



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo  
Mayo County Council



# STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CASTLEBAR 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



This report has been prepared by Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd 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.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of this SEA Environmental Report

This is the Environmental Report that has been prepared as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the draft Castlebar County Development 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 draft 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.

## 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.

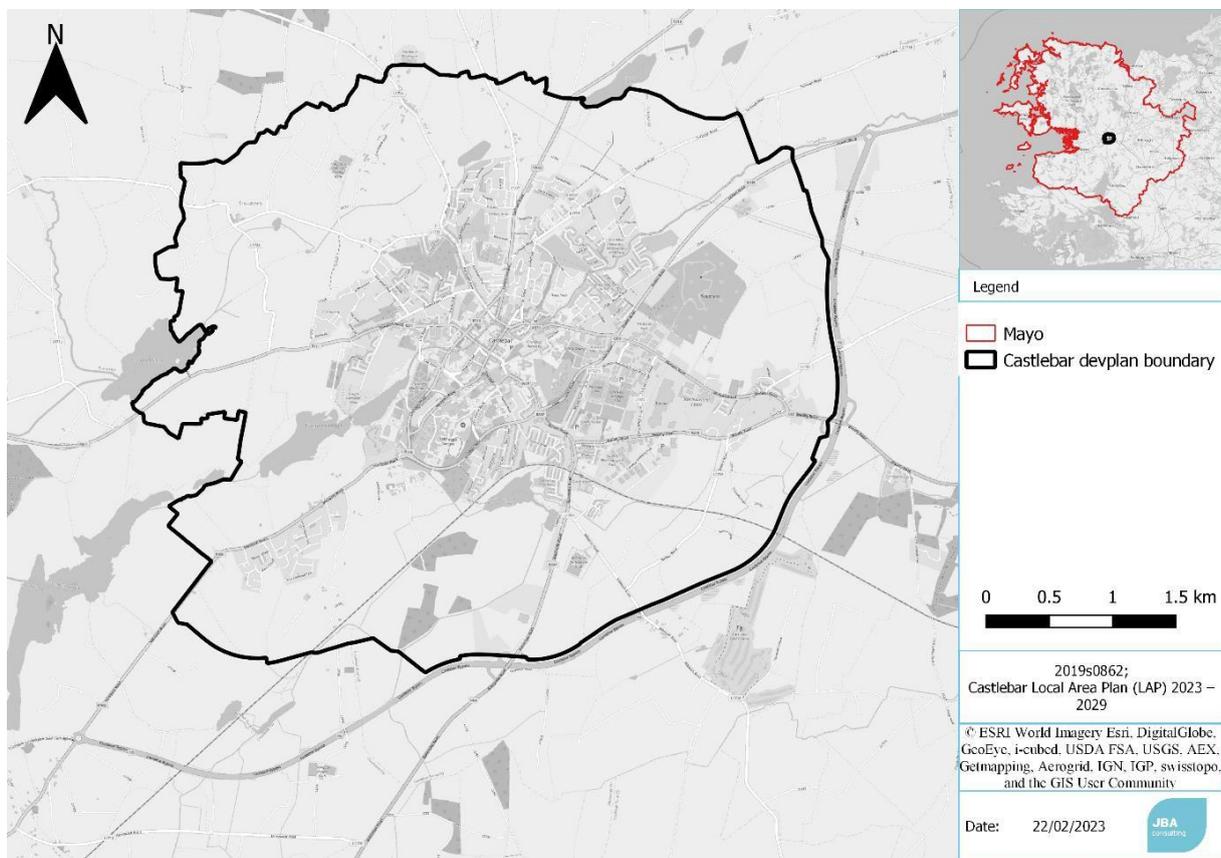
The RSES seeks to support and grow the role of Castlebar, in tandem with the town of Westport, as a driver of economic development for County Mayo and wider region. Castlebar is a Key Town in the RSES.

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 1-1 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 areas designated pursuant to the Birds Directive or Habitats Directive	Chapter Four Baseline Environment provides this information
(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
Geological Survey Ireland (GSI)	<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>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.</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. For areas underlain by limestone, please refer to the karst specific data layers (karst features, tracer test database; turlough water levels (gwlevel.ie). 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>  <b>GSI continues to populate and develop our national geotechnical database and viewer with site investigation data submitted voluntarily by industry.</b></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
Development Applications Unit, Dept. Housing, Local Government and Heritage	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 policies, 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, <i>“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”</i> .	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.</p> <p>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></p> <p>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>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EPA, 2016. <i>Scoping Guidance Document</i>.</li> <li>- EPA, 2015. <i>Integrating Climate Change into Strategic Environmental Assessment in Ireland - A Guidance Note</i></li> <li>- 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.</li> </ul> <p>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.</p> <p>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>○ 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>○ 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>Issues of potential concern</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>Appropriate Assessment including screening</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>Appropriate Assessment Guidance 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>Environmental Coordinator 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
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	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.
Population and Human Health	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.
Water	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
Land and Soil	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.
Air	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
Climate	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
Material Assets	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.
Cultural Heritage	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
Landscape	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

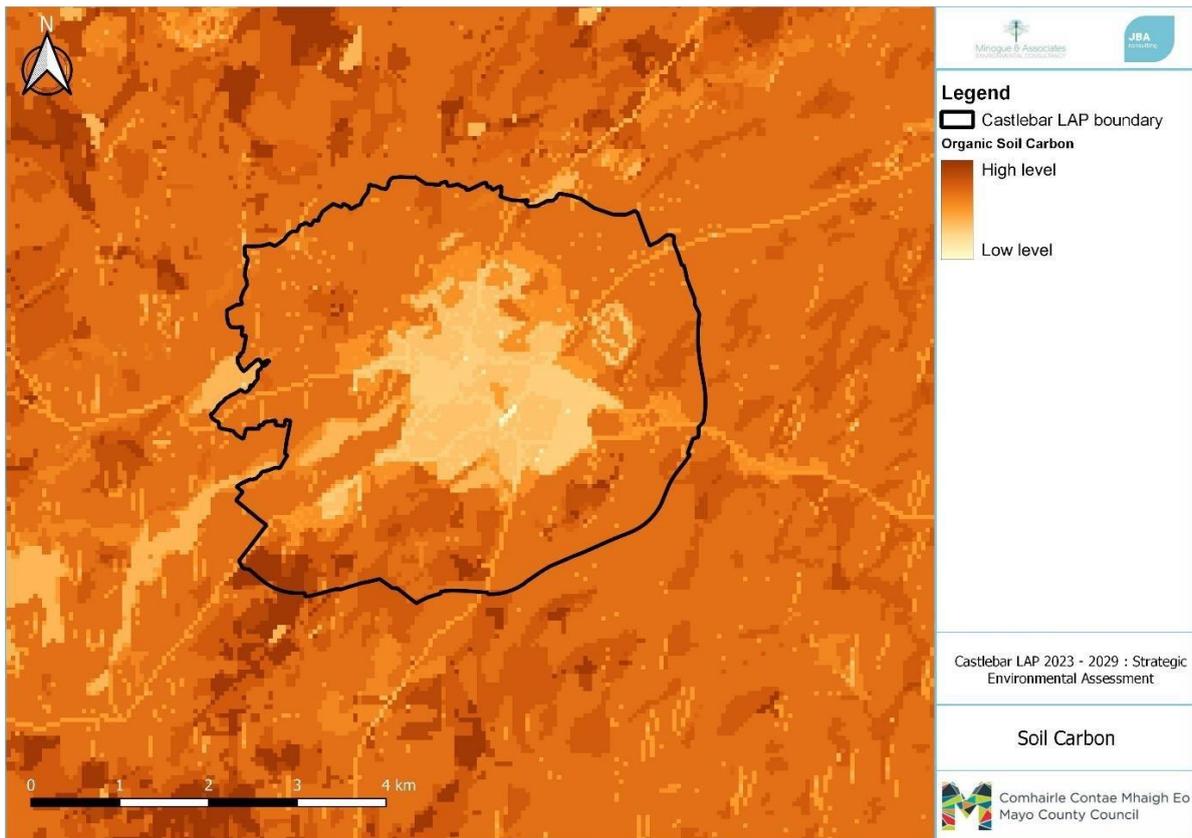
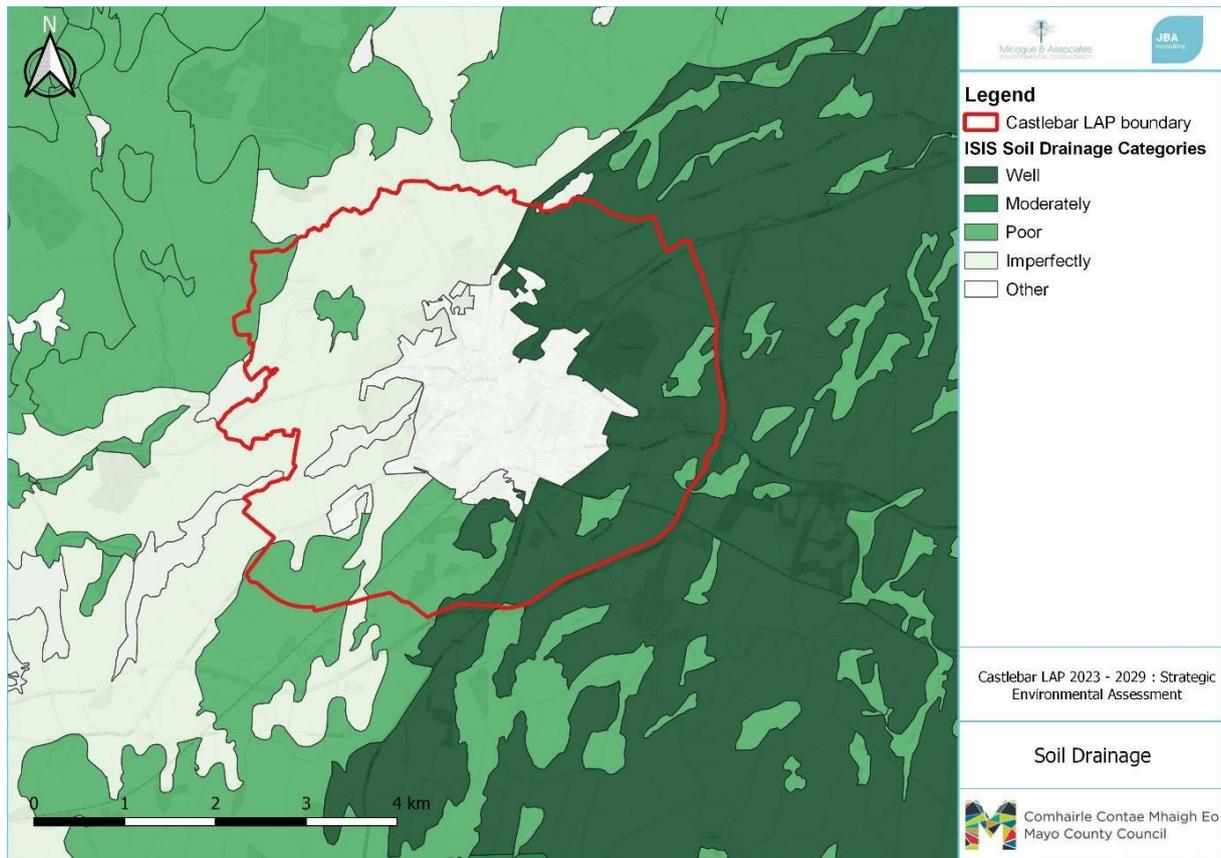


