-20278**

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Biodiversity Flora and Fauna</b>	BFF1: Conserve and enhance biodiversity at all levels
	BFF2: Avoid and minimise effects on nationally and internationally rare and threatened species and habitats through sensitive design and consultation, recognising ecological connectivity
	BFF3: Avoid and minimise habitat fragmentation and seek opportunities to improve habitat connectivity
	BFF4: Ensure careful consideration of non-native invasive and alien species issues particularly as they relate to waterbodies
	BFF5: Promote green and blue infrastructure networks, including riparian zones and wildlife corridor
<b>Population, Human Health</b>	PH1: Protect, enhance and improve people’s quality of life based on high quality residential, community, educational, working and recreational environments and on sustainable travel patterns.
	PH2: To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from incompatible land uses/developments.
<b>Water</b>	W1: Protect and enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystem (quality, level, flow)
	W2: Maintain or improve the quality of surface water and groundwater (including estuarine) to status objectives as set out in the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the National River Basin Management Plan and POMS
	W3: Reduce the impact of polluting substances to all waters and prevent pollution and contamination of ground water by adhering to aquifer protection plans and to maintain and improve the quality of drinking water supplies
	W4: Promote sustainable water use and water conservation in the Plan area and to maintain and improve the quality of drinking water supplies
	W5: Protect flood plains and areas of flood risk from development through avoidance, mitigation and adaptation measures
<b>Soil and Geology</b>	SG1: To maximise the sustainable re-use of the existing built environment, derelict, disused and infill sites (brownfield sites), rather than greenfield sites.
	SG2: Conserve, protect and avoid loss of diversity and integrity of designated habitats, geological features, species or their sustaining resources in designated ecological sites
<b>Material Assets</b>	MA1: Avoid and minimise waste generation.
	MA2: Maximise re-use of material resources and use of recycled materials.

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives
	MA3: Minimise energy consumption and encourage use of renewable energy.
	MA4: Promote sustainable transport patterns and modes.
	MA5: To maximise the capacity of wastewater collection networks and treatment plants by excluding surface water run-off from the sewage network through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Blue/Green infrastructure.
<b>Air Quality</b>	AQ1: Recognise the ecosystems functions of habitats in and around the plan area and promote nature-based solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
	AQ2: Minimise all forms of air pollution and maintain/improve ambient air quality.
	AQ3: Minimise emissions of greenhouse gases and contribute to a reduction and avoidance of human-induced global climate change.
	AQ4: Reduce car dependency within the plan area by way of an integrated approach to sustainable urban transport.
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	CH1: Conserve, preserve and record architectural and archaeological heritage.
	CH2: Avoid and minimise effects on historic environment features through sensitive design and consultation.
	CH3: Support and enhance both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.
<b>Landscape</b>	L1: Ensure no significant disruption of historic/cultural landscapes and features through objectives of the County Development Plan.
	L2: Promote and enhance landscape character at county and local scale through sensitive siting and design.

## 6 Consideration of Alternatives

### 6.1 Introduction

One of the critical roles of the SEA is to facilitate an evaluation of the likely environmental consequences of a range of alternative development scenarios, in this case the LAP 2023-2029. These alternative development scenarios should meet the following considerations:

- Take into account the geographical scope, hierarchy and objectives of the plan –**be realistic**
- Be based on socio-economic and environmental evidence – **be reasonable**
- Be capable of being delivered within the plan timeframe and resources –**be implementable**
- Be technically and institutionally feasible – **be viable**.

This chapter presents the approach to considering and assessing the alternatives for the Plan

- Section 6.2 summarises how the alternative scenarios were developed;
- Section 6.3 presents the alternative scenarios;
- Section 6.4 explains how the assessment of alternatives was undertaken;
- Section 6.5 presents the alternative scenarios
- Section 6.6 presents the evaluation of the alternatives for potential environmental effects.

### 6.2 Development of alternative scenarios

In developing, refining and assessing the alternatives for the LAP, the toolkit included in Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment Good Practice Guidance (EPA 2015) was utilised. In addition to the above, the LAP will function within the policy hierarchy established by national, regional and county strategic plans, as well as relevant legislation. Discussions helped shape the development of the LAP alternatives outlined below.

### 6.3 Alternative Scenarios for LAP

In the case of the Draft Castlebar LAP, possible alternatives include different land uses and scales of development which were examined:

**1. Continuation of Existing LAP land use zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario).**

Continue with the existing LAP in its current context.

**2. Town centre consolidation:** This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.

**3. Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered**

**structure:** Promotion of development lands within the town centre for development and the designation of secondary and edge of centre areas where this type of development is considered appropriate in certain circumstances. This scenario will promote infilling within the built-up footprint of the town with a 10-minute walking distance to the town centre. This scenario would also promote the development of neighbourhood centres to provide a level of retail services locally.

In considering these alternatives, regard was given to the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3 – the Strategic Planning Approach) identified for the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.

This is based on the following:

- Greater consistency with the requirements of the NPF and NW RESS
- This approach identifies areas under pressure from urban generated rural housing and aims to more strategically approach rural housing in line with NPF and NW RESS requirements around compact growth and sustainable communities.
- Developing existing settlements, compact growth, serviced settlements are more robustly planned for under this Scenario.
- Key towns are planned for and will be subject to LAP in line with the RPOs of the NW RESS. The Tier II and III can be planned for in terms of town centre opportunity sites, public realm and permeability enhancements that increase the attractiveness of town and village centre living whilst efficiencies in terms of existing infrastructure area maximised and reduced reliance on private or individual septic tanks and wells.
- Smarter Travel policies, reduction in commuting, increased walking and cycling can fit better within this scenario;
- By a hierarchy of settlements, this approach can identify at settlement level opportunities for enhancing green and blue infrastructure, particularly where towns and villages have been subject to habitat surveys.
- Rural housing trend likely to continue albeit more slowly with this scenario but within a stronger policy framework and hierarchy with a more robust criteria-based approach
- This scenario directs development to town and village centres;
- This approach allows for better protection of designated sites and achievement of WFD targets as serviced led development is directed to settlements.
- Reuse of brownfield and infill sites promoted in this scenario. This scenario performs strongest in terms of cultural heritage as it promotes reuse of older and historical buildings and the embodied carbon within these structures. Indirect, positive interactions with PHH and L SEOS under this scenario also.

Ultimately, within this scenario, the Land use zoning has been applied in a way that primarily seeks to achieve sustainable and compact growth, taking into account the various requirements set out in the higher-level NPF and Northern and Western RSES. Requirements relating to land use zoning provided for by the NPF and RSES have significantly limited the availability of alternatives for the various settlements.

## 6.4 Assessment of Potential Effects for Each Alternative Scenario

This Section presents the assessment of potential environmental effects for each Alternative Scenario. This is undertaken by assessing each alternative against the SEOs presented in Chapter 5 of this SEA ER. It is informed by the environmental baselines as well as the policy review.

The assessment of Alternatives is categorised as follows:

Positive	
Neutral	
Uncertain	
Negative	

## 6.5 Summary Evaluation against SEOs

Strategic Environmental Objectives	Alternative 1: Continuation of Existing LAP land use zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario). Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.	Alternative 2: Town centre consolidation. This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.	Alternative 3: Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure.
<b>Biodiversity</b>			
BFF1: Conserve and enhance biodiversity at all levels	Negative	Negative	Positive
BFF2: Avoid and minimise effects on nationally and internationally rare and threatened species and habitats through sensitive design and consultation, recognising ecological connectivity	Positive	Uncertain	Positive
BFF3: Avoid and minimise habitat fragmentation and seek opportunities to improve habitat connectivity	Negative	Neutral	Positive
BFF4: Ensure careful consideration of non-native invasive and alien species issues particularly as they relate to waterbodies	Negative	Neutral	Positive
BFF5: Promote green and blue infrastructure networks, including	Negative	Neutral	Positive

Strategic Environmental Objectives	Alternative 1: Continuation of Existing LAP land use zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario). Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.	Alternative 2: Town centre consolidation. This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.	Alternative 3: Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure.
riparian zones and wildlife corridor			
<b>Population and Human Health</b>			
PH1: Protect, enhance and improve people's quality of life based on high quality residential, community, educational, working and recreational environments and on sustainable travel patterns.	Negative	Negative	Positive
PH2: To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from incompatible land uses/developments.	Negative	Negative	Positive
<b>Water</b>			
W1: Protect and enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystem (quality, level, flow)	Negative	Uncertain	Positive
W2: Maintain or improve the quality of surface water and	Neutral	Neutral	Positive

Strategic Environmental Objectives	Alternative 1: Continuation of Existing LAP land use zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario). Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.	Alternative 2: Town centre consolidation. This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.	Alternative 3: Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure.
groundwater (including estuarine) to status objectives as set out in the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the National River Basin Management Plan and POMS			
W3: Reduce the impact of polluting substances to all waters and prevent pollution and contamination of ground water by adhering to aquifer protection plans and to maintain and improve the quality of drinking water supplies	Negative	Uncertain	Positive
W4: Promote sustainable water use and water conservation in the Plan area and to maintain and improve the quality of drinking water supplies	Negative	Uncertain	Positive
W5: Protect flood plains and areas of flood risk from development through avoidance, mitigation and adaptation measures	Neutral	Uncertain	Positive



Strategic Environmental Objectives	Alternative 1: Continuation of Existing LAP land use zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario). Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.	Alternative 2: Town centre consolidation. This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.	Alternative 3: Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure.
<b>Soil and Geology</b>			
SG1: To maximise the sustainable re-use of the existing built environment, derelict, disused and infill sites (brownfield sites), rather than greenfield sites.	Uncertain	Positive	Positive
SG2: Conserve, protect and avoid loss of diversity and integrity of designated habitats, geological features, species or their sustaining resources in designated ecological sites	Uncertain	Positive	Positive
<b>Material Assets</b>			
MA1: Avoid and minimise waste generation	Uncertain	Negative	Positive
MA2: Maximise re-use of material resources and use of recycled materials	Uncertain	Uncertain	Positive
MA3: Minimise energy consumption and encourage use of renewable energy	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain

Strategic Environmental Objectives	Alternative 1: Continuation of Existing LAP land use zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario). Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.	Alternative 2: Town centre consolidation. This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.	Alternative 3: Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure.
MA4: Promote sustainable transport patterns and modes.	Negative	Negative	positive
MA5: To maximise the capacity of wastewater collection networks and treatment plants by excluding surface water run-off from the sewage network through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Blue/Green infrastructure	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
<b>Air Quality and Climatic factors</b>			
AQ1: Recognise the ecosystems functions of habitats in and around the plan area and promote nature-based solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation.	Uncertain	Uncertain	Positive
AQ2: Minimise all forms of air pollution and maintain/improve ambient air quality.	Uncertain	Uncertain	Neutral
AQ3: Minimise emissions of greenhouse gases and contribute to a reduction and	Uncertain	Uncertain	Positive

<b>Strategic Environmental Objectives</b>	<b>Alternative 1: Continuation of Existing LAP land use zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario). Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.</b>	<b>Alternative 2: Town centre consolidation. This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.</b>	<b>Alternative 3: Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure.</b>
avoidance of human-induced global climate change			
AQ4: Reduce car dependency within the plan area by way of an integrated approach to sustainable urban transport	Negative	Negative	Positive
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>			
CH1: Conserve, preserve and record architectural and archaeological heritage	Positive	Positive	Positive
CH2: Avoid and minimise effects on historic environment features through sensitive design and consultation	Negative?	Uncertain	Positive
CH3: Support and enhance both tangible and intangible cultural heritage	Negative?	Negative?	Positive
<b>Landscape</b>			
L1: Ensure no significant disruption of historic/cultural landscapes and features through objectives of the County Development Plan	Negative	Uncertain	Positive

Strategic Environmental Objectives	Alternative 1: Continuation of Existing LAP land use zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario). Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.	Alternative 2: Town centre consolidation. This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.	Alternative 3: Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure.
L2: Promote and enhance landscape character at county and local scale through sensitive siting and design	Negative	Uncertain	Positive

### 6.1.1 Preferred Alternative

As the above assessment table shows, the preferred alternative from an environmental strategic perspective is Alternative 3, Town Centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure. This provides the greatest positive environmental effects and is consistent with national and regional planning policy.

## 7 Assessment of Significant effects

### 7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section of the Environmental Report is to predict and evaluate as far as possible the environmental effects of the LAP.

SEA is an iterative process and the LAP has taken consideration of environmental issues raised during the SEA process to date. These issues have been incorporated into the LAP and the principal purpose of this chapter is to discuss the evaluation of these. The discussion of likely impacts is grouped around each of the following environmental parameters as described in Chapter Four:

- Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna
- Population & Human Health
- Water
- Soil & Geology
- Air and Climatic Factors
- Cultural Heritage
- Material Assets
- Landscape
- In-combination and cumulative effects.

The individual evaluation of relevant requirements contained in the LAP is presented in Annex A. The identification of impacts through the evaluation matrix and discussion of significant impacts detailed below, in turn informs the development of mitigation measures presented in Chapter Eight, Mitigation Measures. Table 7.1 below identifies the significant environmental issues that were identified for all alternatives considered through the SEA process.

TABLE 7-1 OVERALL EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE CASTLEBAR LOCAL AREA PLAN 2023 -2029

SEA theme	Significant positive effects	Significant adverse effects, if unmitigated
<p><b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b></p>	<p>The natural environment includes those spaces outside of the built environment such as open spaces, lakes, rivers and agricultural land.</p> <p>Despite the fact that the plan area is primarily urban in character, the town and its environs, which are located in a rolling drumlin landscape, contain several significant elements of the Natural Environment. Lough Lannagh and Saleen Lough are located in close proximity to the town centre as well as the Castlebar River, which winds through the centre of the town (NEP1 &amp; NEP2 Designated Sites policies).</p> <p>These features are supplemented by a range of public open spaces and parks, significant institutional lands and playing pitches, which all combine to form an attractive physical environment that distinguish Castlebar from most other urban centres of its size.</p> <p>Apart from their intrinsic ecological value as habitats for a variety of plant and animal species these elements of the environment provide direct and indirect benefits to the population of Castlebar and its surrounds. They are places where people can engage in recreational activities such as walking, swimming, water related activities and playing formal and informal field sports. These areas also provide a visual amenity that enhances the attractiveness of the town as a place in which to live and work.</p> <p>Due to increased utilisation of lands within the existing development boundary and use of existing utilities and brownfield sites reduces</p>	<p>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 in the absence of detailed surveys and assessment.</p> <p>In addition to this the would be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A reduction in water quality can impact water dependant habitats. Therefore, site selection and the appropriate environmental assessment will be vital to ensure that the integrity of these habitats are not impacted.</li> <li>- Lack of protection for non-designated aspects of biodiversity such as ecological corridors and linkages, and ensure control and manage measures for invasive species.</li> <li>- This lack of protection would also affect hedgerows and treelines, amenity development and greenways, bats, and lighting issues.</li> </ul>

SEA theme	Significant positive effects	Significant adverse effects, if unmitigated
	<p>pressure and need for greenfield land development (DSO 1 Development Strategy; HSCO1 &amp; HSCO4 Residential Development).</p> <p>Embedding nature-based solutions to climate change – allows for co-benefits with other environmental parameters including biodiversity, water and human health (NEP 3 Designated Sites policy; CAP1 to Cap11 Climate Action policies; and NEO2 Ecological Corridor Objective; NEP4 &amp; NEP5 Trees and hedgerows policy; NEO3 Trees and hedgerows objective; HSCO5 Residential Density, Design &amp; Mix Objective).</p> <p>Promotion of pedestrianisation and cycle friendly town with modal shift contributes to air quality improvements at local level and noise level reductions with positive effects on urban wildlife.</p> <p>In turn longer positive interactions with population and human health in facilitating. access to additional well-designed green and blue space</p> <p>Positive effects on water quality arising from nature-based solutions from micro to macro scale. This can reduce pressure on stormwater overflows and conserve water, thus reducing abstraction pressures on water dependent habitats and species.</p>	
<b>Population and Human health</b>	<p>Land use planning (e.g., residential, community, education, work, recreation, transport) impacts on the everyday lives of people and can either hinder or help promote healthy sustainable environments and communities. This will be important to protect, enhance and</p>	<p>Activities associated with construction and operation, particularly in environmentally sensitive areas may result in emissions to air and water; with accompanying adverse effects on local health and well-being.</p>



SEA theme	Significant positive effects	Significant adverse effects, if unmitigated
	<p>improve quality of life for the local population and/or those visiting the area.</p> <p>For example, the provision of safe walking routes and cycle-ways, parks, playgrounds, safe routes to school, public transport facilities, etc. result in direct and indirect health benefits and allow for healthier transportation choices to be made by communities above private motor car (MTP1/4 Sustainable Mobility Policy; MTO1 sustainability mobility objective; MTO9 CMTO 4 CLTP objective; MTO10 &amp; MTO11 car park objective).</p> <p>Many of the policies identified in the LAP 2023-2029 may give rise to long term positive effects on population and human health both by responding and adapting to the impacts of climate change, promoting town centre, compact living, enhancing access to open space and improving the public realm (DSO6 Development Strategy Objective; NEP1 Designated Sites Policy; CAO3 Climate Action Objective; TCP4-TCP6 Town Centre Policy; NEO3 Trees and Hedgerows Objective; HSCP6 Density, Design &amp; Mix Policy; HSCO4 Density, Design &amp; Mix Objective; HSCO 9 Age Friendly Objective; HSCO3 Residential Development Objective).</p> <p>Adaptation to climate change by reducing reliance on fossil fuel for heating as well as transport (CAP3 &amp; CAP7 Climate Action Policy; CAO3 Climate Action Objective).</p>	

SEA theme	Significant positive effects	Significant adverse effects, if unmitigated
	<p>Reuse of existing buildings represents embedding existing carbon in existing buildings. (EDP1 Economic Development Policy, EDO4 Retail and Town Centre Objective; CAP3 to CAP11 Climate Action Policy).</p>	
<b>Water</b>	<p>The Mayo CDP 2022-2028 includes a range of provisions and measures to address and minimise the adverse, including measures around green infrastructure, flood risk management and development control.</p> <p>This LAP further enhances and strengthen these through the flood resilience actions and nature-based solutions in particular (IESP 1 &amp; IESP 2 Flood Risk Management Policy; IESO1 Flood Risk Management Objective; IESP5 Drinking water Wastewater Policy).</p> <p>Additional tree planting and a focus on riparian habitats provide for positive effects as they reduce soil run off and allow for water attenuation and filtration. Again, this provides for longer, positive effects associated with linear habitat creation and ecological connectivity.</p> <p>The introduction of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) has a number of benefits including heat reduction through evaporation and flood prevention, particularly during periods of high rainfall when surface water runoff increases in urban areas. SuDS mimic natural drainage by storing, infiltrating and slowing the flow of water. The impervious surface in urban environments has lower infiltration and evaporation than natural environments and greater surface run-off. Measures around SuDS, and other natural water retention measures are particularly positive, creating long term direct positive effects</p>	<p>A reduction in water quality in groundwater, springs and watercourses associated with the construction phase of new developments (short to medium term impacts)</p> <p>Surface water runoff from impermeable surfaces leading to reduced water quality in groundwater springs or surface waters affecting qualifying habitats and species downstream (impacts can range from short to long term);</p> <p>Changes in the flow rate of watercourses arising from an increased footprint of impermeable surfaces within the Plan area - increasing the extent of impermeable surfaces will result in a decrease in infiltration and an increase in runoff.</p> <p>Generally, land use practices can result in water quality impacts and whilst surface water impacts may be identified quickly, impacts to groundwater can take much longer to ascertain due to the slow recharge rate of this water resource.</p> <p>Water quality impacts can also have human health impacts in the case where bacterial or chemical contamination arises.</p>

SEA theme	Significant positive effects	Significant adverse effects, if unmitigated
	<p>on water resources, as well as soil and biodiversity, landscape and population (CAP2 &amp; CAP3 Climate Action Policy; IESO1 Flood Risk Management Objective).</p>	
<p><b>Soil and Geology</b></p>	<p>Soil quality and function may be enhanced through particular measures associated with flood resilience and nature-based solutions.</p> <p>The promotion of brownfield and town centre sites embeds existing geological resources and reduces requirements for additional geological resources and greenfield development (DSO1 Development Strategy Objective; HSCO1 Residential Development Objective; HSCO4 Residential Density, Design &amp; Mix Objective).</p> <p>The recognition of ecosystem services and green infrastructure further recognises the essential role and function that soil plays in terms of biodiversity, landscape, human health and climate change adaptation and mitigation (CAP2 &amp; CAP3 Climate Action Policy; NEO2 Ecological Corridor Objective; IESP11 Information Communications Technology and Broadband Policy)</p> <p>The LAP also recognises and supports the ecosystem services approach which identifies CAP1 (Climate Action Policy) areas within the Plan area that show the greatest carbon retention in the soil.</p> <p>Micro and macro nature-based solutions ranging from green roofs to larger nature water retention measures all serve to reduce the volume and rate of flow of water, thus impacting positively in terms of potential loss of soil associated with increased surface water runoff and extreme weather events.</p>	<p>Given the historical and recent land use associated with a number of town centre sites, the potential for contamination soil presents a risk in the absence of mitigation.</p>

SEA theme	Significant positive effects	Significant adverse effects, if unmitigated
<b>Material Assets</b>	<p>Many of the measures in the LAP are identified with a view to minimising adverse effects of climate change on material assets, and also responding and facilitating behavioural and modal change in energy use and transport (all infrastructure and climate action policies and objectives).</p>	<p>In the absence of mitigation, the opportunity to embed circular economy and reuse of existing buildings and brownfield development would not occur. This would also be the case with the reduction of waste and modal shift in transport which contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases.</p>
<b>Air Quality</b>	<p>Will contribute positively to climate change adaptation through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue and green infrastructure giving rise to increased surface water storage and potential carbon sequestration (CAP2 Climate Action Policy</li> <li>• Focus on energy efficiency and innovation (CAP3 Climate Action Policy; CAO4 Climate Action Objective; NEO2 Ecological Corridor Objective;</li> <li>• Other energy related measures are all identified as positive in relation to this SEO.</li> </ul> <p>Key measures relating to behavioural change around transport and the increase in walking/cycling and public transport measures are essential in addressing transport emissions over the lifetime of the strategy and beyond (CAP1-CAP11 Climate Action policy; CAO 1-CAO4 Climate Action objective; MTP3 Sustainable Mobility Policy; TCP4 Town Centre Policy).</p>	<p>In the absence of mitigation, the opportunity to embed meaningful actions in the plan that are needed to deliver the overall vision and aims is lost. Particularly in the areas of urban greening, and nature-based solutions which offer co and multiple benefits in responding to climate change whilst enhancing the overall environmental quality of Castlebar LAP.</p>

SEA theme	Significant positive effects	Significant adverse effects, if unmitigated
	<p>Recognising the ecosystems functions of soil, water and biodiversity is a key element in the Nature Based solutions theme and is an important acknowledgement that also provides for positive effects across a number of SEOs.</p>	
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<p>Long term positive effects associated with the town centre use and intensification of use (HSCO4 Residential Density, Design &amp; Mix Objective).</p> <p>The relationship between the urban realm, townscape and cultural heritage features and intangible cultural heritage (BEP1-BEP5 Built Heritage Conservation Policy; BEP6 Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures Policy; BEP7 Archaeological Heritage Policy; BEP8 &amp; BEP9 Placemaking &amp; Views &amp; Prospects Policy; BEO 1-BEO1 Built Heritage Conservation Objective; BEO2-BEO5 Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures Objective; BEO6 &amp; BEO7 Archaeological Heritage Objective).</p>	<p>In the absence of mitigation, potential adverse effects particularly in relation to the townscape setting and context of architectural conservation areas.</p>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>Long term positive effects are identified in the LAP for landscape primarily through the public realm enhancement (TCO 5 Town Centre Objective), green and blue infrastructure (NEP1 Designated Sites Policy), increased tree planting (NEO3 Trees and hedgerow objective), etc.</p> <p>Many of the measures in the LAP require a landscape level response such as recognition of green and blue infrastructure and corridors and this an important approach to take when responding to climate change (CAP 2 &amp; CAP3 Climate Action Policy; CAO4 Climate Action Objective).</p>	<p>In the absence of mitigation, the varied landscape, an inherent part of Castlebar’s natural heritage requires protection in its own right. Therefore, the landscape must be protected against possible development, which would undermine or change its character. It is paramount to Castlebar’s future development only takes place where visual intrusion is minimal, particularly within areas of elevated topography or sparse vegetation. Castlebar is located within Area K – East Central Drumlin Spine of the ‘Landscape Appraisal for County Mayo’. This large geographical area is made up of glacial drumlins that are uniform at its western end near its transition with the distinct</p>

SEA theme	Significant positive effects	Significant adverse effects, if unmitigated
	<p>Public realm enhancement and reuse of existing buildings are also consistent with landscape SEOs.</p> <p>Overall, positive effects identified for Landscape SEOs, as landscape change can be considerable with climate change effects in terms of changing water levels, habitat change, transport measures and adaptation measures such as flood risk management.</p> <p>An increase in open space, green infrastructure, public realm and permeability would all create long term positive effects for the Landscape SEOs.</p>	<p>drumlins of Clew Bay. There are two local landscapes which are protected, and these are Lough Lannagh and Saleen Lough.</p> <p>The consideration of modal shift, increased pedestrianisation and cycling are all positive but require consideration to avoid visual clutter associated with excessive infrastructural and signage.</p> <p>The public realm enhancements offer a good opportunity to embed urban greening measures to avoid an over hardscaped public realm design.</p>

## 7.2 Summary Evaluation of Land use Zonings – Castlebar

7.2 presents a summary of the SEA assessment, please see Annex A for more detailed assessment.

**TABLE 7-2 SEA EVALUATION OF LANDUSE ZONINGS**

It is an Objective of the Council to implement the following land use zoning objectives in Castlebar:									
LUZ 1									
Objective: Ensure that development progresses in accordance with the land use zoning objectives as set out in Table 10.1 and the Land Use Matrix contained in Table 11.2.									
SEA Comments: General support statement of consistency with landuse zoning objectives in 10.1									
NIR Screened out.									
LUZ 2 - Town Centre Inner and Outer	↕	↑	↕	↑	↑	↑	↕	↑	↕
Objective: To maintain and enhance the vitality, viability and environment of the town centre and provide for appropriate town centre uses.									
SEA Comment:									
Town centre viability and support for appropriate uses, and design features will provide positive long-term effects. Promotion of the Town Centre development under the Town Centre policies and objectives is positive in relation to population and human health, soil and geology, material assets and cultural heritage SEOs in particular. The majority of the LAP policies and objectives supports the town centre by improving the connectivity within the centre, enhance public realms, and upgrade the fabric of the streetscape. It is important that environmental assessments are carried out if required.									
The NIR screened this out.									