FIGURE 4-3 ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: SOIL DRAINAGE



#### 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

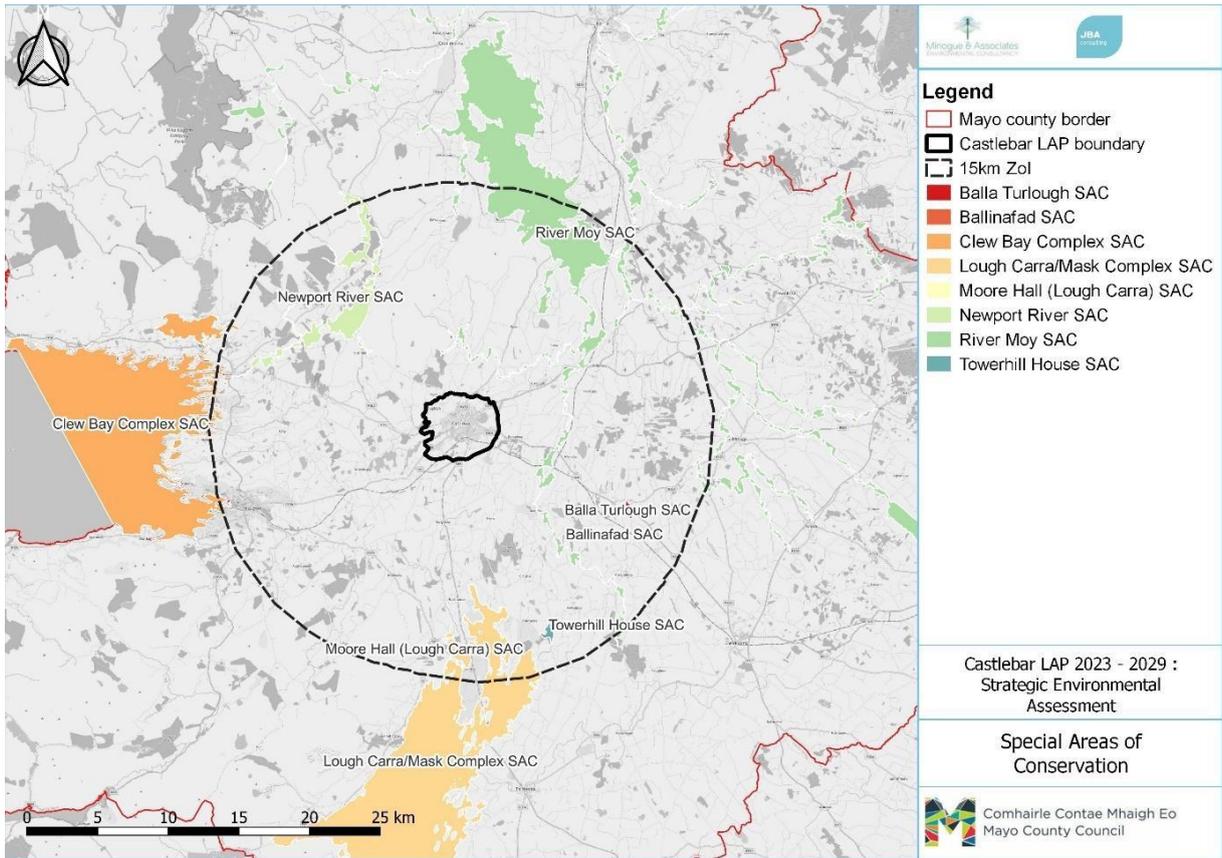


FIGURE 4-5 SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS WITHIN 15KM FROM THE PLAN AREA

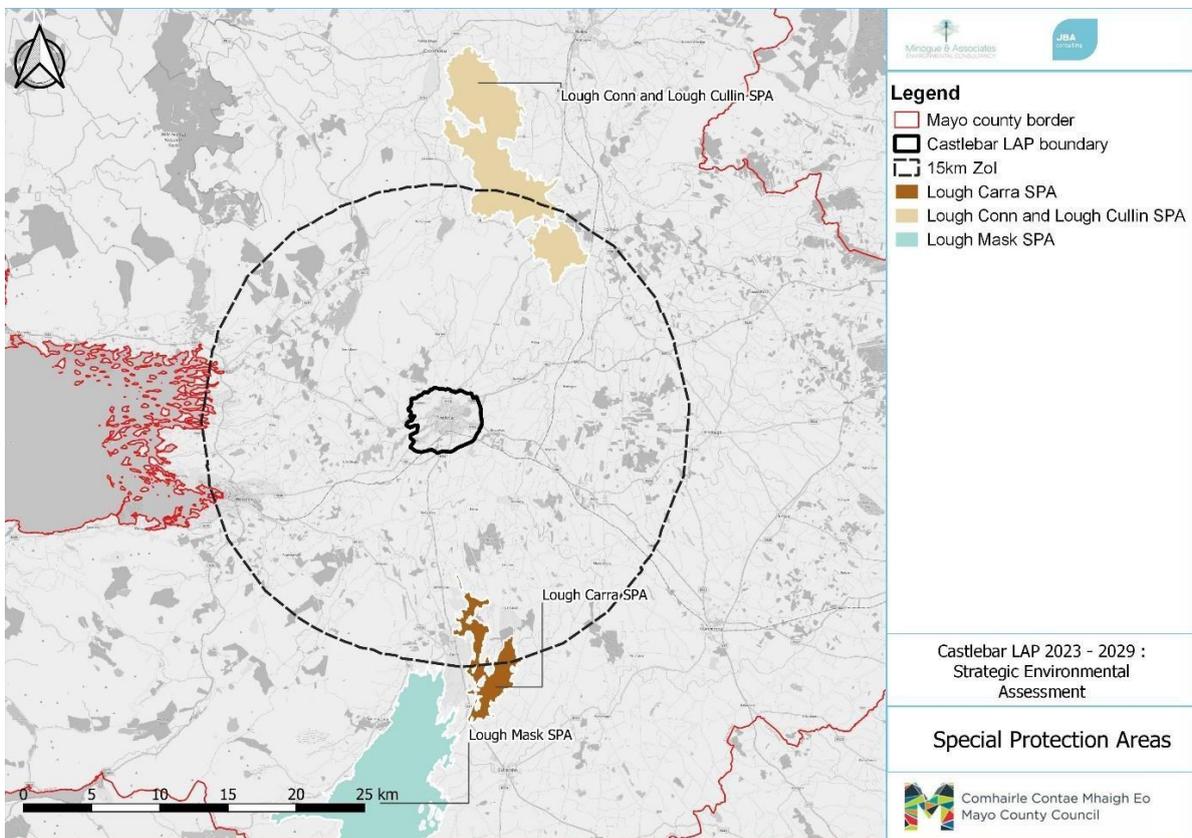


FIGURE 4-6 NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS IN THE PLAN AREA

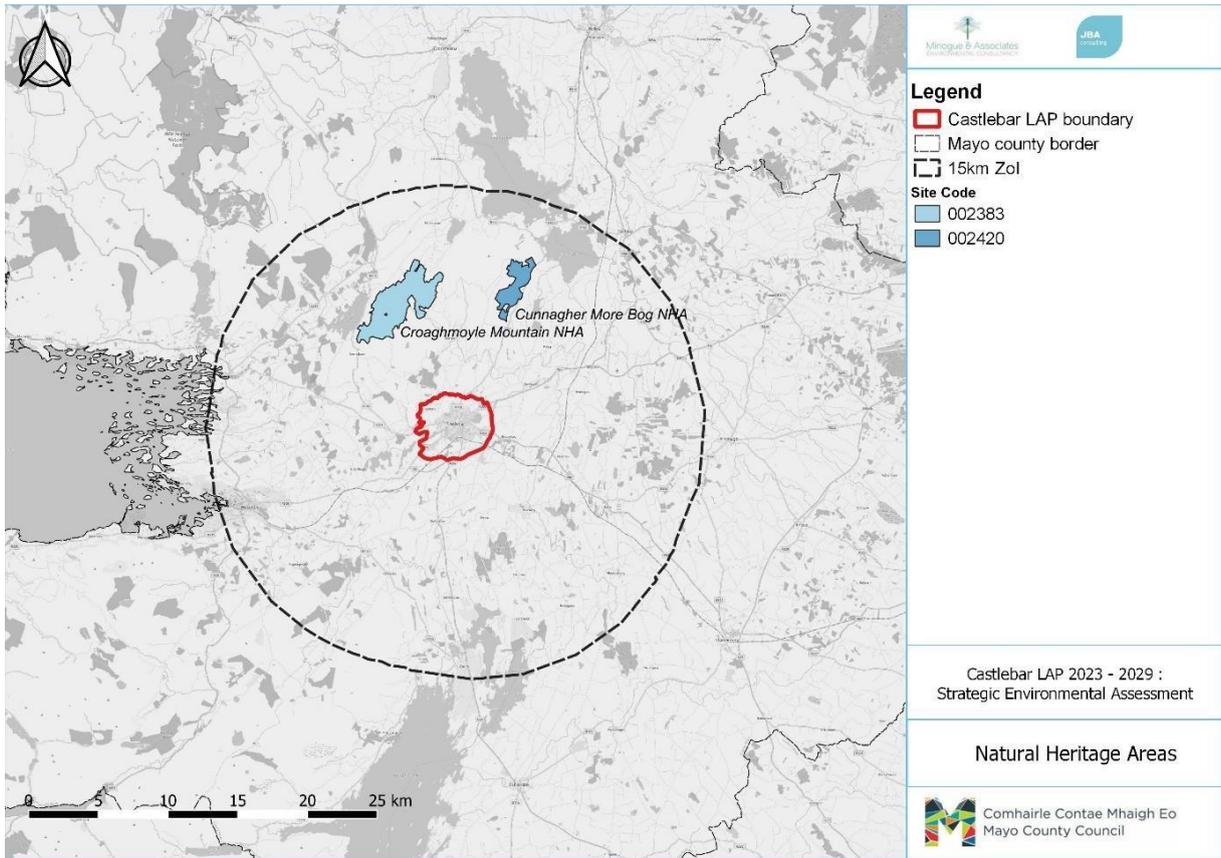
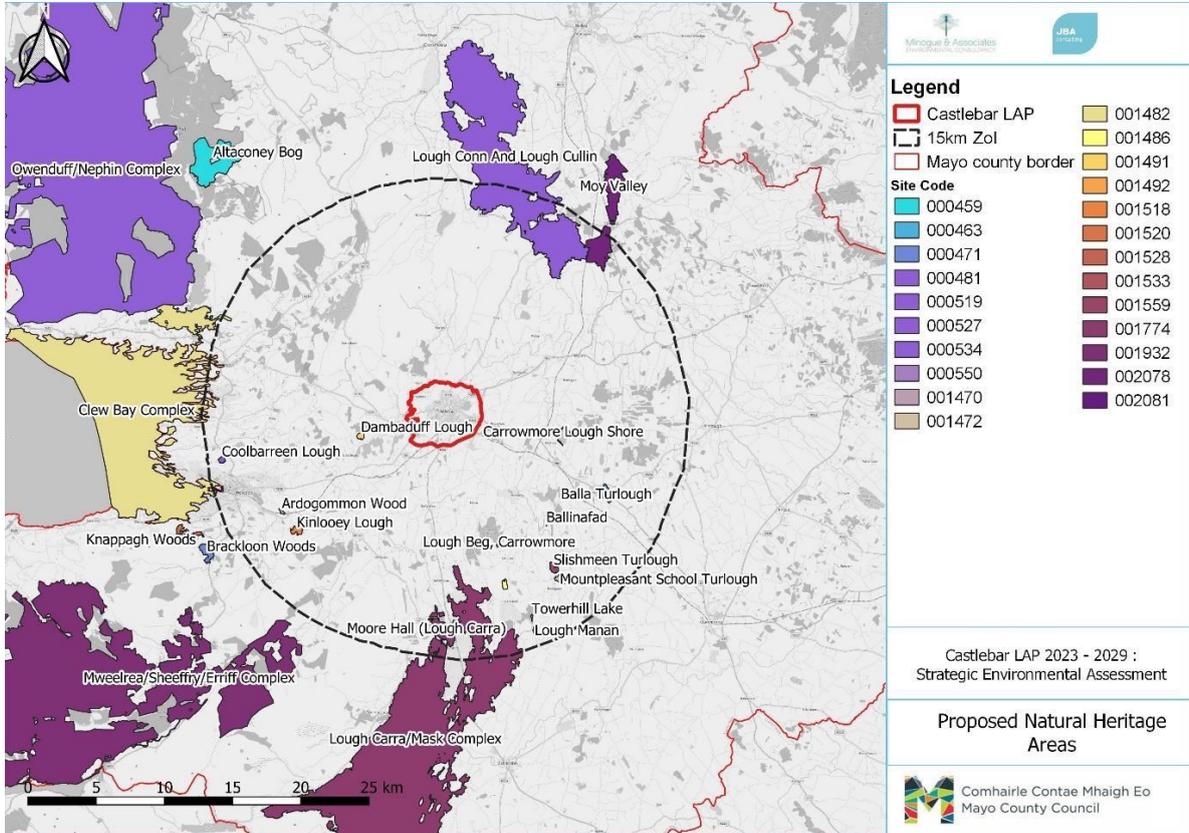