The SFRA provided the following in relation to this Town Centre landuse zoning: Indicative primary vulnerability: Less / highly vulnerable. SFRA commentary: For highly vulnerable development in Flood Zone A or B. For less vulnerable development in Flood Zone A.									
LUZ 3 - Enterprise & Employment Objective: To provide land for light industrial and appropriate commercial development.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
SEA Comment: Most of these lands are on either agricultural lands or are areas of existing land-use activities Subject to implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, no significant adverse effects are identified for this zoning. It is likely to impact positively population and human health of the area.  NIR: screened this out> There are a number of zones that have been identified for Enterprise and Employment development. Of these sites, none have been identified as having the potential to cause likely significant effect upon any of the Natura 2000 sites identified via the zoning process. Care should be taken at a plan level in the riparian margins to the south of the plan area, has a hydrological connection to the River Moy SAC. Emissions should also be considered from industry, given sensitivity of bog habitats to airborne particle deposition. Generally speaking, the main areas of expansion are in less groundwater vulnerable zones (to the south), helping to minimise impact on the Natura 2000 network via a groundwater pathway. The SFRA provided the following in relation to this Enterprise and Employment landuse zoning: Indicative primary vulnerability: Less vulnerable. SFRA commentary: Appropriate use in Flood Zone B, but JT will be needed in Flood Zone A.									
LUZ 5 - Existing Residential Area:276.41 ha Objective: To protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SEA Comment:</b> <b>Confirms existing land use.</b>									
LUZ 6 - New Residential Area: 40.61 ha Objective: To provide for high quality new residential development and other services incidental to residential development.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
SEA Comment: Most of the impacts identified for residential development zones are identified as being mitigated at project level through development management. Positive impacts were identified for population and human health, plus a number of material assets such as flood risk. NIR screened this out. This will represent a significant amount of development within the plan area. The residential areas are largely confined to the already "built up" areas, with areas of infill. This areas are mostly at distance from the Castlebar River, helping to protect the integrity of the river network, which connects to the River Moy SAC. No impact on the Natura 2000 network is anticipated as a result of the zoning process, but the individual developments themselves should undergo the Appropriate Assessment process to protect the Natura 2000 network. The SFRA provided the following assessment for new residential: Indicative primary vulnerability: Highly Vulnerable SFRA commentary: JT required for within Flood Zone A and B.									
LUZ 8 - Community Services / Facilities Objective: To provide land for social, health, public administration and educational services and facilities.	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑	↑



SEA Comment:

Positive impacts are identified for population and human health, transport and air quality for these zonings with mitigable impacts for the SEOs in relation to soil and biodiversity. NIR: screened out.: There are seventeen zones that have been identified for Community Services and Facilities development. Of these sites, none have been identified as having the potential to cause likely significant effect upon any of the Natura 2000 sites identified in Section 4.2 via zoning. The objectives have been identified as to provide for and improve local neighbourhood, community, ecclesiastical, recreational and educational facilities

The SFRA provided the following assessment for Community services/facilities

Indicative primary vulnerability: Less / highly vulnerable. SFRA commentary: Consideration to be given to flood risks and sequential use of land to ensure highly vulnerable uses are located within areas at lowest risk of flooding.

LUZ Quarry/Mining Area: 38.14 ha Objective: To provide for extraction / quarrying and associated activities including processing of extracted materials and land restoration.	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
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SEA Comment:

Application of policy SO 9 and measures in the MCDP will apply

NIR: This landuse zoning is screened in:

Surface waters may be affected by means of physicochemical properties; where flows can be increased or decreased and may be contaminated by runoff or dust from the quarry. The removal of topsoil, overburden and aggregates may affect the quality of water recharging of an aquifer, and excavation below the water table may lead to de-watering of adjacent watercourses and wells. The closest point in which the Castlebar river passes the quarry is at a distance of 250m. These processes can release pollutants previously trapped in the rock into surrounding underground water sources. Chemicals including iron, aluminium, and sulphates can leach into the groundwater and make it unsafe for consumption. There is one case of quarrying to the north-east of the Plan boundary. Quarries tend to accumulate high volumes of groundwater from excavations and may negatively affect groundwater conditions, creating a pathway wherein pollution takes place after harmful substances from process on site or vehicle fuels have entered the groundwater body. No change in zoning for quarrying and mining is associated with this LAP, and the zoning is close to the boundary of the existing quarry.

The SFRA provided the following assessment for Quarrying:

Indicative primary vulnerability: Water compatible/Less vulnerable. SFRA commentary: For Water Compatible, land use appropriate and should be retained.

LUZ – Open Space Area:22.41ha Objective: To protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕	↕
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SEA Comment:

Generally, impacts are positive for a range of parameters including soil and geology, population and human health, flood risk, water quality and landscape. The opportunity to enhance these areas through public realm improvements and/or green and blue infrastructure measures contribute positively longer term to biodiversity, water and climate change adaptation SEOs also.

NIR: Screened out.

The SFRA provided the following assessment for Open Space: Indicative primary vulnerability: Water compatible. SFRA commentary: For Water Compatible, land use appropriate and should be retained.										
LUZ - Agriculture Area: 1017.01 ha Objective: To reserve land for agricultural and rural uses and to preserve the amenity of the town setting.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
SEA Comment: Confirms existing land use. NIR: This is the main zoning type within the plan boundary. Of these zones, none are anticipated to negatively impact on any of the Natura 2000 sites identified in Section 4.2, in themselves. However, agriculture is known as a diffuse and point source of pollution to watercourses. Many of the agriculture zones are adjacent to watercourses which lead to the River Moy, so efforts should continue to prevent pollution from agriculture. No significant change in zoning for agriculture is present in this Plan. The SFRA provides the following assessment of Agriculture landuse zoning: Indicative Primary vulnerability: Water compatible / highly vulnerable JT not needed for water compatible. For farm housing the Justification Test applies in Flood Zone A/B.										
LUZ Recreation and Amenity Objective: To protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕
SEA Comment: Generally, impacts are positive for a range of parameters including soil and geology, population and human health, flood risk, water quality and landscape. The opportunity to enhance these areas through public realm improvements and/or green and blue infrastructure measures contribute positively longer term to biodiversity, water and climate change adaptation SEOs also. NIR: Screened out. The SFRA provides the following assessment of Open Space and Recreation landuse zoning Indicative primary vulnerability: Water compatible / less & highly vulnerable. SFRA commentary: Some areas of Open Space and Recreation have highly vulnerable and less vulnerable existing developments. For Water Compatible, land use appropriate and should be retained. For highly vulnerable development in Flood Zone A or B. For less vulnerable development in Flood Zone A.										
LUZ - Infrastructure & Utilities Area: 8.57 ha Objective: To provide land for public infrastructure and public utilities.	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↑
SEA Comment: The impacts are identified as overall positive, particularly for PHH, W, MA and interrelationship SEOs in particular as it aims to provide essential public utilities as appropriate in line with the enhanced development of Castlebar as a whole.										

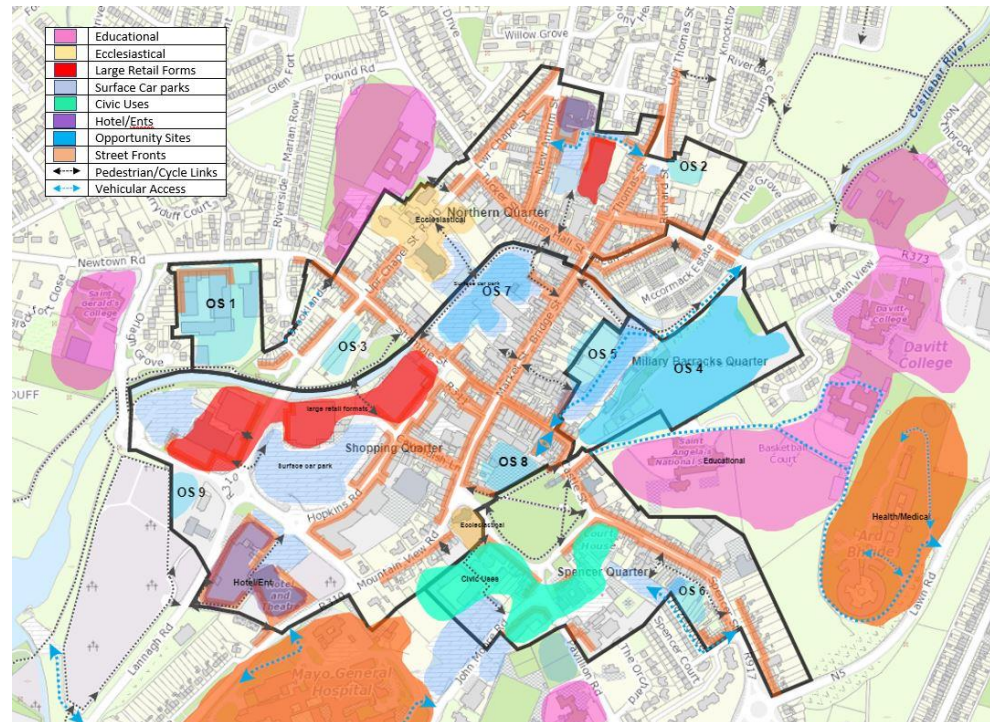
NIR: There are five areas designated as zones of infrastructure and utilities. Of these five zones, none are anticipated to have a negative impact on any of the Natura 2000 sites identified. There are five areas designated as zones of infrastructure and utilities. Of these sites, none are anticipated to have a negative impact on any of the Natura 2000 sites identified via the zoning process. These sites are already zoned for infrastructure and utilities so no change is anticipated.

The SFRA provides the following assessment of Infrastructure and Utilities landuse zoning. Indicative primary vulnerability: Less / highly vulnerable For highly vulnerable development in Flood Zone A or B. For less vulnerable development in Flood Zone A.

### 7.2.1 Opportunity Sites

Figure 7.1 below presents the 9 opportunity sites identified in the draft LAP. In summary, these are consistent with national and regional policy objectives in terms of town centre first, support for brownfield regeneration.

FIGURE 7-1 OPPORTUNITY SITES



The application of a number of policies in the draft LAP will also provide appropriate mitigation at site level, in particular the following policies/objectives:

TCO1 Encourage and facilitate the development of Opportunity Sites in Castlebar for a mixture of uses that will contribute to the regeneration, vibrancy, diversity, vitality, attractiveness, safety, liveability and compact growth of the town centre. In conjunction with this, proposed developments must demonstrate how they will interact within its context and the wider urban area.

TCO2 Continue to develop and implement the Castlebar Town Centre Regeneration Strategy, and encourage and facilitate the reuse and regeneration of derelict, vacant, backland and underutilised lands and buildings in the town centre through active land management for retail, residential and other mixed uses and where necessary through appropriate legislative mechanisms/instruments and / or by supporting the progression and delivery of projects funded by the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and other appropriate funds to achieve this aim.

TCO3 (a) Promote high quality place-making and public realm in accordance with the Mayo Development Plan 2022 – 2028, including the Development Management Standards, any replacement thereof and any relevant Section 28 Guidance. All development shall demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.

(b) Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied in the town centre, and the opportunity areas identified in this Proposed Plan. The success of the public realm is high quality, easily maintained street furniture, soft landscaping. Drainage solutions should be designed on the principles of SuDS.

(c) Ensure development proposals have given proper consideration to the urban design criteria of site context, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking and detailed design.

A number of sites are identified as meriting ecological assessment given the existing habitats on site, and application of mitigation measure as recommended through the SEA, SFRA and AA.

## 7.3 Cumulative and In-combination Effects

TABLE 7-2 POTENTIAL CUMULATIVE AND IN COMBINATION EFFECTS

Plan	Comment	Cumulative Effects
Northern and Western Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy 2020-2032;	These plans were subject to full SEA and AA and concluded that subject to full adherence and implementation of measures likely significant effects were not identified.	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans.
Mayo County Development Plan 2022 2028	The Mayo County Development Plan was adopted in 2022 and was prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000, and was subject to full SEA, AA and SFRA. The plan sets out the overall strategy for planning and sustainable development for the county. Chapter 10 of the plan outlines the aims of the Mayo County Council to protect and enhance the natural heritage and biodiversity of designated and non-designated ecological sites and sets out the policies and objectives for this. The Castlebar LAP complements the implementation of the current MCDP.	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans.
Mayo County Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2017 - 2022;	These plans were subject to full SEA and AA and concluded that subject to full adherence and implementation of measures likely significant effects were not identified.	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans.
County Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024	Mayo Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019-2024 and any subsequent versions). This Plan has been subject to SEA/AA screening	No in-combination impacts were predicted as a result of implementation of the Plans.

## 8 Material Alterations

This chapter presents an assessment of the proposed material alterations that were assessed under the SEA screening process as requiring full SEA. The SFRA and AA assessments have been integrated into this assessment process. Each proposed Material Alteration has a commentary and assessment under the SEOS but a summary of key effects is presented below.

### 8.1 Summary of significant environmental effects of proposed material alterations

Proposed Material Alterations are not consistent with many SEOs. In particular they do not align with sustainable development and are identified as generating direct effects across a range of SEOS by liberalising the approach to housing in terms of compact growth, rural housing criteria and national and regional policies as identified in the National Planning Framework and RESS. Effects are identified as direct, indirect, and cumulative for short to long term.

Key effects include:

- Significant increase in new residential zoning on lands not identified as such, largely zoned agriculture currently and all at a distance from town centre – significant conflict with Core Strategy, National Planning Framework, North West RESS and existing Mayo CDP and Castlebar LAP policies.
- The provision zonings outside of serviced areas and without would contribute to peripheral growth and represents an inefficient use of land as well as the additional costs in terms of servicing same in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment etc. Moreover locations at the edge of town does not align with compact growth and need for sustainable transport options provided at present.
- Groundwater is sometimes relied upon as a source of drinking water, particularly in areas not served by water mains. Depending on the geology of the area, aquifers can be vulnerable to contamination, particularly from wastewater treatment systems. This is particularly pertinent in the karst areas around Castlebar, and where the groundwater is particularly vulnerable to contamination.
- Conflict with climate change commitments and active travel policies and objectives
- Increase of carbon emissions associated with lost opportunity for integrated landuse and transport and maximizing non vehicular trips associated with compact growth.
- Cumulatively potential effects re soil sealing, increased run off, erosion of existing linear woodland habitat, run off to small lakes, and potential flood risk.
- Not contributing to the 30% town centre target for new residential provision
- Cumulatively loss of foraging habitat and connectivity
- Potential effects on wildlife and biodiversity, through severance effects, loss of connectivity, habitat fragmentation and supporting resources in particular water including surface and groundwater.
- Potential effects arising from above on mobile species and habitats.
- Potential effects associated with material assets and the additional costs and burdens associated with services such as wastewater, water supply, transport, waste management etc.
- Issues in provision of above services and poor efficiencies by not utilising and maximising serviced lands and a service led development approach.
- Loss of soil and geology with accompanying effects around surface water run off at cumulative scale.