FIGURE 4-7 PROPOSED NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS IN THE PLAN AREA



#### 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.

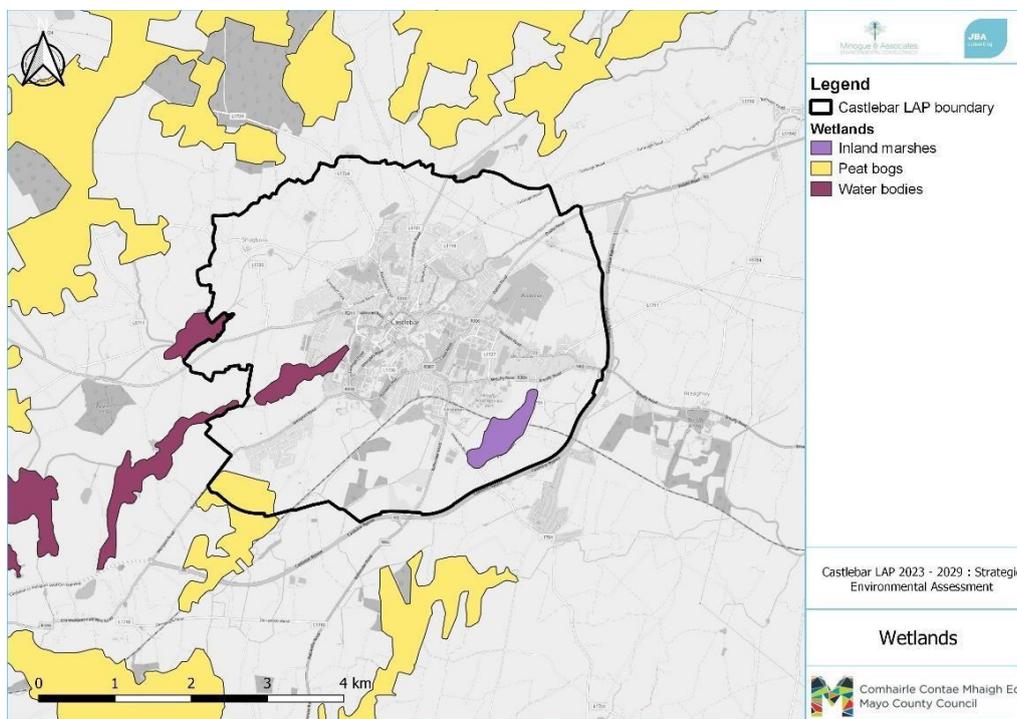
#### 4.4.5 Ecological Networks

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

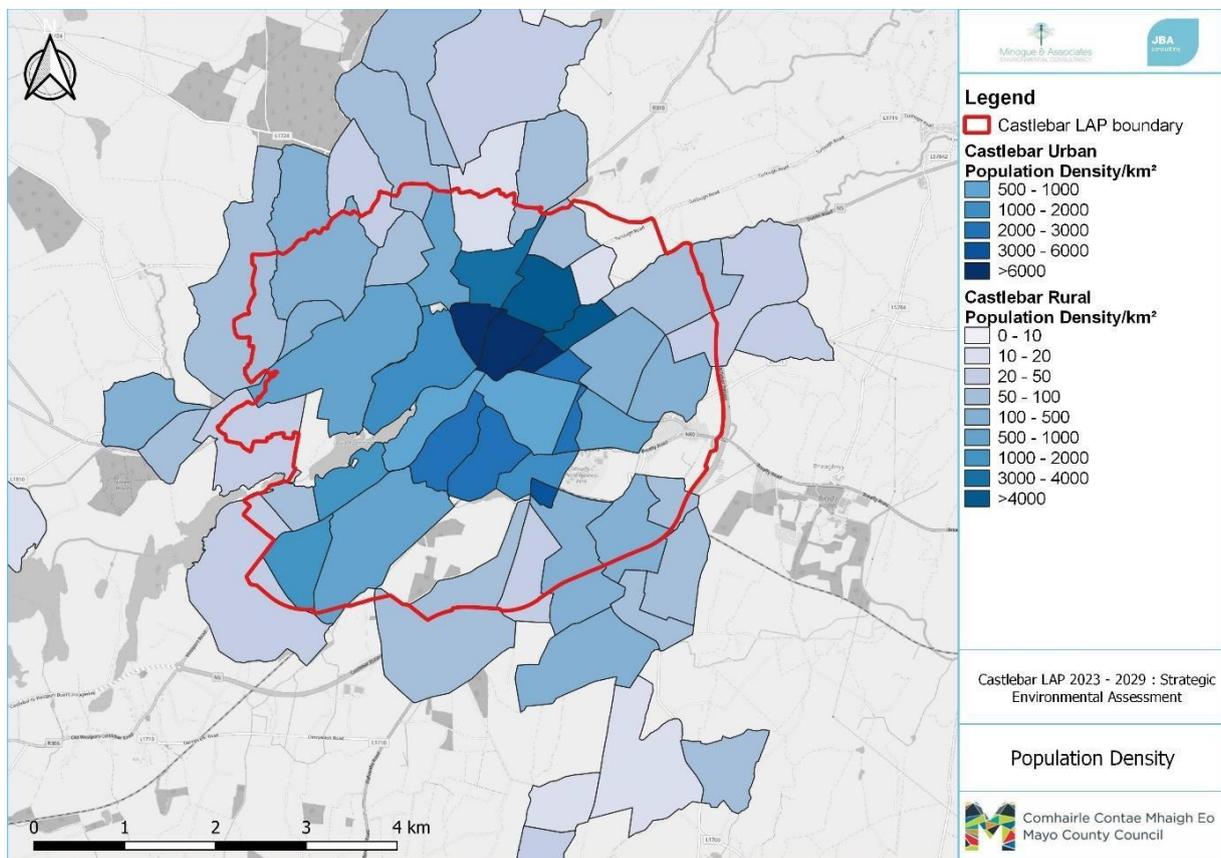
Castlebar is the largest town in Co. Mayo, with a population of 12,068 (2016) (See Figure 4.9 for population density in the plan area) and is the main administrative, public health, education and commercial centre in the county. The town provides over 9000 jobs and hosts a range of industrial/enterprise 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

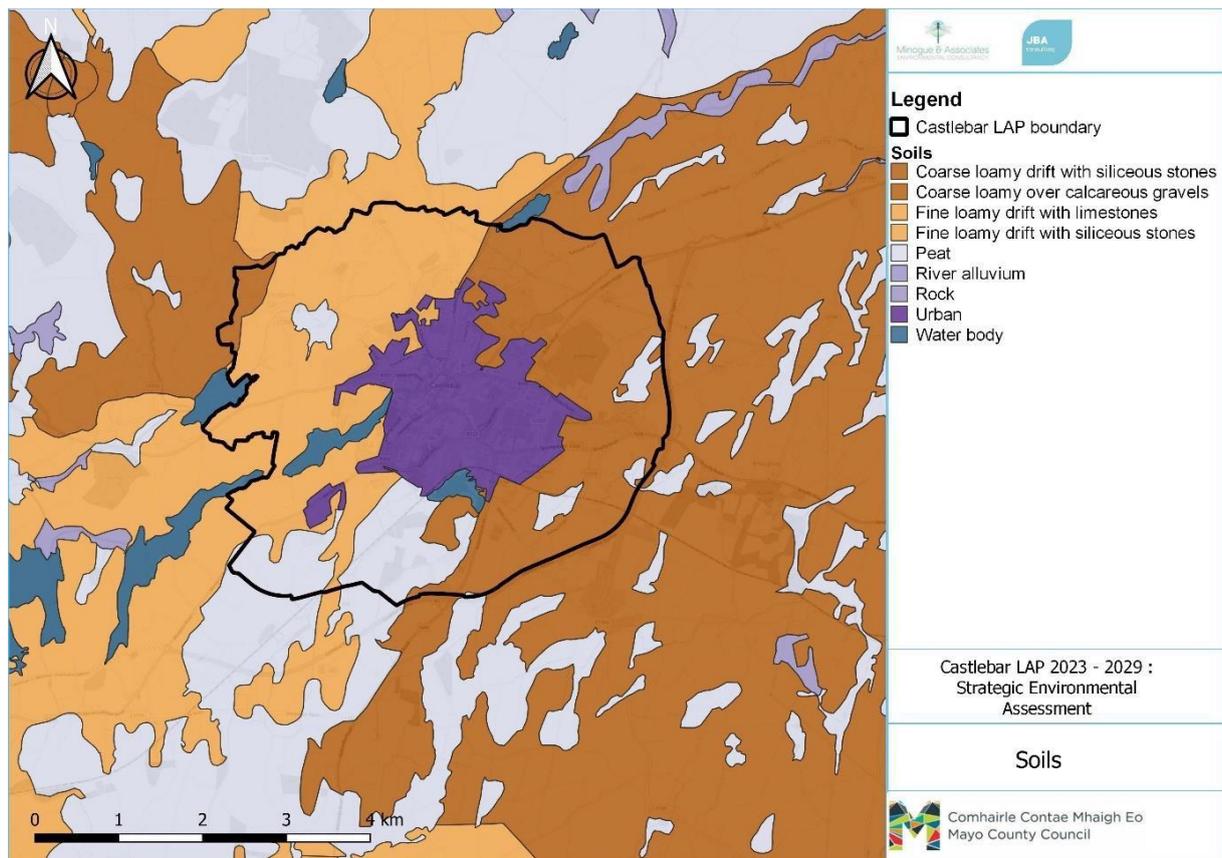
### 4.6.1 Soils

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 Visean limestone and calcareous shale, with palaeogene basic intrusive rocks, Visean 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:

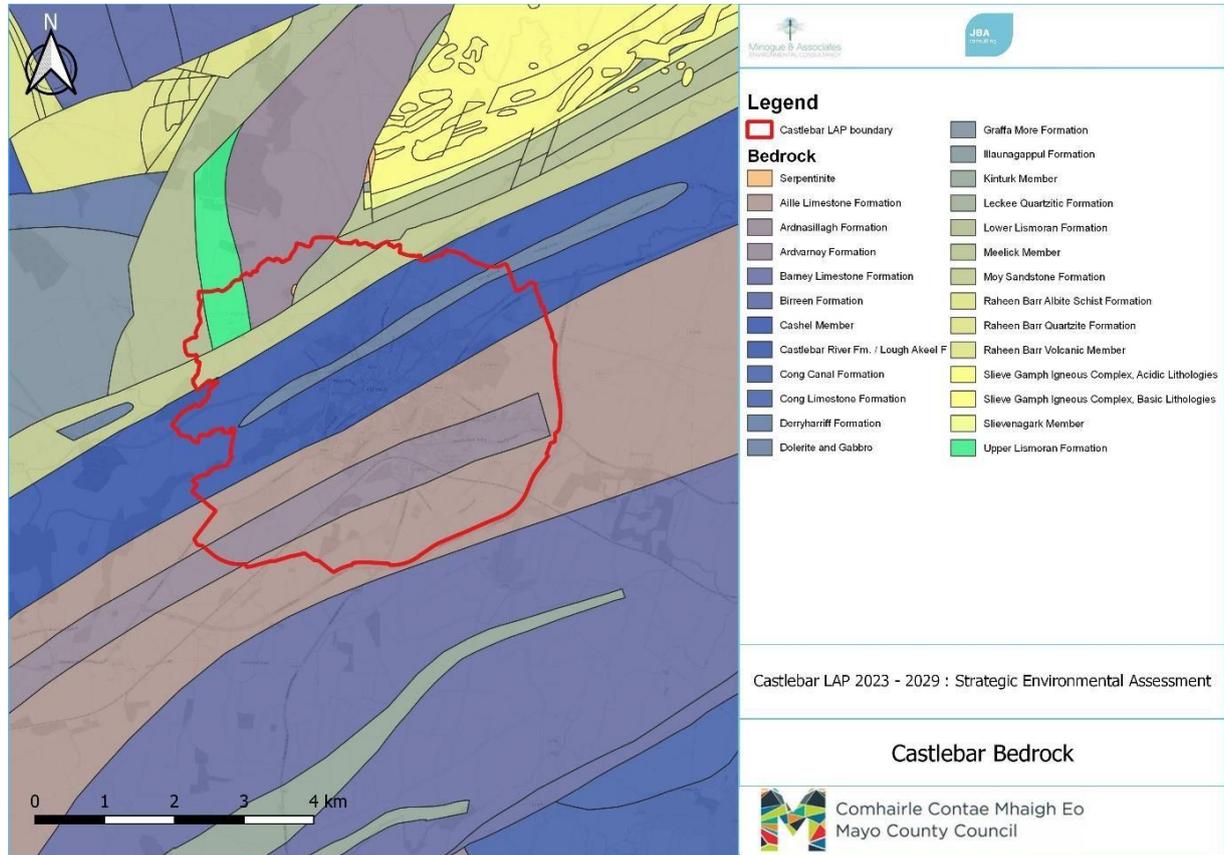
- Clew Bay, Co. Mayo (GR 95001, 289737), under IGH themes: IGH7 Quaternary, IGH13 Coastal Geomorphology. A west-facing embayment, some 12km wide from north to south, with numerous drumlin islands, spits and sand bars around the inner margins of the bay. The sequence forms one of the best examples of 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>.

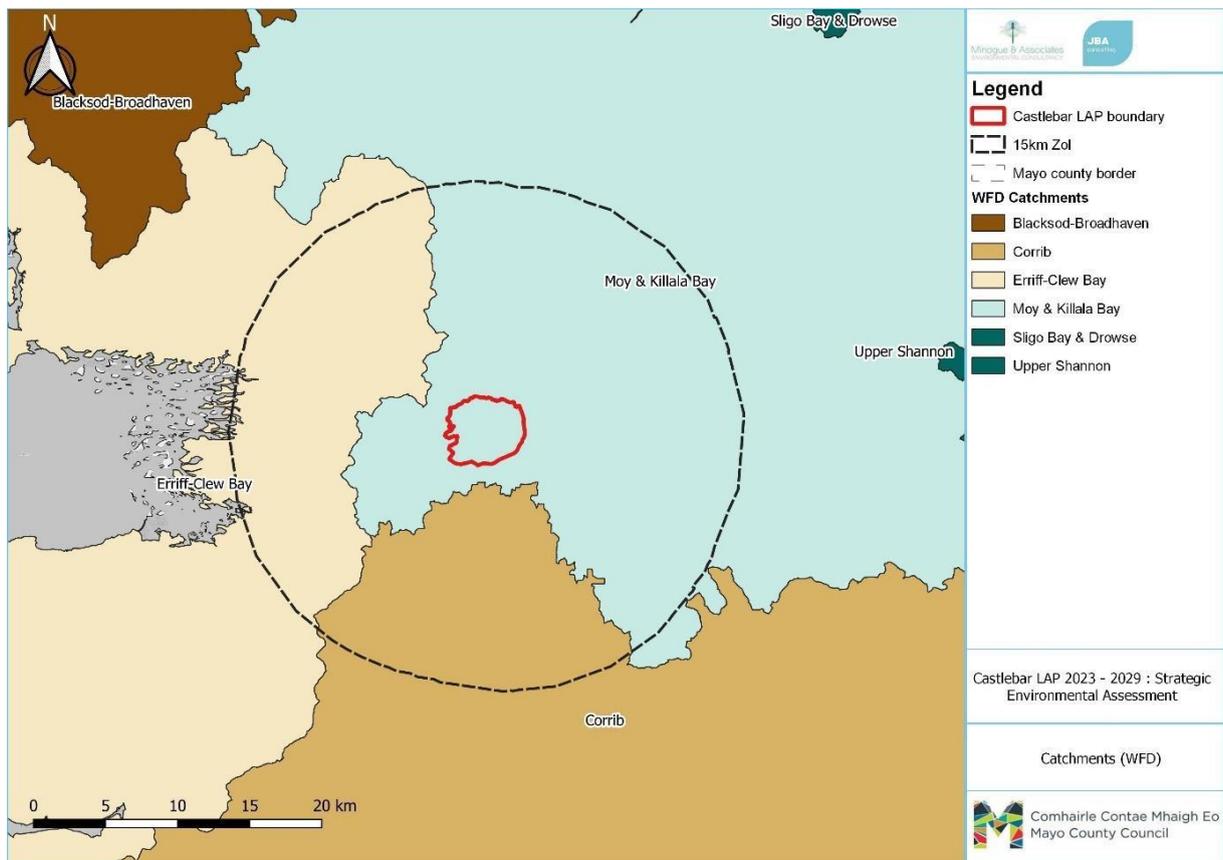
**Table 4-1 Profile of sub-catchment Castlebar\_SC\_010 (ID: 34\_22)**

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	Islandeady	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