- Increasing nutrient loading on water bodies and contribution to declining water quality.
- Loss of local landscape character, setting of architectural heritage with accompanying landscape impacts.
- Effects on population and human health arising from the above.

A number of proposed Material Alterations in Table 6 overleaf are assessed and specific mitigation measures are recommended to reduce, avoid and /or ameliorate potential significant environmental effects, these are presented in blue font.

Note the elected members rejected all OPR and OPW submissions and as a consequence, the opportunity to strengthen and further align national, regional and county planning hierarchy with the Castlebar LAP is missed. This weakens the sustainable development objectives of the LAP and reduces the opportunity to integrate and align more closely with climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as strengthening of flood risk assessment and mitigation. Please see Annex B of this SEA ER.

## 8.2 Changes to European Site Boundaries

One minor amendment was made to the River Moy SAC in July 2023, and the most up-to-date SAC boundaries have been presented in the maps in this report. However, the change in boundary does not have any bearing on the original assessment i.e. the change in boundary is at distance from the Plan Area, and will not result in any changes to the original assessment.

Please see Annex C for the full SEA Screening of all Proposed Material Alterations. Figure 18 below shows the landuse zonings included for full SEA with the reference number from the Natura Impact Report.

FIGURE 2 MATERIAL ALTERATIONS, LANDUSE ZONINGS

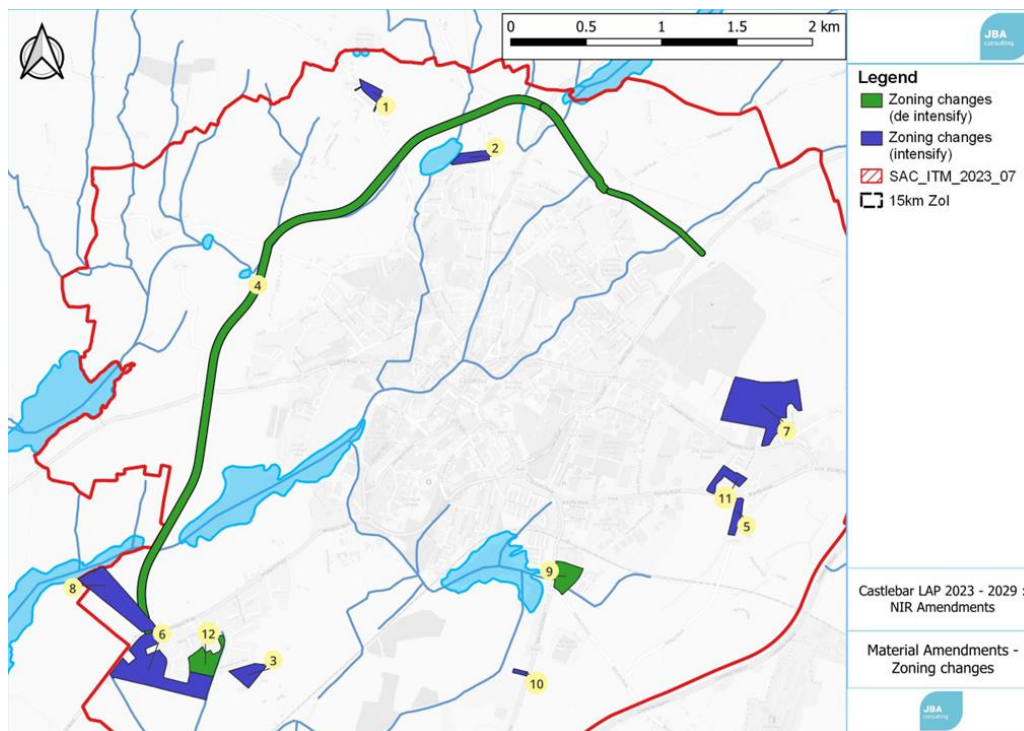
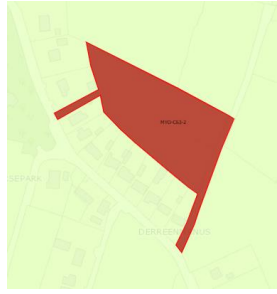






TABLE 8-1 EVALUATION OF MATERIAL ALTERATIONS SCREENED IN FOR SEA

			BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<b>Proposed rezonings</b>											
MYO-C63-2 Martin & Helen Gaughan	Rezone lands for Residential 	Subject lands to be rezoned from Agri to New Residential	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA Comment</p> <p>The subject land parcel is an area of approximately 33324m<sup>2</sup> (3.3ha) on a greenfield site to the rear of existing housing and is located at a considerable distance from the town centre and is currently zoned agricultural landuse. This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1. Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></li> <li>b) <i>promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></li> <li>c) <i>promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></li> <li>d) <i>facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></li> </ol>											

	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, and those located within any future Architectural Conservation Area(s), providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</p> <p>f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option;</p> <p>g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development;</p> <p>h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</p> <p>HSCP1 Encourage the compact growth of Castlebar and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.</p> <p>HSCP2 Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.</p> <p>MTP1 Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.</p> <p>NEP1 In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Castlebar, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network.</li> <li>- Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and</li> <li>- Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces.</li> <li>- Where development proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip informed by ecological assessment to ensure it is robust and appropriate for wildlife and nature conservation along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</li> </ul> <p>NEP3 Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green and Blue Infrastructure network in Castlebar and strengthen links to the wider regional network. This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.</p> <p>The provision of this zoning would contribute to peripheral growth and represents an inefficient use of land as well as the additional costs in terms of servicing same in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment etc.</p> <p>Moreover this location at the edge of town does not align with compact growth and need for sustainable transport options. This rezoning is not consistent with a number of SEOS in particular MA, PHH, AQ, CC and can interact negatively indirectly across a range of other SEOS that may be mitigated in the short term but medium to long term adverse effects on these SEOS such as SG and L.</p> <p>CE comment:</p> <p>The subject land parcel is zoned 'Agriculture' in the Draft Castlebar LAP and is situated along the northern perimeter of the town, in the townland of Coarsepark. The submission requests a change of zoning to facilitate low density housing on these lands, which would not be permissible under the agricultural zoning category. It is considered that residential development at this peripheral location would not promote compact growth or sustainable travel options, by reason of its non-sequential out of town location. Furthermore, the rezoning of these lands for residential development would be contrary to the Core Strategy as set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</p>									

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<p>NIR: Development at this site would result in an intensification of use. This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP Policies and Objectives. However, the distance from the Natura Network, the existing AA process and existing mitigation is sufficient to continue to protect the SAC network.</p> <p>SFRA: flood zone C, no mitigation measures or JT.</p>										
<p>MYO-C63-3 – Michael Geraghty</p>	<p>Rezone from Agriculture to New Residential (as per drawing below)</p> 	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA comment:</p> <p>The subject land parcel is an area of approximately 43896m<sup>2</sup> (4.3ha) on a greenfield site to the rear of existing housing and adjoins an unnamed waterbody, a freshwater lake. This land parcel is outside the Urban Wastewater Treatment Agglomeration boundary and habitats appear to be rough grassland. Areas in the vicinity of this site are historically noted to be karst (outcropping rock/pavement), and groundwater vulnerability is noted to be extreme/high.</p> <p>This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1. Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <p><i>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></p> <p><i>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></p>										

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<p>MYO-C63- 9 - Grady Architects on behalf of Roonith Properties (TML)</p>  <p>Rezone lands from Agriculture to New Residential (as per map below)</p>		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
<p>SEA comment: This greenfield site covers an area of approximately 57203m2 (5.7ha) on a greenfield site a significant distance from the town centre of Castlebar. Aerial imagery indicates excavated soil with stones and some existing hedgerow at the southwestern boundary. The provision of this zoning would contribute to peripheral growth and represents an inefficient use of land as well as the additional costs in terms of servicing same in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment etc.</p> <p>Moreover, this location does not align with compact growth and need for sustainable transport options. This rezoning is not consistent with a number of SEOS in particular MA, PHH, AQ, CC and can interact negatively indirectly across a range of other SEOS that may be mitigated in the short term but medium to long term adverse effects on these SEOS such as SG and L.</p> <p>This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1. Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <p><i>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></p> <p><i>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p>										


	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>c) <i>promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p>d) <i>facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></p> <p>e) <i>supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, and those located within any future Architectural Conservation Area(s), providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</i></p> <p>f) <i>supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option;</i></p> <p>g) <i>limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development;</i></p> <p>h) <i>working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP1 Encourage the compact growth of Castlebar and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP2 Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.</i></p> <p><i>MTP1 Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.</i></p> <p><i>NEP1 In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Castlebar, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network.</i></li> <li>- <i>Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and</i></li> <li>- <i>Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces.</i></li> <li>- <i>Where development proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip informed by ecological assessment to ensure it is robust and appropriate for wildlife and nature conservation along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>NEP3 Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green and Blue Infrastructure network in Castlebar and strengthen links to the wider regional network. This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.</i></p> <p>The provision of this zoning would contribute to peripheral growth and represents an inefficient use of land as well as the additional costs in terms of servicing same in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment etc. Moreover, this location at a significant distance from the town centre, does not align with compact growth and need for sustainable transport options. This rezoning is not consistent with a number of SEOS in particular MA, PHH, AQ, CC and can interact negatively indirectly across a range of other SEOS that may be mitigated in the short term but medium to long term adverse effects on these SEOS such as SG and L. In addition, given works have been undertaken in the absence of planning consent, impacts may be already present that were not identified through the planning and consenting process.</p>									

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<p>NIR: Development at this site would result in an intensification of use. This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives. However, the distance from the Natura Network, the existing AA process and existing mitigation is sufficient to continue to protect the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>SFRA : flood zone C, no mitigation measures or JT.</p>										
MYO-C63-8 Brian Moran	Ring Road removal of map	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA Comment: The submission seeks to omit Objective MTO 7 (Northern Orbital Ring Road) from Section 7.10 (Movement and Transport Policy &amp; Objectives) of the draft Plan for a number of reasons including since the publication of the 1980 Castlebar and Environs Plan, his lands (outlined in red on map below) have been seriously affected by the reservation of land for the Ring Road. There has been little progress on the Northern Orbital Ring Road and other reasons cited. This is a large parcel of greenfield land amounting to approximately 344424m<sup>2</sup> (34ha), located between the Pontoon Road, Curradriish Road and is largely agricultural grassland with some hedgerows/field boundaries present. The land is also adjacent to Tuckers Lough located to the north of the site and a number of drains flow through the site that enter the lake. In addition, there is a power lines traversing the subject lands.</p> <p>The Castlebar Local Transport Plan (LTP) that is referenced in the LAP includes a rationale for the northern section of the Northern Orbital Ring Road (NORR). The remainder of the NORR will be included in the LAP as a long-term aspiration for a future transport corridor that may be required for active travel, public transport and access for potential long-term future development within the principle of compact growth.</p> <p>The route could unlock potential in the future for additional management of traffic in the town centre area enabling more allocation of road space on town centre streets to public realm enhancements, active travel and public transport providing an overall positive mode shift. This route would be subject to further analysis in the future in line with normal application procedures and processes.</p> <p>This rezoning is not consistent with the LPT or provisions in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1. Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <p><i>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></p>										



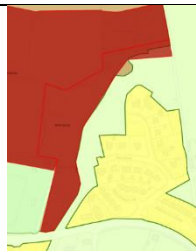
	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
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		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
There are a number of areas where proposed transport infrastructure crosses, or is within, Flood Zone A and / or B in Castlebar, some of which are within Flood Zone C and some cross or are wholly within Flood Zone A and or B. Local infrastructure routes are considered to be less vulnerable and are appropriate in Flood Zone B but a flood risk assessment is required to support the detailed design. Where the routes pass through Flood Zone A, careful consideration of the risks is required to ensure alternative routes within Flood Zone B or C are not available. A detailed flood risk assessment will also be required to support all route selection and detailed design.										
MYO-C63-14 – TOM BOURKE & PADRAIC WALSH	Rezone lands from E&E and Agriculture to New Residential	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA comment: This greenfield land parcel is located at a distance from the town centre, between the N60 national road and Kilkenny Close, and comprises rough grassland with scrub/hedgerow at the southern boundary. The parcel of land is approximately 23396,2 (2.3ha). The provision of this zoning would contribute to peripheral growth and represents an inefficient use of land as well as the additional costs in terms of servicing same in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment etc. Moreover, this location does not align with compact growth and need for sustainable transport options. This rezoning is not consistent with a number of SEOS in particular MA, PHH, AQ, CC and can interact negatively indirectly across a range of other SEOS that may be mitigated in the short term but medium to long term adverse effects on these SEOS such as SG and L. This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1. Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <p><i>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></p> <p><i>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></p>										

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<p>MYO-C63-16 – MARGARET COYNE Rezone lands from Agriculture to</p>	<p>The submission requests that property should be zoned residential zoning.</p> 	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕

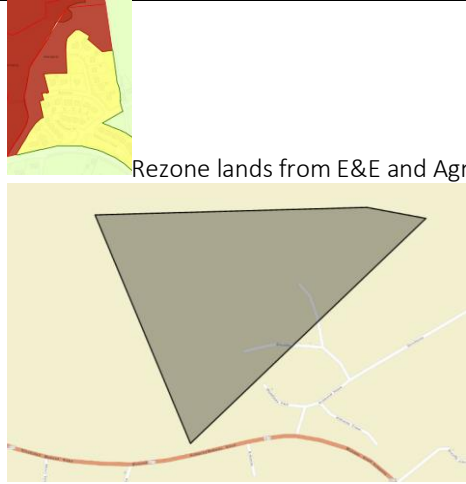
	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
New Residential									
<p>SEA comment: This greenfield parcel is located at a distance from the town centre, a represents one of the larger changes in zoning.11ha has been zoned. It links on the R309. The site is bounded by conifer forestry and boglands (some cutover) to the south. The site comprises some improved grassland, some rough grassland, areas of bog/fen, and hedgerows throughout. The provision of this zoning would contribute to peripheral growth and represents an inefficient use of land as well as the additional costs in terms of servicing same in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment etc. Moreover, this location does not align with compact growth and need for sustainable transport options. This rezoning is not consistent with a number of SEOS in particular MA, PHH, AQ, CC and can interact negatively indirectly across a range of other SEOS that may be mitigated in the short term but medium to long term adverse effects on these SEOS such as SG and L. The network of hedgerows and adjacent bogland habitat and presence of wetland habitats increases its overall importance for ecological and climate change action. <a href="#">Should development take place on these lands, the survey and retention of hedgerows and hydrogeological assessment of the wetland habitats and their retention into any development proposal is recommended as a mitigation measure. Given the size of the rezoning these lands should be subject to preparation of a masterplan.</a></p> <p>This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1 . Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></li> <li><i>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></li> <li><i>c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></li> <li><i>d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></li> <li><i>e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, and those located within any future Architectural Conservation Area(s), providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</i></li> </ol>									

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		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
MYO-C63-21 – FRANCIS TOUHY	 <p>Rezone lands from E&amp;E AND Agriculture to New Residential (as per map online/below)(area outlined in ref)</p>	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA comment: This parcel is adjacent to the football grounds and fronts the R373. The lands are dominated by rough grazing/agricultural with a lane and some scrub vegetation on the northern boundary, it amounts to an area of approximately 6.9ha. It is bounded to the east by bog/fen. The area is noted as having high groundwater vulnerability. It is located at a distance from the town centre.</p> <p>The provision of this zoning would contribute to peripheral growth and represents an inefficient use of land as well as the additional costs in terms of servicing same in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment etc. Moreover, this location does not align with compact growth and need for sustainable transport options. This rezoning is not consistent with a number of SEOS in particular MA, PHH, AQ, CC and can interact negatively indirectly across a range of other SEOS that may be mitigated in the short term but medium to long term adverse effects on these SEOS such as SG and L.</p> <p><a href="#">The presence of scrub habitat and adjacent bog/fen habitat and high groundwater vulnerability increases its overall importance for ecological and climate change action.</a></p> <p><a href="#">Should development take place on these lands, the survey and retention of scrub habitat, informed ecological assessments and hydrogeological assessment of the lands and impacts on groundwater flows and quality is recommended as a mitigation measure. Given the size of the rezoning these lands should be subject to preparation of a masterplan.</a></p> <p>This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p>										

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		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
SFRA: flood zone C, no mitigation measures or JT.										
MYO-C63-22 – Gene McConway	Not mapped, not rezoned.	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
SEA Comment: The R311-R310 Inner Relief Road is also listed in Table 6.5 Road Projects in Co. Mayo, of the Mayo County Development Plan 2023-2029 and as such cannot be removed under LAP procedures. Table 6.5 of the Mayo CDP 2023 -2029 was subject to full SEA and AA assessment in line with statutory requirements and project level mitigation provided as appropriate. The other points raised in this submission relate to development management considerations and are outside the scope of the LAP and SEA considerations. NIR and SFRA: no rezoning.										
MYO-C63-23 – ROSSLEE RESIDENTS GROUP (TOM MULCHRONE)	 <p>Rezone lands from E&amp;E and Agriculture to New Residential</p>	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
SEA comment: This parcel is adjacent to the football grounds and fronts the R373. The lands are dominated by rough grazing/agricultural with a lane and some scrub vegetation on the northern boundary, it amounts to an area of approximately 69353m2 (6.9ha). It is located at a distance from the town centre. This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i> : <i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i>										

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<p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1 . Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <p><i>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></p> <p><i>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></p> <p><i>e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, and those located within any future Architectural Conservation Area(s), providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</i></p> <p><i>f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option;</i></p> <p><i>g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development;</i></p> <p><i>h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP1 Encourage the compact growth of Castlebar and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP2 Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.</i></p> <p><i>MTP1 Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.</i></p> <p><i>NEP1 In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Castlebar, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network.</i></li> <li><i>- Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and</i></li> <li><i>- Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces.</i></li> <li><i>- Where development proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip informed by ecological assessment to ensure it is robust and appropriate for wildlife and nature conservation along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</i></li> </ul>									

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<p>MYO-C63-25 – John Flatley Rezone lands from E&amp;E to New Residential</p>		↓	↕↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA Comment: The submission requests that a 9.71 hectare situated at Rinshinna on the Moneen Road and zoned Community and Enterprise on the DLAP be zoned New Residential. This large site encompasses an archaeological feature (rath) as well as some hedgerows which provide connectivity, and some drainage ditches, this parcel of land is due south of the large Roadstone Quarry operation which may cause localized dust and noise impacts should residential development take place. It is located at a distance from the town centre. The area is noted as having high groundwater vulnerability.</p> <p>This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p>										

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<p>MYO-C63-27 – Michael McHale</p>	 <p>Rezoned lands from Northern Orbital Route</p>	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA Comment: The LTP includes a rational for the northern section of the Northern Orbital Ring Road (NORR). The remainder of the NORR will be included in the LAP as a long-term aspiration for a future transport corridor that may be required for active travel, public transport and access for potential long term future development within the principle of compact growth. The route could unlock potential in the future for additional management of traffic in the town centre area enabling more allocation of road space on town centre streets to public realm enhancements, active travel and public transport providing an overall positive mode shift.</p> <p>This route would be subject to further analysis in the future in line with normal application procedures and processes.</p> <p>This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or active travel and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>CAP 1. Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <p>a) <i>promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></p> <p>b) <i>promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p>c) <i>promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p>										

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>d) <i>facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></p> <p>e) <i>supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, and those located within any future Architectural Conservation Area(s), providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</i></p> <p>f) <i>supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option;</i></p> <p>g) <i>limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development;</i></p> <p>h) <i>working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP2 Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.</i></p> <p><i>MTP1 Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.</i></p> <p>NIR: This zoning will result in less development at this site. The removal of the road zoning will result in a reversion to the original zoning – agriculture. This would represent a de-intensification in terms of zoning potential for impact. No likely significant effect is predicted on the Natura 2000 network from this de-zoning.</p> <p>SFRA: A review of transport infrastructure routes detailed in the Local Area Plan has also been carried out as part of this SFRA. Under the Planning Guidelines and Flood Risk Management, local transport infrastructure is classed as less vulnerable whilst essential infrastructure, such as primary transport, is highly vulnerable. A map of proposed travel infrastructure in Castlebar can be seen in <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b> of the SFRA.</p> <p>There are a number of areas where proposed transport infrastructure crosses, or is within, Flood Zone A and / or B in Castlebar, some of which are within Flood Zone C and some cross or are wholly within Flood Zone A and or B. Local infrastructure routes are considered to be less vulnerable and are appropriate in Flood Zone B but a flood risk assessment is required to support the detailed design. Where the routes pass through Flood Zone A, careful consideration of the risks is required to ensure alternative routes within Flood Zone B or C are not available. A detailed flood risk assessment will also be required to support all route selection and detailed design.</p>										
<p>MYO-C63-30 – Kathleen &amp; Eamon Courell-</p>	 <p>Rezone lands from Agriculture/Northern Orbital Route to New Residential (as shown below)</p>	↓	↕	↓	↓	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA Comment: This parcel is 7.3ha in size and adjoins the waterbody of Lough Lannagh. It is composed of unimproved wet grassland to the road edge, and is liable to flooding at the lake edge, with possible alluvial woodland. Potential for peatlands or Molinia meadow/marshlands in the areas liable to flooding. The proposed Northern Orbital Ring Road forms part of a suite of measures to improve traffic movement in Castlebar and delivery sustainable transport options in the town in the</p>										


	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>revised Draft Castlebar Local Transport Plan (LTP). The delivery of the proposed Northern Orbital Ring Road is a long-term project in the LTP. The opening of the N5 bypass route will not negate the need for the ring road.</p> <p>In addition, the proposed rezoning of the lands at Ballynaboll North located at a peripheral location would not promote compact growth and sustainable travel options in Castlebar, by reason of its non-sequential edge of town location. This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1. Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <p><i>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></p> <p><i>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></p> <p><i>e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, and those located within any future Architectural Conservation Area(s), providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</i></p> <p><i>f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option;</i></p> <p><i>g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development;</i></p> <p><i>h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP1 Encourage the compact growth of Castlebar and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP2 Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.</i></p> <p><i>MTP1 Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.</i></p>									












	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>NEP1 <i>In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Castlebar, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network.</i></li> <li>- <i>Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and</i></li> <li>- <i>Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces.</i></li> <li>- <i>Where development proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip informed by ecological assessment to ensure it is robust and appropriate for wildlife and nature conservation along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</i></li> </ul> <p>NEP3 <i>Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green and Blue Infrastructure network in Castlebar and strengthen links to the wider regional network. This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.</i></p> <p>NIR: This is likely to be one of the most sensitive sites ecologically. However, the distance from the Natura Network, the existing AA process and existing mitigation is sufficient to continue to protect the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>SFRA: Most of the risk is limited to existing development and open space\agricultural land. The Justification Test has been applied and failed for New Residential lands (see Appendix A.7.1) on the basis that Parts 1 &amp; 2 of the Test cannot be satisfied. In order to manage any potential development given the current zoning it is recommended that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New residential development and all associated infrastructure can only take place in Flood Zone C.</li> <li>• Flood Zone A/B must be left as open space with no increase in ground level.</li> <li>• Development is constructed in accordance with the site specific FRAs.</li> <li>• Refer to Appendix A.7.1 for further guidance.</li> </ul> <p>The Justification Test has been applied and passed for Agriculture (see Appendix A.7.2). The Justification Test for Agriculture is passed on the basis that development is;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited to extensions, renovations and change of use when the property is within a flood zone.</li> <li>• New developments, infill residential development, and demolition and reconstruction can only take place in Flood Zone C.</li> <li>• There are to be no bedrooms on the ground floor when extending existing residential property in Flood Zone A/B.</li> <li>• Any future development should be subject to an FRA which should follow the general guidance provided in Section 7 of the SFRA and must specifically address the points detailed in Part 3 of the JT under Appendix A.7.2.</li> </ul> <p>The Justification Test has also been applied and passed for the Open Space and Recreation lands (see Appendix A.7.3). Any future development of the land should be subject to an FRA which should follow the general guidance provided in Section 7 of the SFRA and must specifically address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flood Zone A would principally be suitable for water compatible use only;</li> <li>• FRA should address climate change scenarios in relation to operational levels and potential mitigation measures;</li> <li>• Proposals should not impede existing flow paths or cause flood risk impacts to the surrounding areas, and;</li> <li>• Any development shall also be required to be built in accordance with MCC SuDS Policy.</li> </ul> <p>Elsewhere in the area, risk can be managed in line with approved Policy and the guidance provided within Section 7 of this SFRA.</p>									

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
MYO-C63-34 – Mavenbrook Ltd	<p>Rezone lands from New Residential / Recreation &amp; Amenity to Mixed Used (as per online map) (NEW ZONING CATEGORY - TOWN CENTRE GREY WITH RED HATCHING – LAND USE ZONING/COLOUR)</p> 	↕	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕	↕	↓	↕
<p>SEA Comment:</p> <p>This parcel is currently zoned new residential/ recreation and amenity and is a greenfield site comprising rough grassland/agricultural grassland and scrub/extant hedgerows. It is approximately 77218m2 (7.7ha).</p> <p>Its proximity to the railway centre and town centre supported the new residential zoning as a means to support the 30% of new residential in town centre in line with the NPF and RESS requirements, as well as the Mayo CDP 2022-2028 Core Strategy. The rezoning would not be consistent with a number of SEOS namely PHH, CH, AQ, CC and would not be consistent with existing policies at national, regional and county level namely town centre first and urban regeneration focus, as well as sustainable mobility objectives in the Castlebar LAP, for example:</p> <p><i>TCO3 (a) Promote high quality place-making and public realm in accordance with the Mayo Development Plan 2022 – 2028, including the Development Management Standards, any replacement thereof and any relevant Section 28 Guidance. All development shall demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied in the town centre, and the opportunity areas identified in this Proposed Plan. The success of the public realm is high quality, easily maintained street furniture, soft landscaping. Drainage solutions should be designed on the principles of SuDS.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Ensure development proposals have given proper consideration to the urban design criteria of site context, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking and detailed design.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP1 Encourage the compact growth of Castlebar and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.</i></p> <p><i>HSCP2 Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.</i></p>										

	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p><i>HSCP4 Support new residential development and infill development that occurs in tandem with the delivery of supporting physical and social infrastructure.</i></p> <p><i>MTO1 a) Encourage and facilitate the maintenance and further development of the public footpath network, walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure within the town and where possible the retrofitting of cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network.</i></p> <p><i>b) Promote and facilitate the enhancement of the public realm in order to create attractive, cohesive and well-connected places in order to encourage walking and cycling as more viable forms of transport within the town</i></p> <p><i>MTO3 Promote sustainable, compact development by ensuring that all proposals for residential and mixed-use developments, including infill and brownfield, at design stage will incorporate provisions for pedestrian and cyclist activity and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing road/street network and proposed active travel network in the town.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to Climate Change Action policies and objectives such as:</i></p> <p><i>CAP1 Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <p><i>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></p> <p><i>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></p> <p><i>d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></p> <p><i>e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, and those located within any future Architectural Conservation Area(s), providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</i></p> <p><i>f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option;</i></p> <p><i>g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development;</i></p> <p><i>h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</i></p> <p><i>CE report: It is considered that a mixed-use zoning of the type proposed, (which is essentially a town centre type zoning), on a site that is located a considerable distance from the town centre; would impact negatively on the commercial viability of the town centre and mitigate against the rejuvenation of the town centre, which is the central tenet of the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy outlined in chapter 4 of the DLAP.</i></p> <p><i>NIR: This site originally helped to fulfil the objectives for compact growth within the core strategy of the LAP. While this zoning may result in a deintensification of use (i.e. new residential to agriculture, it may result in intensification at a more sensitive site within the LAP area). Likely to result in a deintensification of zoning at the site itself, so no likely significant effects on the Natura 2000 network.</i></p> <p><i>SFRA: flood zone C, no mitigation measures or JT.</i></p>									

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
MYO-C63-37 – Seamus Regan Rezone lands from Agriculture to New Residential (as per online map)		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
<p>SEA comment:</p> <p>This L shaped parcel is approximately 48757m<sup>2</sup> (4.8ha) in size and fronts in part the National Road. It is surrounded by existing residential development and aerial imagery does not indicate any scrub/hedgerows or wetland features.</p> <p>This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives including, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p><i>DSP 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 5: Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.</i></p> <p><i>DSP 6 Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems and DSP 7:Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.</i></p> <p><i>CAP 1 . Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</i></li> <li>b) <i>promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></li> <li>c) <i>promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</i></li> <li>d) <i>facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</i></li> </ol>										

	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures, vernacular buildings, and those located within any future Architectural Conservation Area(s), providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</p> <p>f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option;</p> <p>g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development;</p> <p>h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</p> <p>HSCP1 Encourage the compact growth of Castlebar and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.</p> <p>HSCP2 Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.</p> <p>MTP1 Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.</p> <p>The provision of this zoning would contribute to peripheral growth and represents an inefficient use of land as well as the additional costs in terms of servicing same in terms of water supply, wastewater treatment etc. Moreover this location at a distance from the town centre, does not align with compact growth and need for sustainable transport options. This rezoning is not consistent with a number of SEOS in particular MA, PHH, AQ, CC and can interact negatively indirectly across a range of other SEOS that may be mitigated in the short term but medium to long term adverse effects on these SEOS such as SG and L.</p> <p>NIR: The distance from the Natura Network, the existing AA process and existing mitigation is sufficient to continue to protect the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>SFRA: flood zone C, no mitigation measures or JT.</p>									

(Proposed by Cllr. D Sheridan & Seconded by Cllr G. Deere	Rezone lands at Manor Village from Strategic Residential Reserve to Recreation and Amenity									
SEA Comment: The Settlement Capacity assessment also identifies this Strategic Residential reserve as having a number of existing service provisions namely lighting, water, foul/stormwater sewer, footpaths and roads thereby being service led development.										

However, this rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives.

<p>Rezone lands from Strategic Residential Reserve to New Residential. (Proposed by Cllr. C Burke, Seconded by Cllr Ger Deere</p>		<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>
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SEA comment: This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives

NIR: This rezoning is not consistent with the Core Strategy in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028, and does not align with national or regional requirements relating to compact growth or achieving a 30% target of housing on town centre locations and is in conflict with the Castlebar LAP development Policies and Objectives. This is likely to be one of the more sensitive sites ecologically. The distance from the Natura Network, the existing AA process and existing mitigation is sufficient to continue to protect the Natura 2000 network.

SFRA: flood zone C, no specific comments or JT

## 9 Mitigation Measures

### 9.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the mitigation measures that will prevent, reduce, and offset as much as possible any significant adverse effects on the environment of the plan area resulting from the implementation of the LAP. Section (g) of Schedule 2B of the SEA Regulations (as amended) requires 'The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the Plan'.

Mitigation involves ameliorating significant negative effects. Where the environmental assessment identifies significant adverse effects, consideration is given in the first instance to preventing such impacts or where this is not possible, to lessening or offsetting those effects. Mitigation measures can be generally divided into those that:

- Avoid effects;
- Reduce the magnitude or extent, probability and/or severity of effect;
- Repair effects after they have occurred, and
- Compensate for effects, by balancing out negative impacts with positive ones.

The iterative process of the LAP preparation has facilitated the integration of environmental considerations into the LAP. In addition, potential positive effects of implementing the LAP have been and will be maximized and potential adverse effects have been and will be avoided, reduced or offset.

Many impacts will be more adequately identified and mitigated at project and EIA level. In general terms, all proposals for development will be required to have due regard to environmental considerations outlined in this Environmental Report and associated assessments including the Screening for Appropriate Assessment/Natura Impact Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Proposals for development which are deemed contrary to the environmental objectives contained in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028 and Castlebar LAP 2023-2029 will not normally be permitted, and if permitted, not without the appropriate site and development specific mitigation measures. There were also a number of policies/objectives associated with the LAP that were identified as potentially generating significant adverse impacts on the environment, and suggested rewording of these proposals are put forward for consideration and recommended for inclusion in the LAP.

This chapter is structured as follows:

- 8.2 Environmental Protection Measures in the Mayo CDP 2022-2028
- 8.2 Existing environmental protection measures in the draft LAP 2023 -2029.
- 8.4 Mitigation measures –amendment of text or new policies/objectives in the Castlebar LAP 2023-2029



## 9.2 Existing principal environmental protection measures in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.

<p>SO9 Ecological Impact Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.</p>	<p>a) To ensure the assessment of all planning applications in the Plan area have regard to the information, data and requirements of the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report, SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report contained in Volume 5 of the Mayo CDP 2022-2028.</p> <p>b) To require project planning to be fully informed by ecological and environmental constraints at the earliest stage of project development and any necessary assessment to be undertaken, including Ecological Impact Assessments (EclA) and assessments of disturbance to species protected under the Wildlife Act and/or the Flora Protection Act and of Habitat IV species protected under the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>Ensure that proposals for developments located within identified or potential flood risk areas, or which may exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere, are assessed in accordance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DoEHLG/OPW 2009) and Circular PL2/2014 (or any updated/superseding document), the relevant policies, objectives and guidelines within this plan and shall also take account of the National CFRAM Programme Flood Hazard Mapping and Flood Risk Management Plans when they become available.</p>
<p>TRP 11</p>	<p>To promote Mayo as a premier walking/cycling destination in the Country and support the further development of walking routes and trails within the county and the integration and linkage of these with other existing / proposed routes and trails both within and outside of County Mayo, in accordance with national walking strategy guidance and in conjunction with the Tourism Section of Mayo County Council, Fáilte Ireland and other relevant stakeholders. Opportunities to enhance ecological connectivity should be integrated as part of any linking of routes to strengthen and support green infrastructure.</p>
<p>MTO 16</p>	<p>Protect open spaces, with multifunctional green and blue infrastructure in developments, with connections to the wider network of open spaces and habitats.</p>
<p>BEO 24</p>	<p>To apply the following key attributes when considering public realm and public space enhancements:</p> <p><i>Accessible</i> - connected and linked permeable spaces to ensure ease of movement.</p> <p><i>Functional</i> - safe, adaptable and social environments to attract and foster activity.</p> <p><i>Attractive</i> - visually pleasing spaces with high quality design, materials and installations (lighting, furniture and signage) based on a singular common design theme.</p> <p><i>Distinctive</i> - reference to local context and building on the character and identity of place.</p> <p>Where appropriate, recreational considerations and access to blue and greens space should be underpinned by the Green Space Principles including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance urban greening through planting strategies that mitigate noise and air pollution and maximise local biodiversity gain and facilitate sustainable drainage (e.g., deciduous wooded and wildflower meadow areas).</li> <li>• A networked approach: emphasising green infrastructure networks (rather than isolated parks) can provide new opportunities for connecting existing and new green spaces and creating linkages between urban and rural areas. Examples include greenways and linear parks, local greenways or cycleways that link to regional and national greenways and de-culverting watercourses to provide new blue corridors.</li> <li>• Well managed and maintained, creating a high-quality environment: poorly managed spaces or vandalism lead to negative perceptions among potential users.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multifunctional uses: examples include spaces that encourage active mobility, physical activity and sports, relaxation and tranquillity, and opportunities for social exchange (e.g., that incorporate community gardens or encourage park runs).</li> <li>• Create multisensory restorative environments that help mitigate the psychological stresses of modern living through the provision of “restive places for rejuvenation”.</li> </ul>
BEP 21	To encourage the continued vitality and viability of town and village centres by promoting ongoing environmental improvements to the public realm, including blue and green infrastructure measures.
NEP 13	To promote and enhance green and blue infrastructure and seek to integrate the provision of green infrastructure with infrastructure provision and replacement, including walking and cycling routes, as appropriate, while protecting and enhancing natural heritage and improving ecological corridors.
NIR of Mayo CDP	<p>Projects stemming from the Mayo County Development Plan will apply a range of standard processes and measures that will mitigate potential environmental impacts. While the applicability of processes and particular measures will be dependent on the nature and scale of each project, examples of typical processes and measures that will be implemented where applicable at the different stages of project implementation are set out in the below sections.</p> <p>It must also be noted that some Aims, Objectives, Strategies and policies of the Plan will increase the levels of environmental protection afforded to Natura 2000 sites and their conservation objectives e.g., Strategic Objective SO 9 8:</p> <p>“Appropriate Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</p> <p>a) To ensure the assessment of all planning applications in the Plan area have regard to the information, data and requirements of the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report, SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report contained in Volume 5 of the Mayo CDP 2022-2028.</p> <p>b) To require project planning to be fully informed by ecological and environmental constraints at the earliest stage of project development and any necessary assessment to be undertaken, including assessments of disturbance to species protected under the Wildlife Act and/or the Flora Protection Act.</p> <p>c) To comply with the objectives and requirements of the Habitats Directive, specifically Article 6(3) and where necessary 6(4), Birds, Water Framework, and all other relevant EU Directives and all relevant transposing national legislation.</p> <p>d) Ensure that proposals for developments located within identified or potential flood risk areas, or which may exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere, are assessed in accordance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DoEHLG/OPW 2009) and Circular PL2/2014 (or any updated/superseding document), the relevant policies, objectives and guidelines within this plan and shall also take account of the National CFRAM Programme Flood Hazard Mapping and Flood Risk Management Plans when they become available.”</p> <p>9.1 Project Mitigation: Consenting Process</p>

As set out in Section 8.2 of the Mayo CDP 2022-2028 NIR, the consenting process for the progression of measures, actions or projects supported, guided or recommended within the Plan involving physical works, will require the applicable environmental assessments. Also, the consenting authorities may set out specific environmental conditions as part of the project approval.

#### 9.2 Project Mitigation: Pre-Construction / Detailed Design

For the detailed design of projects that may arise as a result of the Plan, where options are available, the design should use a hierarchy to mitigation measures along the following principles:

- Avoidance: avoid creating the potential impact where feasible.
- Mitigation: minimise the potential impact through mitigating measures
- Enhancement: Enhance the environment to better than pre-project conditions, where reasonably possible.

The progression of any projects that may arise as a result of the Plan, through the detailed design phase can entail a series of surveys to inform the design, where the scale of surveys would be proportionate to the complexity and potential impacts of the project. These can include:

- engineering structure surveys,
- topographical surveys,
- habitat and species surveys<sup>13</sup>
- ornithological surveys,
- bat surveys,
- fish surveys,
- water quality surveys,
- archaeological surveys,
- landscape and visual assessments,
- land valuation surveys and
- other surveys as deemed necessary to prepare a project.

Where necessary, Wildlife Derogation Licences will be sought from Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

The scope of any necessary EIS will contain a WFD assessment, which will include a hydro- morphological assessment, to more clearly consider and support the Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives. This WFD assessment will inform the project level AA regarding likely significant effects and adverse impacts on the site integrity of Natura 2000 sites in respect of their conservation objectives and if necessary, appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented at project level to ensure adverse effects will not occur.

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<sup>13</sup> In the context of ecological mitigation, the habitat and species surveys are conducted as required to assess the various aspects for the project, such as ecological surveys for:

- protected or notable habitats and species, including Annex 1 habitats, Annex II and Annex IV species, • species protected under the Wildlife Acts, • species protected under the Flora Protection Order,
- the resting and breeding places of relevant species and, • invasive species, both plant and animal.

	<p><b>9.2.1 Project Mitigation: Construction Stage</b>  For large and complex projects and sites, where environmental management may entail multiple aspects, a project specific Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be developed. This will form a framework for all environmental management processes, mitigation measures and monitoring and will include other environmental requirements such as invasive species management measures, if applicable<sup>14</sup>. A designated environmental officer and project ecologist will be appointed, as appropriate for the project. Biosecurity measures may be required and should be considered depending on the location and conditions on-site.</p> <p><b>9.2.2 Project Monitoring</b>  The Plan, with its associated SEA and plan-level AA, sets out a series of monitoring requirements, in connection with the SEA objectives and the predicted effects of the Plan.  For measures involving physical works, the project-level EIA and AA, where conducted, will set out the specific monitoring required for each measure.</p>
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### 9.3 Existing Principal Environmental Protection measures in the draft Castlebar LAP 2023-2029 -

<b>DSP 1</b>	Support and Facilitate the sustainable growth of social, economic and residential development in Castlebar in accordance with the National Planning Framework, the Northern and Western Regional Spatial Economic Strategy 2020-2032, and the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (and any review thereof).
<b>DSP 2</b>	Support the compact growth of Castlebar to ensure that new development proceeds in a sustainable manner and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the Core Strategy.
<b>DSP 3</b>	Promote measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within the Castlebar Plan area.
<b>DSP 4</b>	Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo’s Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.
<b>DSP 5</b>	Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.