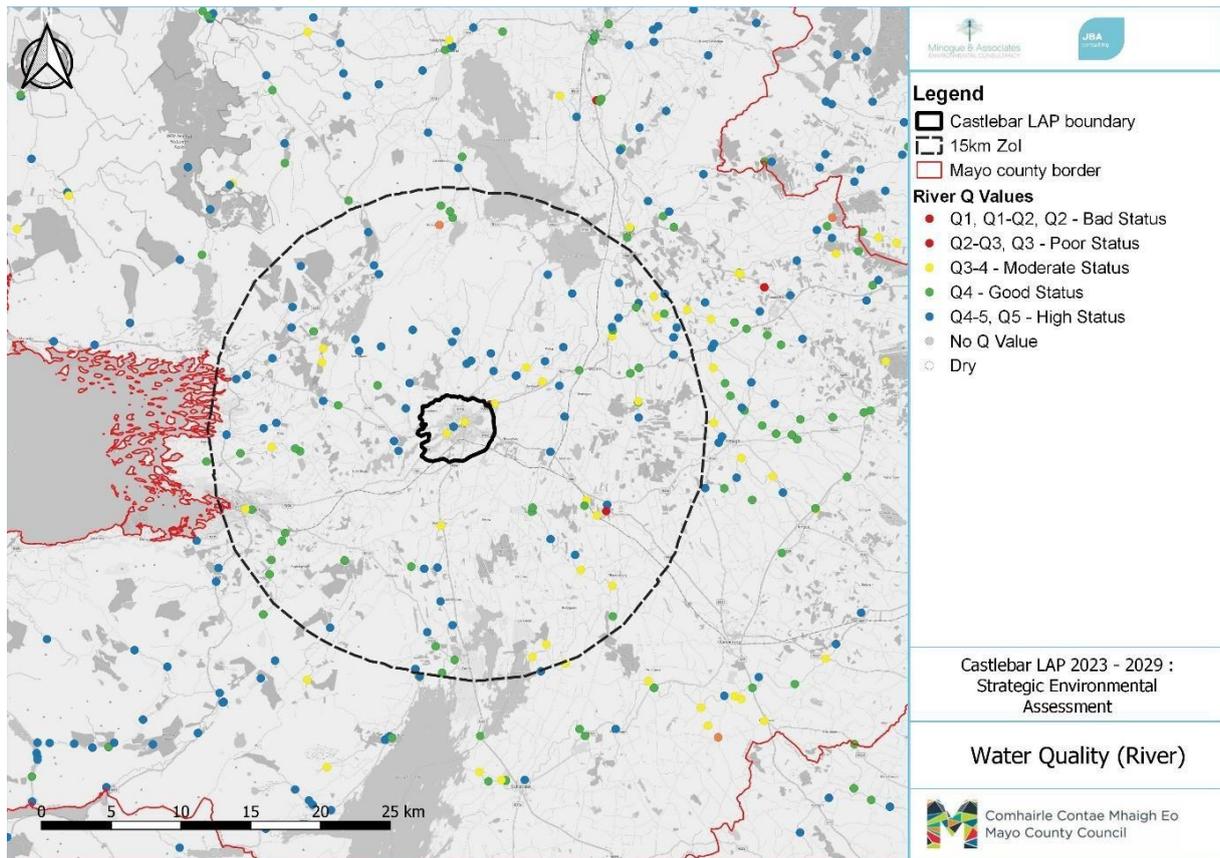
#### 4.7.2 Surface Water Bodies

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

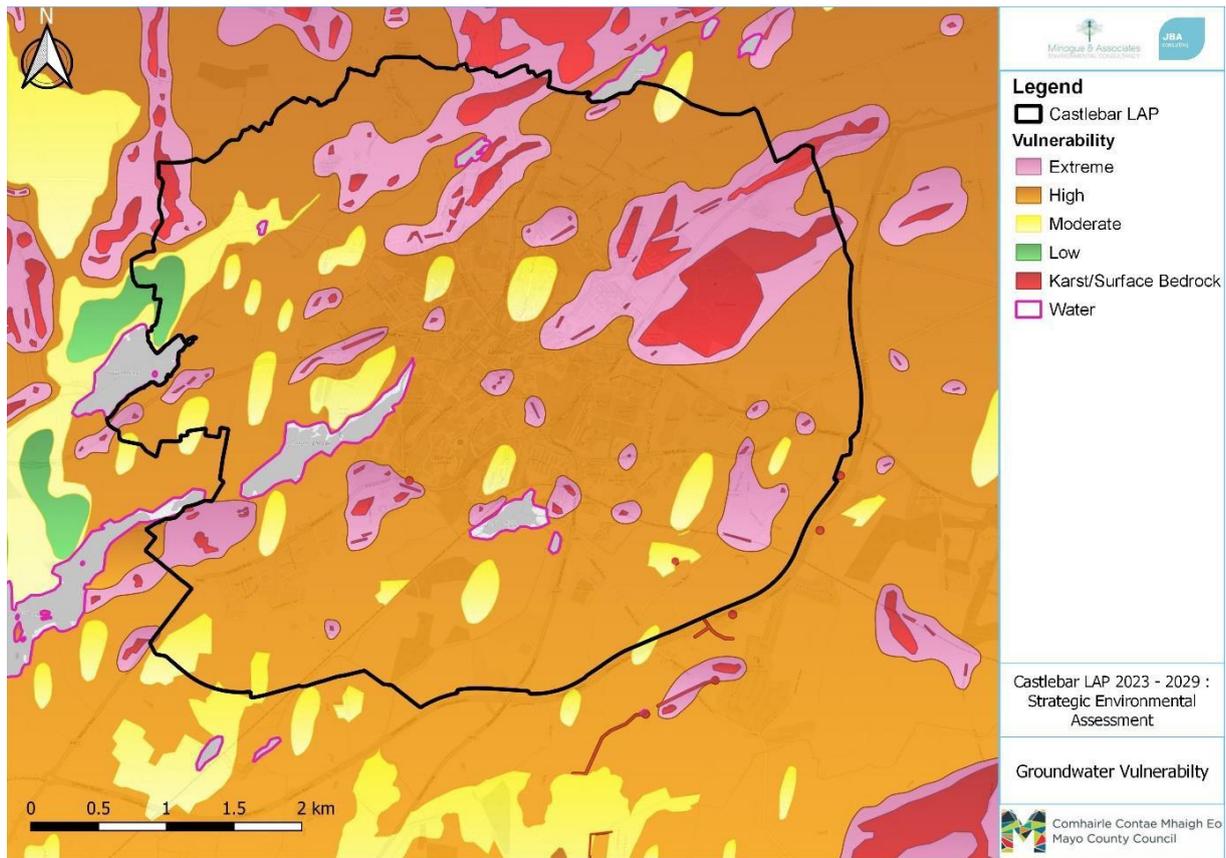
The quality of groundwater in the plan area is classified as good following a reliable assessment in accordance with Annex V of the WFD. In addition to this Directive and associated transposed regulations to protect and restore, wherever necessary, groundwater, additional legal instruments are also in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

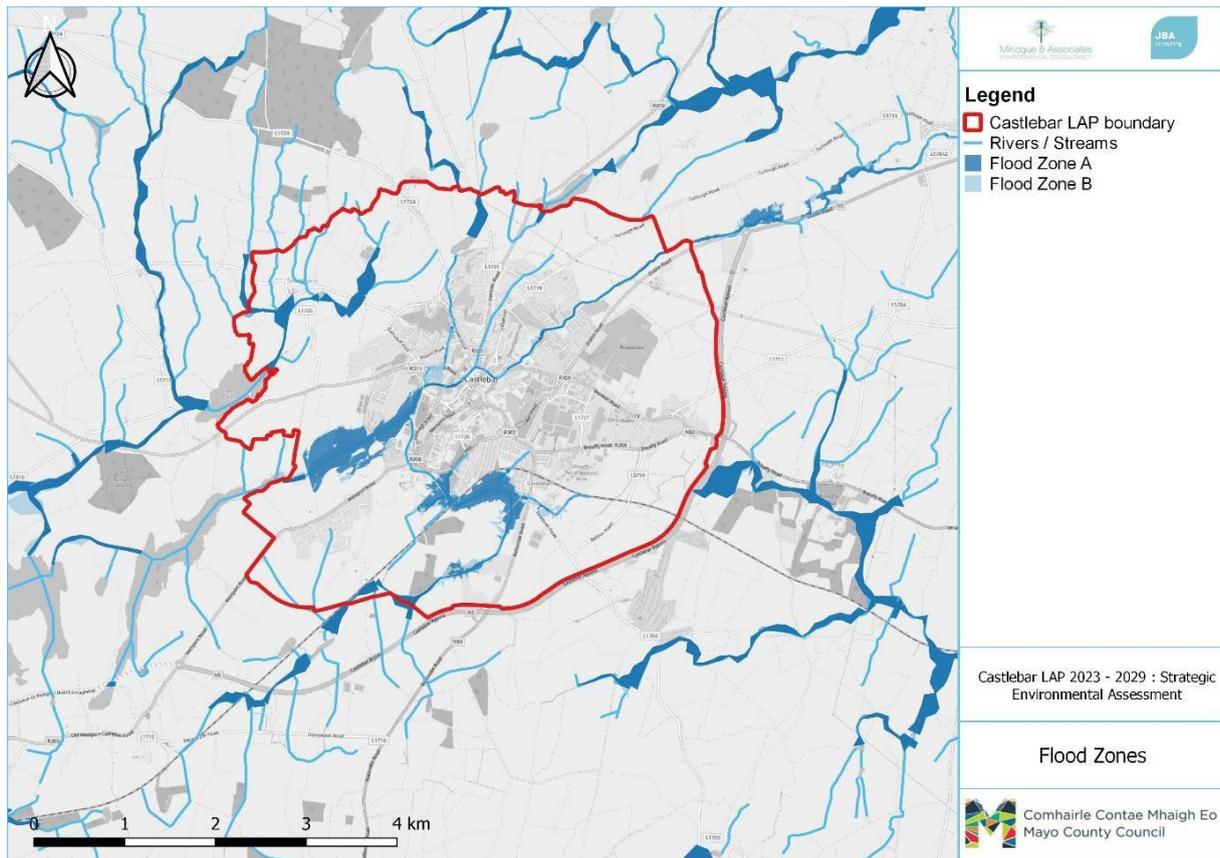


#### 4.7.4 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

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.

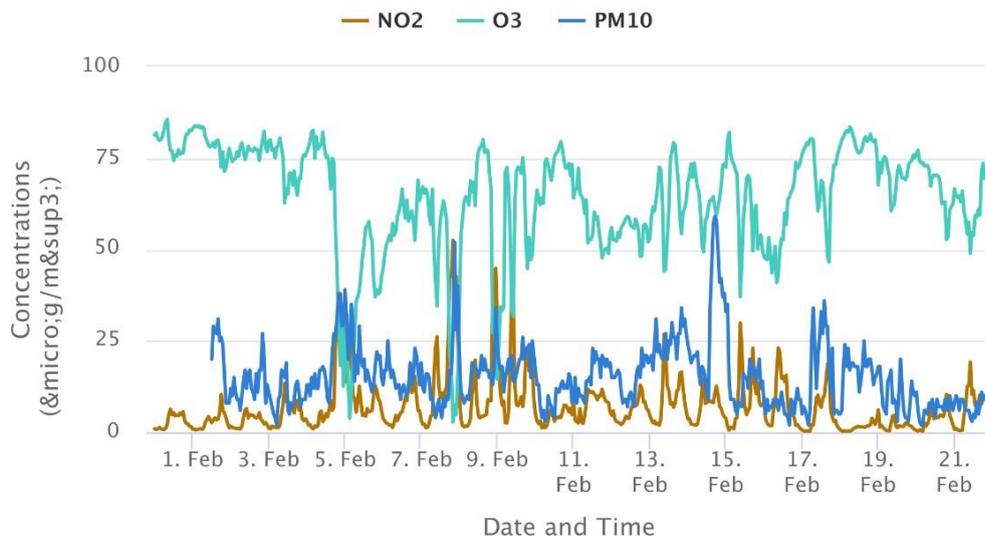
## 4.8 Air Quality and Climatic Factors

### 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
Sea Level Rise	<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>
Wind	<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>
Phenology	<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>
Precipitation	<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>
Surface Air Temperature	<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>
Hydrology	<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 audits 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

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>11</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)

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.mayo.ie/getmedia/54e093a8-493e-48d1-ba85-d2a899b50eac/Vol-4-Landscape-Appraisal-of-County-Mayo-08.pdf>

- 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 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

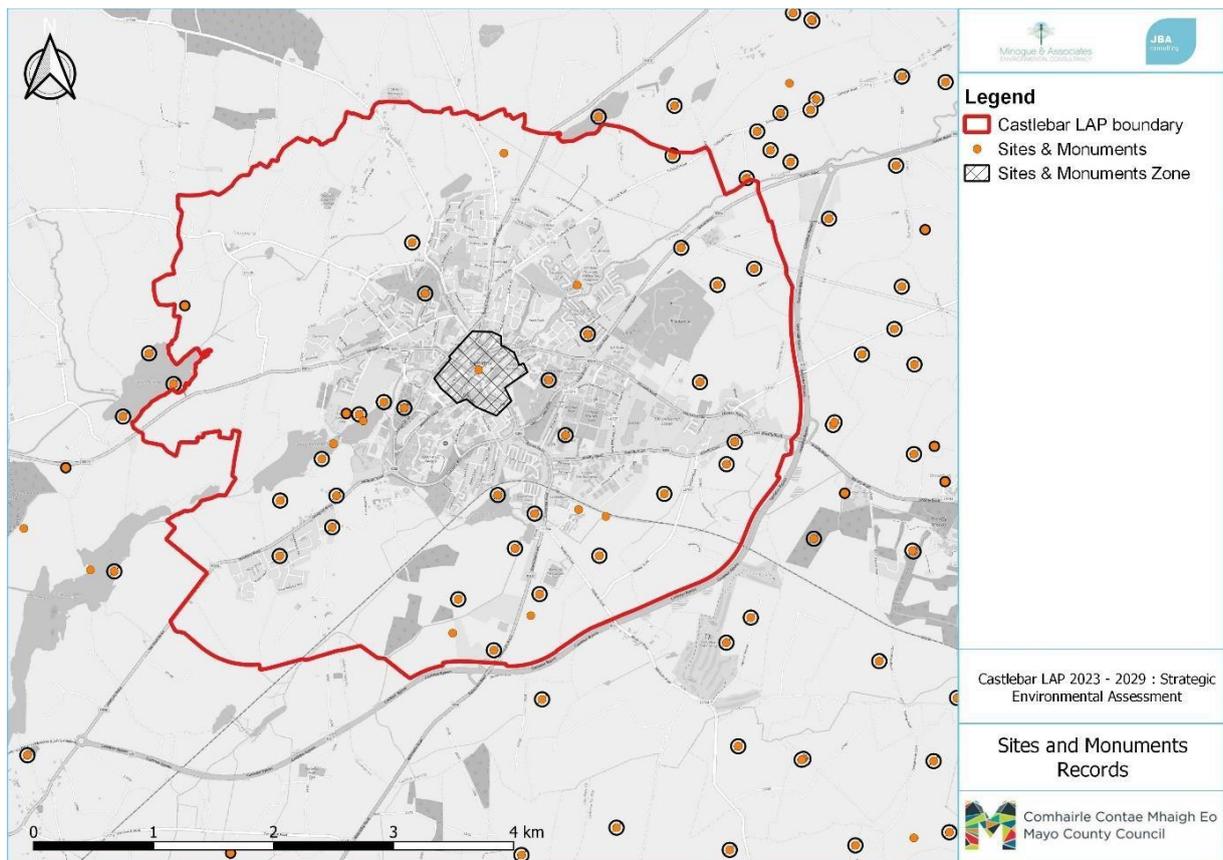
The key issues for landscape in Castlebar include the following:

- 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 &		
	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
Biodiversity Flora and Fauna	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
Population, Human Health	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.
Water	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
Soil and Geology	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
Material Assets	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.
Air Quality	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.
Cultural Heritage	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.
Landscape	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

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.
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>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</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>	
Population and Human health	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	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.

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 ObjectiveNEP1 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>	
Water	<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
Soil and Geology	<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>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
Material Assets	<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>
Air Quality	<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>	
Cultural Heritage	<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>
Landscape	<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
SEA Comment: Confirms existing land use.									
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.



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.



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.										

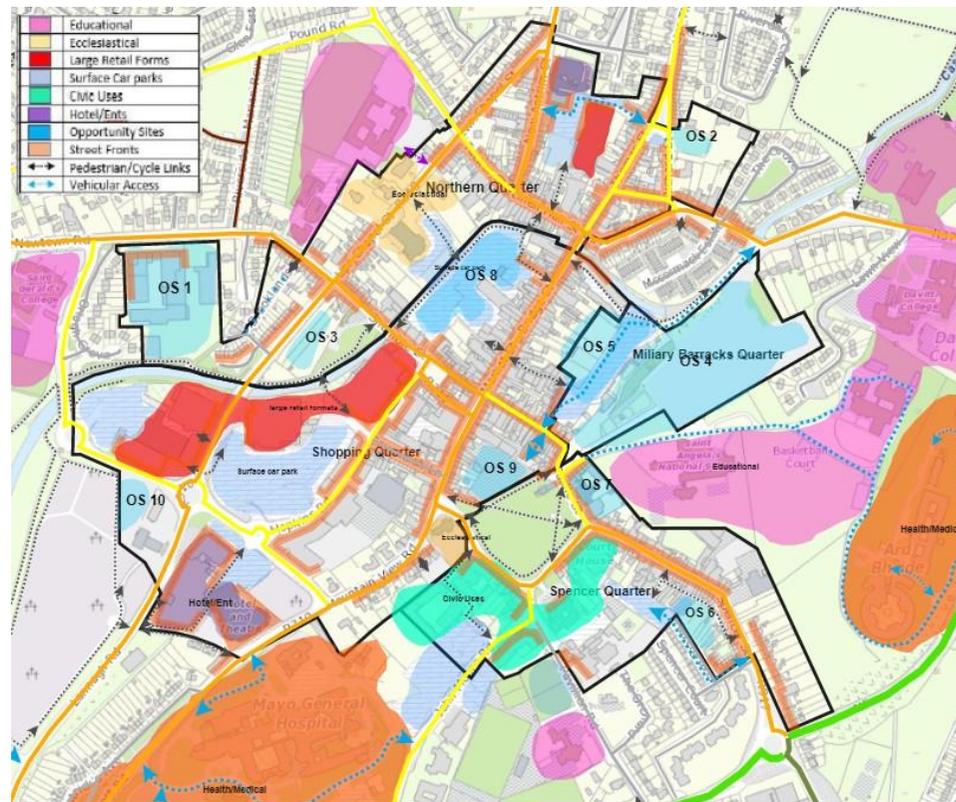
NIR: There are five areas designated as zones of infrastructure and utilities. Of these five zones, none are anticipated to have a negative impact on any of the Natura 2000 sites identified. There are five areas designated as zones of infrastructure and utilities. Of these sites, none are anticipated 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 10 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 Mitigation Measures

### 8.1 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

## 8.2 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>12</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>12</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>13</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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### 8.3 Existing Principal Environmental Protection measures in the draft Castlebar LAP 2023-2029 -

DSP 1	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).
DSP 2	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.
DSP 3	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.
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.
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.

<sup>13</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.

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, 2022-2028, in respect of wastewater systems.
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.
CAP 1 It is a Policy of the Council to:	
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:	
<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>	
TCP 3	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.
TCP 4	Actively encourage, support and facilitate environmental and public realm improvements in Castlebar to address environmental quality, urban design, safety, identity and traffic impact.

It is a Policy of the Council to:	
HSCP 1	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.
HSCP 2	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.
HSCP 3	Encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in Castlebar for residential accommodation.
It is a Policy of the Council to:	
MTP 1	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.
BEP 3	Protect the town centre by ensuring all new developments are compatible with the existing character and visual amenity of Castlebar.
BEP 4	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.
It is a Policy of the Council to:	
NEP 1	<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>
NEP 2	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.
It is the Policy of the Council to:	

IESP 1	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).
IESP 2	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.

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

New policy/objective for Development Strategy Chapter:	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.
CAO1	Ensure all development proposals shall have regard to the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019) AND THE ASSOCIATED SEA AND NIS ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS, 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.	<p>GOAL 3:• Increase the Resilience of Natural and Cultural Capital.</p> <p>OBJECTIVES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build awareness of Nature Based Adaptation Solutions and Green Infrastructure.</li> <li>2. Support bio-diversity for its intrinsic value within the natural environment and its importance in climate change adaptation.</li> <li>3. Develop a database of impacts of climate change on Mayo’s Natural Environment.</li> <li>4. Identify Cultural and Heritage Sites vulnerable to climate change and develop adaptation and management policies.</li> <li>5. Encourage adaptation in Agriculture and Local Food Supply</li> </ol>
NEP1	<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 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> <li>-</li> </ul>
NEP 3	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.
NEP4	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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, <del>subject to available resources.</del>
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## 8.5 Natura Impact Statement Mitigation Measures

### 8.5.1 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.

### 8.5.2 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 (EclA) 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 EcIA can help competent authorities understand ecological issues when determining applications for consent. Unlike EIA, EcIA 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.

### 8.5.3 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.

### 8.5.4 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.

## 9 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 will consist of an assessment of the 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
Biodiversity Flora and Fauna			
<p>BFF1 Conserve and enhance biodiversity at all levels</p>	<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>
<p>BFF2 – Avoid and minimise effects on nationally and</p>	<p>No loss of protected habitats and species during the lifetime of the Plan.</p>	<p>Designation of additional areas due to biodiversity and/or geological value.</p>	

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
internationally rare and threatened species and habitats through sensitive design and consultation, recognising ecological connectivity.	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.	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.	
BFF3 – Avoid and minimise habitat fragmentation and seek opportunities to improve habitat connectivity.	Submission of Ecological Impact Assessments for planning applications  Number of green and blue infrastructure measures implemented through Part 8 applications.  Ensure provision of riparian zones at project/site level.	Number of Ecological Impact Assessments with planning applications.  Number of Part 8 applications with green and blue infrastructure measures  No. of planning applications with sufficient inclusion of buffer zones where necessary and applicable.	
BFF4 – Ensure careful consideration of non-native invasive and alien species particularly as they relate to watercourses	Prevent the introduction of new invasive or alien species.  Control/manage new invasive species.  Control/manage/eradicate invasive species throughout the county.	No., type and location of invasive species identified.  No. of actions achieved under the Biodiversity Action Plan.  Increase/decrease in coverage of invasive species identified.  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>	

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.	
B5 - Promote green and blue infrastructure networks, including riparian zones and wildlife corridors.	<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>	
Population, Human Health			
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.	<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 CSO – every six years in line with census MCC - Annual  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
P2 To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from incompatible land uses/developments.	<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>			
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).	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
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.	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.	MCC EPA
W3– Reduce the impact of polluting substances to all waters and prevent pollution and	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.	MCC - Annual EPA – Annual

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.			
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.	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
W5—Protect flood plains and areas of flood risk from development through avoidance, mitigation and adaptation measures.	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 –
Soil and Geology			
SG1 To maximise the sustainable re-use of the existing built environment, derelict, disused and infill sites (brownfield sites), rather than greenfield sites	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
SG2 Conserve, protect and avoid loss of diversity and integrity of designated habitats, geological features, species or their sustaining resources in designated ecological sites.	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
Material Assets			
Air Quality and Climate			
AQ1 Recognise the ecosystems functions of habitats in and around the plan area and promote nature-based solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation.	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
AQ2 Minimise all forms of air pollution and maintain/improve ambient air quality.	Maintain ambient air quality through reduction of private vehicle usage.	Air quality indicators.	<CC - Annual  EPA - Annual
AQ3 Minimise emissions of greenhouse gases and contribute to a reduction and avoidance of human-induced global climate change.	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
AQ4 Reduce car dependency within the plan area by way of an integrated approach to sustainable urban transport.	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.
Material Assets – Waste			
MA1 Avoid and minimise waste generation	Reduction in the quantities of waste sent to landfill.	Quantity of household waste sent to landfill.	MCC Environment Section
MA2 Maximise reuse of material resources and use of recycled materials	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
Material Assets -energy			
MA3 Minimise energy consumption and encourage use of renewable energy	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>
Material Assets -Transport			
MA4 Promote sustainable transport patterns and modes	<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>
Material Assets – Waste Water			
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.	Upgrade existing wastewater treatment plant infrastructure identified within the plan as being insufficient, based on existing and forecasted population demands to meet EU requirements.	Upgraded Waste Water Treatment Plants within the plan area.	<p>Irish Water -Achievement of Water Services Strategic Plan objectives.</p> <p>MCC – granting of permission conditioned based on a future WWTP upgrade.</p>

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
			MCC – refusal of permission as no upgrade to WWTP due to take place.
Cultural Heritage			
CH1 Conserve, preserve and record architectural and archaeological heritage	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
CH2 Avoid and minimise effects on historic environment features through sensitive design and consultation.	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
CH3 Support and enhance both tangible and intangible cultural heritage	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
Landscape			

Strategic Environmental Objective	Target	Indicator/Data Sources	Source/Responsibility/Frequency
L1 Ensure no significant disruption of historic/cultural landscapes and features through objectives of the County Development Plan	<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>
L2 Promote and enhance landscape character at county and local scale through sensitive siting and design	<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>







		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
DSO6	Protect, enhance and connect areas of natural heritage, green and blue infrastructure and open space for the benefits of quality of life and biodiversity, capitalising on climate change adaptation and flood risk measures.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
DSO7	Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied to all new developments.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
DSO8	Guide the future development of Castlebar in accordance the Town Centre First policy approach seeking to bring people and appropriate business/services back into the heart of Castlebar through place-making, good quality urban design, and sustainable mobility and control of development in other locations which might undermine this objective.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
DSO9	Ensure the future development of Castlebar supports the just transition to a low carbon society and economy, implementing national policy to reduce gas emissions, improve environmental quality and contribute to national targets for climate change.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
DSO10	Monitor the scale, type, tenure and location of constructed and permitted developments in Castlebar during the lifetime of the Plan and apply appropriate development management standards to ensure compliance with the Core Strategy and the County Development Plan to achieve the delivery of strategic plan led and coordinated balanced development within the town.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕

**SEA Comments:**

All of the Development Strategy objectives are consistent with the SEOs, and reflective of National Planning Framework and RSES.