<sup>14</sup> There are a range standard type mitigation measures consisting of good construction practices and good planning of works, that are used within construction projects such as for example: Refuelling of plant and vehicles away from watercourses, Installation of wheel-wash and plant washing facilities, working in-channel or on specific works only within environmental windows e.g., in-stream works in Salmonid channels from May to September.

<b>DSP 6</b>	Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development, 2022-2028, in respect of wastewater systems.
<b>DSP 7</b>	Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.
<b>CAP 1 It is a Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<p>Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations;</li> <li>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies;</li> <li>c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies;</li> <li>d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car;</li> <li>e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures and those located within Architectural Conservation Areas, providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</li> <li>f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option;</li> <li>g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development;</li> <li>h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</li> </ul>	
<b>TCP 3</b>	Protect the visual character, built and cultural heritage, ambience and vitality of the traditional heart of the town centre in order to meet the retailing and service needs of the area, in addition to offering a pleasant and attractive environment for shopping, business, tourism, recreation and living.
<b>TCP 4</b>	Actively encourage, support and facilitate environmental and public realm improvements in Castlebar to address environmental quality, urban design, safety, identity and traffic impact.

<b>It is a Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>HSCP 1</b>	Encourage the compact growth of Castlebar and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.
<b>HSCP 2</b>	Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.
<b>HSCP 3</b>	Encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in Castlebar for residential accommodation.
<b>It is a Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>MTP 1</b>	Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.
<b>BEP 3</b>	Protect the town centre by ensuring all new developments are compatible with the existing character and visual amenity of Castlebar.
<b>BEP 4</b>	Encourage residential uses on the upper floors of town centre commercial properties, where appropriate, and to encourage the retention of residential use except where an alternative use has been established, to maintain and enhance the overall vitality of the town centre area.
<b>It is a Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>NEP 1</b>	<p>In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Castlebar, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network.</li> <li>- Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and</li> <li>- Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces.</li> <li>- Where development proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</li> </ul>
<b>NEP 2</b>	Seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not result in significant climatic impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development.
<b>It is the Policy of the Council to:</b>	

<b>IESP 1</b>	Manage flood risk in Castlebar in conjunction with the Office of Public Works and in accordance with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and circular PL02/2014 (August 2014).
<b>IESP 2</b>	Extensions of existing uses or minor development within flood risk areas will be supported, provided they do not: obstruct important flow paths; introduce a number of people into flood risk areas; entail the storage of hazardous substances; have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities; or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Proposals of this nature shall be accompanied by a commensurate assessment of the risks of flooding in accordance with the Planning Systems Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009.

## 9.4 Mitigation Measures recommended for Castlebar LAP 2023 -2029 -amendment of text or additional policies/objectives.

New policy/objective for Development Strategy Chapter:	<b>Require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications in the plan area to have regard to the information, data and requirements of the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report, SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report that accompany this LAP. There shall be a requirement of Ecological Impact Assessment as appropriate in the Plan area.</b>
CAO1	Ensure all development proposals shall have regard to the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019) <b>AND THE ASSOCIATED SEA AND NIS ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS</b> , any revised or forthcoming adaptation, mitigation or climate action strategies in the formulation of any plans and when assessing planning application for future developments.
CAO -new objective from County Mayo Climate Change Action Plan 2019-2024.	<b>GOAL 3:• Increase the Resilience of Natural and Cultural Capital.</b> <b>OBJECTIVES</b> <b>1. Build awareness of Nature Based Adaptation Solutions and Green Infrastructure.</b> <b>2. Support bio-diversity for its intrinsic value within the natural environment and its importance in climate change adaptation.</b> <b>3. Develop a database of impacts of climate change on Mayo’s Natural Environment.</b> <b>4. Identify Cultural and Heritage Sites vulnerable to climate change and develop adaptation and management policies.</b> <b>5. Encourage adaptation in Agriculture and Local Food Supply</b>
NEP1	In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to: - Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Castlebar, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network. - Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and - Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces. - Where development proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip <b>informed by ecological assessment to ensure it is robust and appropriate for wildlife and nature conservation along the river in consultation</b> with the National Parks and Wildlife Service. -
NEP 3	Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green <b>and Blue</b> Infrastructure network in Castlebar and strengthen links to the wider regional network. <b>This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.</b>
NEP4	There shall be a presumption against the felling, topping, lopping or wilful destruction of mature trees as part of development proposals. Where a development proposal involves the felling, topping, lopping or threatens the destruction of a mature tree or trees, a tree survey will need to be included in the submission, carried out by a qualified Tree Specialist to justify the exceptional circumstances for their interference. <b>The applicant must demonstrate the justification and rationale for removal of mature trees in terms of effect on ecology and landscape and demonstrate how replacement planting will compensate for loss of trees and woodland features. An assessment of potential tree roost features by a qualified and experienced ecologist may also be requested as part of such proposals.</b>
NEO 3	Increase tree planting and pollinator friendly planting, in accordance with the recommendations of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025, and any future editions,



	throughout Castlebar and in open spaces in new developments in order to enhance local biodiversity, visual amenity and surface water management, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, subject to available resources.
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## 9.5 Natura Impact Statement Mitigation Measures

### 9.5.1 Implementation Routes for Physical Works

Measures or projects arising from the objectives, aims, strategies or policies of the LAP requiring physical works may either require planning consent or confirmation, or will be an exempted development. Works that will require planning consent or confirmation, will be carried out by either a private developer or the Local Authority. Works may progress to construction stage as one of the following:

- Project led by private developer in line with the aims, policies, objectives or strategies of the Plan.
  - Project led by the Local Authority under the Planning and Development Regulations.
  - Project led by the Local Authority under the Strategic Infrastructure Act. Project level assessments that may be required for all types of project include:
    - Environmental Impact Assessment: For a project above the thresholds specified under Article 23 of the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1989 as amended or a project likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria specified for under Article 27 of the same EIA Regulations 1989 as amended.
    - Appropriate Assessment: All projects will be screened for Appropriate Assessment and, where there is a potential for a significant effect on a European (Natura 2000) site, an Appropriate Assessment will be undertaken in accordance the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. Exempted developments include those of limited scale and scope, that may fall under the category of flood mitigation works or housing protection schemes. Exempted developments may be carried out by Local Authorities under funding by the OPW, will be exempted in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and will comply with all relevant environmental legislation. This could require the undertaking of an EIA or AA screening for physical works. Local Authorities must supply written confirmation of legislative compliance under condition of funding.
- 8.2 Project Mitigation: Consenting Process The consenting process for the progression of measures, actions or projects supported, guided or recommended within the Plan involving physical works, will require the applicable environmental assessments. Also, the consenting authorities may set out specific environmental conditions as part of the project approval.

### 9.5.2 Project Mitigation: Pre-Construction/Detailed Design

For the detailed design of projects that may arise as a result of the Plan, where options are available, the design should use a hierarchy to mitigation measures along the following principles:

- Avoidance: avoid creating the potential impact where feasible.
- Mitigation: minimise the potential impact through mitigating measures
- Enhancement: Enhance the environment to better than pre-project conditions, where reasonably possible The progression of any projects that may arise as a result of the Plan, through the detailed design phase can entail a series of surveys to inform the design, where the scale of surveys would be proportionate to the complexity and potential impacts of the project.

These can include: • engineering structure surveys,

- topographical surveys,
- habitat and species surveys
- ornithological surveys, In the context of ecological mitigation, the habitat and species surveys are conducted as required to assess the various aspects for the project, such as ecological surveys for:
  - protected or notable habitats and species, including Annex 1 habitats, Annex II and Annex IV species,
  - species protected under the Wildlife Acts,
  - species protected under the Flora Protection Order,
  - the resting and breeding places of relevant species and,
  - invasive species, both plant and animal.
  - bat surveys,
  - fish surveys,
  - water quality surveys,
  - archaeological surveys,
  - landscape and visual assessments,
  - land valuation surveys and
  - other surveys as deemed necessary to prepare a project.

Where necessary, Wildlife Derogation Licences will be sought from the National Park and Wildlife Service Wildlife Licence Unit, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

When large volumes of water are to be discharged to the stormwater system as a result of these projects all levels must be supervised; and that appropriate levels of attenuation/storage should be in place in new projects to prevent overload on the combined system during periods of high rainfall. Rainfall runoff is required to be managed, e.g., attenuated and contained on site up to the 1-in-100-year rainfall event which has a statistical 1% chance of occurring in any given year, while also allowing for a 20% climate change factor. Additionally, systems and pipework should be checked for sections of settled wastes following phases of low rainfall or dry spells.

The scope of any necessary Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) will contain a WFD assessment if relevant, which will include a hydro-morphological assessment, to consider and support the WFD objectives more clearly. This WFD assessment will inform the project level AA regarding likely significant effects and adverse impacts on the site integrity of European sites in respect of their conservation objectives and if necessary, appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented at project level to ensure adverse effects will not occur. Where a full EIS is not required for a project (i.e., has been screened out), an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) should be considered to demonstrate how a project accords with relevant planning policy and legislation where an EIA is not required.

The findings of an EclA can help competent authorities understand ecological issues when determining applications for consent. Unlike EIA, EclA on its own is not a statutory requirement but can be a valuable evaluation process where habitats, species and ecosystems may be impacted from a development/project.

### 9.5.3 Project Mitigation: Construction Stage

For many project sites, where environmental management may entail multiple aspects, a project specific Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be developed. This will form a framework for all environmental management processes, mitigation measures and monitoring and will include other environmental requirements such as invasive no-native species management measures, if applicable.

2 A designated environmental officer and project ecologist will be appointed, as appropriate for the project. Biosecurity measures may be required and should be considered depending on the location and conditions on-site.

### 9.5.4 Project Monitoring

The Plan, with its associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and plan-level AA, sets out a series of monitoring requirements, in connection with the SEA objectives and the predicted effects of the Plan. For measures involving physical works, the project-level EIA and AA, where conducted, will set out the specific monitoring required for each measure.

## 10 Monitoring

### 9.1 Introduction

It is proposed, in accordance with Article 10 of the SEA Directive, to base monitoring on a series of indicators which measure changes in the environment, especially changes which are critical in terms of environmental quality, for example water pollution levels. Monitoring will focus on the aspects of the environment that are likely to be significantly impacted upon by the implementation of the LAP.

The targets and indicators are derived from the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) discussed in Chapter Five. The target underpins the objective whilst the indicators are used to track the progress of the objective and targets in terms of monitoring of impacts. The monitoring programme comprises relevant indicators and targets against the data relating to each environmental component. Similarly, monitoring will be carried out frequently to ensure that any changes to the environment can be identified.

### 9.2 Frequency of Monitoring and Reporting

Should new data or the following occur, additional monitoring will be required:

- Pollution events associated with construction;
- Boil notices on drinking water;
- Fish kills;
- Court cases taken by the DEHLG regarding impacts upon archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places; and,
- Complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts resulting from development which is granted permission under the LAP.

In turn the list below is subject to review at each reporting stage to reflect new data. Laois County Council are responsible for the implementation of the SEA Monitoring Programme including:

- Monitoring specific indicators and identifying any significant effects, including cumulative effects;
- Collating the Environmental Reports (such as Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, Natura Impact Reports etc) submitted by developers in the LAP area;
- Reviewing the effectiveness of monitoring/mitigation measures during the lifetime of the LAP; and
- Identifying any cumulative effects.

It is recommended that the monitoring report be made available to the public upon its completion.

TABLE 9-1 INDICATORS, TARGETS, SOURCES AND REMEDIAL ACTIONS

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
<b>Biodiversity Flora and Fauna</b>			
<b>BFF1 Conserve and enhance biodiversity at all levels</b>	<p>No reduction in length or loss of hedgerows.</p> <p>Operators who conduct mechanical hedge cutting should have achieved the Teagasc proficiency standard MT 1302-Mechanical Hedge Trimming.</p> <p>30% broadleaf/native afforestation.</p> <p>Protection and promotion of non-designated salmonid rivers.</p> <p>No. ecological networks or parts thereof which provide significant connectivity between areas of local biodiversity to be lost without remediation as a result of implementation of the MCDP 2021-2027</p> <p>Afford the same level of protection to Margaritifera Sensitive Areas as is afforded to Freshwater Pearl Mussel SAC rivers</p>	<p>Percentage of unique habitats and species lost in non-designated sites over the lifetime of the Plan through trending of annual/bi-annual surveys.</p> <p>Percentage of broadleaf/native afforestation.</p> <p>Number of green infrastructure and blue infrastructure measures implemented during Part 8 applications.</p> <p>Number of pollinator friendly planting schemes as part of public realm works.</p> <p>Number of pollinator friendly schemes identified under Tidy Towns</p> <p>Number of Part 8 applications requiring Ecological Clerk of Work</p> <p>Percentage loss of connectivity between areas of local biodiversity importance as a result of implementation of the MCDP as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping and the Biodiversity Mapping undertaken by MCC for towns and villages where present.</p> <p>Decrease in population of freshwater pearl mussels in <i>Margaritifera</i> sensitive areas and/or habitat and water quality deterioration.</p>	<p>MCC</p> <p>MCC Part 8 planning applications Coillte- Annual NPWS – Annual or as and when surveys completed by NPWS for National Monitoring programmes on a rolling basis and/or surveillance monitoring undertaken for compliance with Article 17 of the Habitats Directive and reported on every 6 years. MCC - Annual OPW - Annual National Biodiversity Data Centre – Annual</p> <p>Ireland River Basin Management Plan –second and third RBMP Cycle</p>
<b>BFF2 – Avoid and minimise effects on nationally and</b>	No loss of protected habitats and species during the lifetime of the Plan.	Designation of additional areas due to biodiversity and/or geological value.	