DSO1 delivering at least 30% of all new homes in Castlebar within the existing built-up footprint of the town will have a positive effect on PHH. There is potential conflict with the other SEOs which is likely to be mitigated at project level.

The NIR screened in this objective. The rationale for screening in this objective were as follows:

I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone

L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination

The NIR identified potential impacts arising from 'construction and operation'.

The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.

DSO2 will have positive effects on PHH and SG with regard to the existing built environment, derelict, disused and infill sites rather than greenfield sites. DSO3, DSO4 and DSO8 will improve PHH quality of life and AQ through economic developments and improved modes of transport. Potential conflicts with other SEOs can be mitigated once these sustainable objectives are subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the MCDP 2022-2028 and strict adherence to all environmental assessment requirements.

DSO5 will have positive effects on all of the SEOs particularly CH, PHH and L. It is very important that BFF is also respected with new development and any potential linkages are maintained and enhanced as noted in DSO6. DSO7 and DSO10 while having positive effects on PHH must ensure compliance with the policies and development management





		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
CAP5	Support the designated and any future Decarbonising Zone (DZ) in Castlebar and associated implementation plan promoting measures to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and improve general environmental conditions in this area.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
CAP6	Support Energy Master Plans prepared by Sustainable Energy Communities in Castlebar, in particular, where appropriate, to support the recommendations of the Castlebar Energy Master Plan.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
CAP7	To support and encourage the development of small scale wind renewable facilities / micro- renewable energy production.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↑	↕	↕	↑	↕
CAP8	Promote and encourage positive community and/or co-operative led climate action initiatives and projects in Castlebar that seek to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency, enhance green infrastructure and encourage awareness on climate change issues.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
CAP9	Promote the use of district heating systems in new residential and commercial developments where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment, landscape, biodiversity or local amenities.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
CAP10	Support the development of sustainable low-carbon climate resilient communities and encourage a climate adaptation and mitigation approach to developments which will enable regeneration.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
CAP11	Encourage innovation and facilitate the development of pilot schemes in Castlebar that support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑

**SEA Comments:**

All of the Climate Action policies will have a positive effect on all of the SEOs as they unanimously promote and support development which are adaptive and resilient to climate change for generations. Policies summaries are:

CAP1 mitigates against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, ensuring development proposals take into account and demonstrate the promotion of sustainable patterns of development, energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, alternative waste facilities to landfill, the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste), limiting/mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, and working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems/Nature Based Solutions.

CAP2 promotes/support sustainable design principles for new buildings/ services/site, including green roofs and walls, efficient use of natural resources, minimise pollution by reducing surface water runoff, reduce flood risk and risks from temperature/weather extremes, and promoting and protecting biodiversity and green infrastructure.

CAP3 promotes low carbon development within the County including Castlebar to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to allow development proposals to meet the highest feasible environmental standards during construction and occupation. Parameters range from building design to energy efficiency.

CAP4 supports a successful transition to a circular economy where waste and resources are minimised in accordance with emerging legislation and national strategy including the Circular Economy Programme 2021-2027, as amended or superseded.



		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
	use of blue green infrastructure as a mechanism for surface water management and improving public realm.									
CAO4	Support high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro-fitting of appropriate energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock, and to actively retrofit Mayo County Council's housing stock to a B2 Building Energy Rating (BER) in line with the Government's Housing for All Plan retrofit targets for 2030.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
<p>SEA Comments:</p> <p>All of the Climate Action Objectives will have a positive effect on all of the SEOs as they unanimously promote and support development which are adaptive and resilient to climate change for generations. Policies summaries are:</p> <p>CAO1 ensures all developments will align with the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019) and other adaptation, mitigation or climate action strategies. It is important that the associated SEA, NIS and any other relevant environmental assessments are consulted and included in this objective. ...' AND THE ASSOCIATED SEA AND NIS ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS'</p> <p>CAO 2 ensures that the Draft CLAP will be consistent with the approach to climate action recommended in the revised Local Area Plan Guidelines when adopted or any other relevant guidelines.</p> <p>The NIR screened in this objective. The rationale for screening in this objective were as follows:</p> <p>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</p> <p>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts arising from 'construction and operation arising from alterations to existing plans'.</p> <p>The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.</p> <p>CAO3 promotes smart climate change use and carbon off-setting solutions in new developments. In large industrial, commercial or newly constructed public buildings renewable technologies design will be encouraged subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria, which included environmental assessments criteria.</p> <p>CAO4 supports high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy sources in existing buildings. Mayo County Council will actively retrofit their housing stock to a B2 Building Energy Rating (BER) in line with the Government's Housing for All Plan retrofit targets for 2030.</p> <p>As with the policies above while all of these objectives fully support and encourage adaptation/mitigation/resilience to climate change and they will all have positive effects long term, it is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These objectives must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2022-2028 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. Policies such as SO 9 will apply as appropriate to provide sufficient environmental assessment at project stage. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level.</p>										
Chapter 4 Town Centre and Regeneration Strategy – Town Centre Policy										
TCP1	Ensure that new development in the town centre and in particular the opportunity areas comprise the highest of qualitative and design standards, complimenting the existing historical built fabric, or natural heritage, sustaining Castlebar as a town in which to live, work, invest in and do business.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
TCP2	Seek to develop and improve areas within the town that are in need of regeneration, renewal and redevelopment. The Council will seek to apply, where appropriate, the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, Derelict Sites Act, and use Compulsory Purchase Orders and other active land management instruments, as appropriate, to facilitate regeneration, housing supply, employment opportunities and community facilities.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
TCP3	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.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
TCP4	Actively encourage, support and facilitate environmental and public realm improvements in Castlebar to address environmental quality, urban design, safety, identity and traffic impact.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑
TCP5	Support the development of the further public realm projects in Castlebar that will enhance the aesthetics of the town's built and natural character and improve the overall ambience and visitor experience of the town.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕
TCP6	Embed an age-friendly approach to the design of the public realm.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕
TCP7	Support and encourage the principle of healthy place-making in Castlebar.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕	↕

SEA Comments:

All of the Town Centre policies will have an overall positive effect on all of the SEOs on reviving the town centre once subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the MCDP 2022-2028, and to all environmental assessment requirements.

TCP1 while focusing on new town centre development particularly opportunity areas, will complement the existing historical built fabric, or natural heritage, thus having a positive effect on PHH, L and CH. The NIR screened in this objective. The rationale for screening in this objective were as follows:

I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone

L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination

The NIR identified potential impacts arising from 'operational disturbance, discharge'.

TCP2 will regeneration, renewal and redevelopment for housing, employment and community facilities which will benefit PHH and SG by focusing on brownfield as opposed to greenfield sites. The NIR screened in this objective. The rationale for screening in this objective were as follows:

I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone

L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination

The NIR identified potential impacts that 'may result in increased development and operational disturbance'.

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.</p>										
<p>TCP3 will positively effect CH and L by protecting Castlebar’s visual character, built and cultural heritage giving the local population and visitors an enhanced quality of life through improvements to the town’s ambience and vitality. TCP 4 and TCP5 will add to this positive PHH experience by focusing on public realm environmental quality, urban design, safety, and traffic impact, and projects that will enhance the aesthetics of the town’s built and natural character and visitor ambience.</p> <p>TCP 6 embeds age-friendly design which will have a very positive effect for PHH. However, this will occur at project level and must integrate all environmental requirements to ensure all SEOs are protected. TCP 7’s support and encourage of the place-making in Castlebar will benefit PHH and CH but like TCP will require the integration of environmental considerations at local level. Ideally, an integrate approach from the beginning would ensure all SEOs were equally protected which positively developing Castlebar Town.</p> <p>All of the Town Centre Policies provide positive long-term effects on population and human health, soil and geology (through promoting reuse), landscape/townscape, cultural heritage (regenerate or reuse existing building) and material assets. Regeneration/Reuse of existing buildings contributes to cultural heritage by preserving, restoring and enhancing built heritage. It also enhances streetscapes with indirect long term positive effects on MA. All of these policies will rejuvenate the town centre, integrate disused building and areas back into a more vibrant and safer town, while also taking pressures off adjoin lands for continued and sprawling development(s) particularly in greenfield situations. Promotion of development in the Town Centre will complement and support the Town Centre by improving the connectivity within the centre, enhance public realms and upgrade the fabric of the streetscape. Town Centre viability and support for appropriate uses, and design features will collectively lead to positive long-term effects.</p> <p>While all of these policies fully support and encourage the town centre and regeneration and they will all have positive effects long term, it is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These policies must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2022-2028 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. Policies such as SO 9 will apply as appropriate to provide sufficient environmental assessment at project stage. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level.</p>										
Chapter 4 Town Centre and Regeneration Strategy – Town Centre Objective										
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,	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
	<p>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.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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.</p>									
TCO4	Work with landowners and other stakeholders in the redevelopment of the identified 'opportunity sites' for appropriate town centre uses over the lifetime of the Plan.	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
TCO5	Work in partnership with community groups in the development of regeneration initiatives and public realm enhancement projects and to seek funding for projects as opportunities arise.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
TCO6	Support the provision of cycling infrastructure, bicycle parking facilities and electric vehicle charging points in the town centre, in accordance with the recommendations of the Local Transport Plan and subject to traffic and pedestrian safety	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
TCO7	Undertake a building heights and residential density study for Castlebar town, within a year of adoption of this Local Area Plan, in order to identify suitable locations within the town where development potential for greater height and density rates can be suitably accommodated. <i>These may require screening for SEA /AA and Ecological Impact Assessment as appropriate.</i>	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
TCO8	Require the preparation of urban design frameworks/masterplan for the Opportunity Sites in Castlebar Town Centre to inform future development proposals.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
TCO9	Maintain and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre by addressing and controlling leakage of social, economic and service activities to areas outside the Town Centre.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
TCO10	Prevent the use of film or screening that obscures the glazed areas of a shopfront window where it negatively impacts upon the streetscape.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕
<p>SEA Comments:</p> <p>TCO1, TCO 4 and TCO8 focus specifically on opportunity sites with regard to regeneration, coordination with landowners and other stakeholders, and by preparing urban design frameworks/masterplan for the Opportunity Sites in Castlebar Town Centre to inform future development proposals. All three objectives have the potential to positively develop and enhance Castlebar town in numerous ways. Equally they could have negative effects on one or more SEO parameter. Each opportunity site must be independently and collectively environmental assessed to ensure a positive outcome/balance for all SEOs while enhancing the economic and social elements of Castlebar town. This framework/masterplan must adhere to all environmental requirements including screening for SEA and AA as appropriate. See recommended additional mitigation text for this objective</p> <p>TCO 7: Undertake a building heights and residential density study for Castlebar town, within a year of adoption of this Local Area Plan, in order to identify suitable locations within the town where development potential for greater height and density rates can be suitably accommodated. <b>These may require screening for SEA /AA and Ecological Impact Assessment as appropriate.</b></p> <p>TCO2 focuses on regenerating Castlebar Town Centre will be positive for PHH and SG. However, similar to the objectives discussed above the SEOs must be protected. While, TCO3 which being positive for PHH, L and MA (SuDS) must also be mindful of protecting all of the other SEOs which will also enhance Castlebar town's public realm. This policy will have an overall positive effect on the entire townscape visa and on the health and well-being of the local and general population. Promotion of development in the Town Centre is positive in relation to PHH, MA and CH. SEOs in particular. It will complement and support the town centre by improving the connectivity withing the centre, enhance public realms, upgrade the fabric of the streetscape. Town centre viability and support for appropriate uses, and design features will provide together for positive long-term effects.</p> <p>The NIR screened in objectives TCO1, TCO3, TCO4 and TCO8. The rationale for screening in these objectives were as follows:</p> <p>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</p> <p>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts that 'may result in increased development and operational disturbance' for objectives TCO1, TCO3, TCO5 and TCO8</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts arising from 'construction, operational distrubance' for objective TCO4.</p> <p>The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.</p> <p>TCO5 communicating with community groups will allow input and hopefully understanding of what must be protected to enhance the public realm for generations to come. Community groups must be made aware of all of the above so as to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future development(s). TCO6 supporting cycling infrastructure, bicycle parking facilities and electric vehicle charging points will allow the transition to a low carbon integrated transport system and assist in contributing to climate change SEOs. This will also encourage reduce car dependency within the town by way of an integrated approach to sustainable urban transport. TCO7 relates to a building heights and residential density study to identify town locations for greater height and density rates. It is very important to consider the environmental consequences of such developments particularly on the local landscape and PHH even though it can benefit a portion of the local population.</p> <p>TCO9 will maintain and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre by addressing and controlling leakage of social, economic and service activities to areas outside the Town Centre. While, TCO10 will prevent the use of film or screening that obscures the glazed areas of a shopfront window where it negatively impacts upon the streetscape.</p> <p>Both objectives enhance streetscapes with direct long term positive effects on PHH with the additional direct positive effects on CH and L from TCO10. These objectives will rejuvenate the town centre, integrate disused building and areas back into a more vibrant and safer town, while also taking pressures off adjoin lands for continued and sprawling development(s)</p>										



		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
EDP7	Support and encourage the provision of ground floor live work units and/or co-working spaces, as part of mixed-use and residential developments, in appropriate town centre locations, as a means of enlivening streets and to provide flexible accommodation for small businesses and remote working opportunities.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
EDP8	Promote and support Castlebar as the sports capital of Mayo and seek to provide effective access to recreation and leisure opportunities within the natural environment and to maximise the local economic development opportunities while safeguarding the natural and build heritage.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
EDP9	Encourage the development of tourism activities such as water-based activities, cultural and food tourism including festivals and food markets in Castlebar.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕	↕
EDP10	Support the development of new tourist facilities or the upgrading / extension of existing tourist facilities.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
EDP11	Promote festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕	↕
EDP12	Encourage linkages to strong tourism locations such as Westport to realise the potential of the Castlebar Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG).	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕

SEA Comments:

EDP1 will have a positive effect on PHH, BFF, W, CH, L and their interrelationships. Such developments occurring in a comprehensive and sequential manner will allow monitoring of all SEOs to ensure protection.

EDP2, EDP4 and EDP6 will have positive effects on PHH as EDP2 supports the development and expansion of enterprise and employment co-operating with all stakeholders, land owners and relevant agencies to attract investment (while at the same time ensuring there is no resultant negative impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre), EDP4 supports/consolidates Castlebar's retail function as a Regional Tier 2 Category town, and EDP6 focuses on retail-led tourism associated with the natural and built heritage assets of Castlebar. It is very important to protect what one is trying to sell. Therefore, EDP2, EDP4 and particularly EDP6 must ensure all SEOs are considered and protected from the onset in order to advance/achieve their economic policies.

Policy EDP3 (development of economic and enterprise development and activity) will support EDP2 and EDP4 through the support/promotion of the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable county. This policy is potentially very positive for all SEOs but care must be taken to ensure what is a positive environmental promotion does not have any negative effects on the SEOs as a consequence.

EDP5 Supports/facilitates the development of retail, retail services and niche retailing in the town centre area, including new/infill development and redevelopment of an appropriate scale. This policy on town centre retail will not only have positive effects on PHH but also SG by encouraging building reuse/infill/redevelopment.

The NIR screened in this objective. The rationale for screening in this objective was as follows:

I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone

L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination

The NIR identified potential impacts that 'may result in increased development and operational disturbance'.

	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.</p> <p>EDP7 will also support PHH and SG by supporting/encouraging the provision of ground floor live work units and/or co-working spaces, as part of mixed-use and residential developments, in appropriate town centre locations, as a means of enlivening streets and to provide flexible accommodation for small businesses and remote working opportunities.</p> <p>These policies will be positive as they promote addition/mixed use of existing buildings in the town centre and contribute to altering commuting patterns, promoting adaptive reuse of buildings, and contribute to town centre viability. Reuse of older structures indirectly contributes to townscape quality and character as it promotes SG SEOs as it represents reuse of existing buildings/brownfield sites.</p> <p>EDP8 promotes Castlebar as the sports capital of Mayo while at the same time safeguarding the natural and built heritage. EDP9 and EDP11 encourages water-based activities, cultural and food tourism including festivals and food markets, EDP10 supports new/upgrading/extensions tourist facilities, EDP11 promotes festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town, while EDP12 encourages linkages to strong tourism location to realise the potential of the CWEG. Policies EDP8 to 12 relating to tourism are positive for PHH (with EDP9 and EDP11 also positive for CH) once safeguarding the natural environment and built heritage which is one of the reason tourists will travel to a particular area. However, this could be a double-edged sword.</p> <p>The NIR screened in policies EDP10 and EDP11. The rationale for screening in these objectives were as follows:</p> <p>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</p> <p>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts arising from ‘construction, operational’ for objective EDP10.</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts that ‘may result in increased development and operational disturbance’ for policy EDP11.</p> <p>The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.</p> <p>The protection of built, natural and cultural heritage will further enhance the SEOs for landscape and interrelationships from the development and management of tourist facilities and/or activities which have been found to be beneficial for the co-existence and wellbeing of people and nature as evidenced by research including EPA 2020.</p> <p>Food and culinary tourism promote longer term awareness and positive interactions relating to PHH and CH 3 (intangible cultural heritage). By supporting local producers, longer term positive effects are identified in terms of food security and resilience.</p> <p>Any tourism developments should be subject to community and environmental carrying capacity and will require the necessary environmental assessment, etc. and monitoring and consideration of issues around tourism should be recognised and consideration of water, wastewater capacity and increased visitor numbers and seasonality should inform these policies. The mitigation measures identified in the SEA ER and NIR of the Mayo Tourism Strategy and Action Plan – Destination Mayo 2015-2021 must be applied. All environmental measures as presented in the MCDP 2022-2028, Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme, the SEA and NIR of the Destination Mayo Strategy and support monitoring of environmental effects associated with tourism growth must also be applied to ensure cumulative and in combination effects are avoided.</p> <p>For other SEOs, it is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These policies must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2022-2028 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. Policies such as SO 9 will apply as appropriate to provide sufficient environmental assessment at project stage. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level.</p>									
Chapter 5 Economic Development – Economic Development Objective									

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
EDO1	Engage with IDA Ireland and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in seeking to attract Foreign Direct Investment into Castlebar.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
EDO2	Ensure new enterprise and employment uses provide Workplace Travel Plans /Mobility Management Plans to reduce dependency on private modes of travel consistent with the principles set out in the National Transport Authority guidance: 'Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans'.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
EDO3	Support the emerging purple economy (night-time / after dark economy) of Castlebar and seek to attain the Internationally accredited 'purple flag' status for evening and night-time economy over the lifetime of the plan.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
EDO4	Support, promote and facilitate the provision of shared co-working spaces/hubs in town centre and other appropriate locations in Castlebar to provide multi-purpose flexible workspace options.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
Chapter 5 Economic Development – Retail and Town Centre Objective										
EDO4	The Council, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Local Authorities (DECLG, 2012 or as amended or superseded) will continue to protect and promote the vitality and viability of Castlebar town centre, including applying a 'town centre first approach' or sequential test for retail developments.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
EDO5	Manage the over proliferation of certain undesirable uses such as fast-food outlets, amusement arcades, off licences, bookmakers, and of other non-retail uses in the interest of protecting the vibrancy, residential amenity and public realm of Castlebar's town centre.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
EDO6	Ensure that new shop front and signage design contributes positively to and enhances the streetscape and is in accordance with the guidance set out in The Development Management Standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and as set out in the <i>Mayo Shopfronts</i> Booklet (Mayo County Council).	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕
EDO7	To support, promote and facilitates measures, such as town centre regeneration, implementation of the local transport plan to improve accessibility and public realm improvements and other town centre first initiatives over the plan period, to reduce retail and commercial vacancy in Castlebar town centre.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
Chapter 5 Economic Development – Tourism Objective										

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
EDO9	Support and facilitate the development of an integrated network of greenways and heritage trails, including the Castlebar Urban Greenway to Turlough and Westport.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
ECD10	Work with all relevant stakeholders and Fáilte Ireland to facilitate the provision of standardised signage and interpretation for tourism facilities and tourist attractions throughout the town.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
EDO11	Develop a recreational strategy for Lough Lannagh, in order to aid and enable Castlebar's emergence Lough Lannagh as a major sports and adventure destination in Mayo.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕

**SEA Comments:**

EDO1 attracting Foreign Direct Investment into Castlebar will have direct positive effects on PHH and could potentially have positive effects on the remaining SEOs once environmental cavities are incorporated into the investment discussion. The NIR screened in this objective. The rationale for screening in this objective were as follows:

I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone

L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination

The NIR identified potential impacts arising from 'Construction, increased development, operational disturbance'.

The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.

EDO2 will ensure new enterprise/employment uses provide Workplace Travel Plans /Mobility Management Plans to reduce dependency on private modes of travel consistent with the principles set out in the National Transport Authority guidance: 'Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans'. The promotion of sustainable transport patterns and modes are positive with the encouragement of public transport options and promotion of walking and cycling, particularly for daily, short trips in particular will have important long-term effects on Castlebar, its population and visitors.

EDO3 supports the emerging purple economy (night-time / after dark economy) of Castlebar and seek to attain the