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
<p><b>internationally rare and threatened species and habitats through sensitive design and consultation, recognising ecological connectivity.</b></p>	<p>No compromise in the favourable conservation condition of European sites. No compromise or impact on the achievement of the favourable conservation condition objectives (whether maintain or restore) of European sites.</p>	<p>Percentage of unique habitats and species lost in designated sites through trending of annual surveys. No./percentage of developments in/near Natura 2000 network. Percentage of European sites in the plan area that are at 'Favourable' conservation status. Percentage of Qualifying Interest Features which have achieved their specific objectives of maintain or restore.</p>	
<p><b>BFF3 – Avoid and minimise habitat fragmentation and seek opportunities to improve habitat connectivity.</b></p>	<p>Submission of Ecological Impact Assessments for planning applications</p> <p>Number of green and blue infrastructure measures implemented through Part 8 applications.</p> <p>Ensure provision of riparian zones at project/site level.</p>	<p>Number of Ecological Impact Assessments with planning applications.</p> <p>Number of Part 8 applications with green and blue infrastructure measures</p> <p>No. of planning applications with sufficient inclusion of buffer zones where necessary and applicable.</p>	
<p><b>BFF4 – Ensure careful consideration of non-native invasive and alien species particularly as they relate to watercourses</b></p>	<p>Prevent the introduction of new invasive or alien species.</p> <p>Control/manage new invasive species.</p> <p>Control/manage/eradicate invasive species throughout the county.</p>	<p>No., type and location of invasive species identified.</p> <p>No. of actions achieved under the Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Increase/decrease in coverage of invasive species identified.</p> <p>No. of submissions/observations submitted through invasive species Ireland "Alien Watch". <a href="http://www.invasivespeciesireland.com/alien-watch">www.invasivespeciesireland.com/alien-watch</a></p>	

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
		The National Biodiversity Data Centre will track success in the implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan by measuring increases in the abundance and diversity of pollinators within the Irish landscape as the 81 actions are implemented.	
<b>B5 - Promote green and blue infrastructure networks, including riparian zones and wildlife corridors.</b>	<p>Ensure new development is set back from rivers.</p> <p>The recommended width for larger river channels (&gt;10m) is 35m to 60m and for smaller channels (&lt;10m) is 20m or greater. The determined width should be tailored to site specific, river reach or lakeshore characteristics and their associated habitats. It is important that the buffer zone is large enough to protect the ecological integrity of the river (including emergent vegetation), the riparian zone (bank side vegetation including trees) and takes into account the human history of the area.</p>	<p>No. planning permissions close to water.</p> <p>Number of Part 8 applications with green and blue infrastructure measures</p>	
<b>Population, Human Health</b>			
<b>P1 Protect, enhance and improve people's quality of life based on high quality residential, community, educational, working and recreational environments and on sustainable travel patterns.</b>	<p>Increase in the number of green and blue space in settlements.</p> <p>Improved trends in perceived quality of life related to these matters.</p>	<p>No/area of green spaces and amenities available to the public as shown in public realm improvements</p> <p>Improved trends in perceived quality of life related to these matters as gathered through surveys.</p>	<p>MCC – URDF funding and other funding sources</p> <p>CSO – every six years in line with census</p> <p>MCC - Annual</p> <p>Iarnrod Eireann - Annual</p>

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
	<p>Bonds to ensure the completion of developments until taken charge.</p> <p>No significant deterioration in human health as a result of environmental factors.</p>	<p>Employment rates over the lifetime of the Plan.</p> <p>Completion handover of development to MCC</p> <p>Availability of public transport/ smarter travel initiatives.</p> <p>Occurrence of any decline in human health around the plan area.</p>	Bus Eireann – Annual
<b>P2 To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from incompatible land uses/developments.</b>	<p>No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors.</p> <p>Number of complaints received from public relating to Noise, Air and Water Emissions.</p>	<p>Any occurrence of spatially concentrated deterioration in human health.</p> <p>Complaints to MCC Environment Section, Health and Safety Authority and EPA</p>	<p>CSO – every six years and as results arise on a yearly basis from the 2016 census</p> <p>Healthwell Database</p> <p>MCC – Annual</p>
<b>Water</b>			
<b>W1 – Protect and enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystem (quality, level, flow).</b>	To achieve a Q rating of 4 ‘good’ quality status by 2021.	Biotic quality rating of river waters at EPA monitoring locations.	EPA – Annual as recorded through the WFD Monitoring Programme
<b>W2– Maintain or improve the quality of surface water and groundwater (including estuarine) to status objectives as set out in the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the River Basin Management Plan and POMS.</b>	Improvement or at least no deterioration in surface water quality by 2021	Changes in receiving water quality as identified during water quality monitoring for WFD, National RBMP conducted by MCC and EPA.	<p>MCC</p> <p>EPA</p>
<b>W3– Reduce the impact of polluting substances to all waters and prevent pollution and</b>	Improvement or at least no deterioration in surface and groundwaters by 2027 at the latest	Changes in receiving waters and groundwater quality as identified by water quality monitoring programmes conducted by MCC and EPA.	<p>MCC - Annual</p> <p>EPA – Annual</p>



Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
contamination of ground water by adhering to aquifer protection plans and to maintain and improve the quality of drinking water supplies.			
<b>W4 - Promote sustainable water use, water conservation and sources of water supply in the plan area and to maintain and improve the quality of drinking water supplies.</b>	Pressure on water and waste water treatment plants.	Decrease in no. of water shortage notices issued during drought periods.  Decrease in the amount of water consumed per household in the plan area.	MCC/Irish Water
<b>W5—Protect flood plains and areas of flood risk from development through avoidance, mitigation and adaptation measures.</b>	In accordance with OPW/DOEHLG, all planning applications within designated Flood Risk Zones A and B as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the plan are required to undertake Flood Risk Assessment.  Increase in nature based solutions to flood risk and blue infrastructure measures	Level and location of flooding.  Number of measures achieved in Goal 3 of Climate Ready Mayo.  Number of NBS that form part of public realm, Part 8 applications.	MCC – Records obtained as and when flood events occur  OPW –
<b>Soil and Geology</b>			
<b>SG1 To maximise the sustainable re-use of the existing built environment, derelict, disused and infill sites (brownfield sites), rather than greenfield sites</b>	NPF target of 30% urban development and 20% of rural developing on brownfield lands achieved over lifetime of the plan	Planning applicationsq	MCC  annually

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
<b>SG2 Conserve, protect and avoid loss of diversity and integrity of designated habitats, geological features, species or their sustaining resources in designated ecological sites.</b>	No loss of diversity and integrity of designated habitats, geological features, species or their sustaining resources in designated ecological sites. Designation of sites as County Geological Sites.	Percentage of habitats, geological features, species etc. Lost over the lifetime of the Plan through trending of annual/bi-annual surveys.  No. of areas designated as County Geological Sites.	GSI MCC
<b>Material Assets</b>			
<b>Air Quality and Climate</b>			
<b>AQ1 Recognise the ecosystems functions of habitats in and around the plan area and promote nature-based solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation.</b>	Maintain and enhance ecosystems functionality in and around plan area  Integrate nature-based solutions through planning applications, public realm plans, greenways and transport projects.	% land mapped for green and blue infrastructure in urban settings and along greenways.  Enhancement of ecological networks/linkages through habitat creation/restoration	MCC
<b>AQ2 Minimise all forms of air pollution and maintain/improve ambient air quality.</b>	Maintain ambient air quality through reduction of private vehicle usage.	Air quality indicators.	<CC - Annual  EPA - Annual
<b>AQ3 Minimise emissions of greenhouse gases and contribute to a reduction and avoidance of human-induced global climate change.</b>	Provide for increased use of public transport.  Increase number of cycle lanes and pedestrian routes in the plan area.  Establish incentives/increase no. of permissions for renewable energy projects.	Use of public transport.  Provision of cycle lanes and walking routes.  No. of grants given for insulation works; energy efficiency of new buildings – energy rating figures.  No. of planning applications for residential houses with low carbon footprint.	MCC – Annual  CSO – Annual as figures/reports based on 2016 census become available.  MCC and SEAI – increase in BER rating at Small Area for towns identified.  Number of Energy Retrofitting grants in County

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
		No. Of wind turbines permitted which may contribute to mitigation of, and adaptation to Climate Change.  Location of permitted wind farms and other renewable energy projects as identified in the Co Mayo RES. w	MCC – No and type of planning applications in relation to low carbon residential housing and wind turbines and/or commencement of construction of such on an annual basis. SEAI
<b>AQ4 Reduce car dependency within the plan area by way of an integrated approach to sustainable urban transport.</b>	An increase in the percentage of the population travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means.  A decrease in the average distance travelled to work or school by the population of the plan area.	Percentage population within the plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means.  Average distance travelled to work or school by the population of the plan area.	CSO – every 6 years through census information.
<b>Material Assets – Waste</b>			
<b>MA1 Avoid and minimise waste generation</b>	Reduction in the quantities of waste sent to landfill.	Quantity of household waste sent to landfill.	MCC Environment Section
<b>MA2 Maximise reuse of material resources and use of recycled materials</b>	Increase in the quantities of waste sent for recycling.  Increase in the number of bring banks in the plan area.  Compliance with the Region Waste Management Plan	Quantity of household waste sent to recycling  Number of repair/ reuse initiatives over plan lifetime	Connaught Waste Management annual report
<b>Material Assets -energy</b>			
<b>MA3 Minimise energy consumption and encourage use of renewable energy</b>	Increase in renewable energy developments.  Adaptive reuse of town centre buildings	No. of renewable energy developments granted planning permission.  Establishment of R&D projects (one or more).	MCC – new solar farms, windfarms or other renewable energy developments granted.

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
		<p>Meet or exceed County contributions to national renewable energy targets.</p> <p>Meet or exceed County contributions to national energy efficiency/conservation targets.</p> <p>Number of houses increasing BER rating to B3</p>	<p>– number of new R&amp;D projects within the Plan area e.g., testing of tidal energy devices.</p> <p>Regional Assembly for the Northern and Western Region</p> <p>Marine Institute</p> <p>SEAO</p>
<b>Material Assets -Transport</b>			
<b>MA4 Promote sustainable transport patterns and modes</b>	<p>An increase in provision of cycle lanes and pedestrian routes.</p> <p>An increase in population travelling to work and school by public transport or non-motorised transport.</p> <p>A reduction in the distance travelled to work or school by the population of the plan area.</p>	<p>No. of cycle lanes and pedestrian routes provided in the plan area.</p> <p>Percentage of the population within the plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means.</p> <p>Average distance travelled to work or school by the population of the plan area.</p> <p>Number of private cars on road as a percentage of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT).</p>	<p>MCC</p> <p>CSO – every 6 years through census information.</p> <p>TII</p>
<b>Material Assets – Waste Water</b>			
<b>MA5 To maximise the capacity of wastewater collection networks by excluding surface water run-off from the sewage network through the use of SUDs and Blue/green Infrastructure.</b>	<p>The most recent wastewater treatment capacity register, issued to Mayo County Council, in June 2022 indicates the current spare capacity is approximately 9,800pe.</p>	<p>WWTP currently has capacity for the planned population growth for Castlebar.</p>	<p>Uisce Éireann -Achievement of Water Services Strategic Plan objectives.</p> <p>MCC – monitoring</p> <p>.</p>

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
			15
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>			
<b>CH1 Conserve, preserve and record architectural and archaeological heritage</b>	No permitted development which involves loss of cultural heritage, including protected structures, archaeological sites, Architectural Conservations Areas and landscape features.	No. of developments permitted during the lifetime of the plan which will result in the loss or partial loss of protected structures or sites of archaeological status.  No. of additions to the list of Protected Structures.  No. of additions to the list of Architectural Conservation Areas.  Development of cultural heritage areas for amenity resources.	MCC - ongoing
<b>CH2 Avoid and minimise effects on historic environment features through sensitive design and consultation.</b>	Increase in consultation and engagement with statutory bodies.  Increase in architectural heritage impact assessments	No. of applications which are referred to the Conservation and Heritage Officers.	MCC - ongoing
<b>CH3 Support and enhance both tangible and intangible cultural heritage</b>	Increase in awareness of cultural heritage  Increase in use of Irish Language  Reverse island population trend	No. planning applications for restoration/re-use of vacant and derelict structures.  No of Irish Language speakers  No of Irish Language Impact assessment  Population of Islands	MCC – ongoing  CSO
<b>Landscape</b>			

<sup>15</sup> The monitoring for MA5 has been updated based on Uisce Éireann submission at draft plan stage.

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
<b>L1 Ensure no significant disruption of historic/cultural landscapes and features through objectives of the County Development Plan</b>	<p>. No significant visual impact from development.</p> <p>Ensure no significant disruption of high landscape values.</p>	<p>No. of developments permitted and their impacts on cultural/historic landscapes.</p> <p>No. of developments located within Scenic Route or no degradation of Coastal Areas</p> <p>No. of developments located within a designated scenic view in Co Mayo that disrupt views (based on the LCA).</p> <p>Development and application of framework in relation to the application of LCA and their contribution to SEA.</p>	<p>CCC – ongoing</p> <p>Heritage Council - ongoing</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland - ongoing</p> <p>GSI - ongoing</p> <p>NPWS - ongoing</p> <p>EPA SEA Unit in conjunction with CCC</p>
<b>L2 Promote and enhance landscape character at county and local scale through sensitive siting and design</b>	<p>Maintain and enhance landscape quality within the plan area by minimising visual impacts through appropriate design, assessment and siting.</p> <p>Number of applications referencing Rural Housing Guidelines</p> <p>Number of applications reflecting native tree /hedgerows and local stone treatments</p>	<p>No. of developments located within a high landscape area that disrupt views</p> <p>No of large-scale developments permitted with Visual Impact Assessment prepared</p> <p>Km of additional hedgerow /treelines planted</p>	<p>MCC - ongoing</p>

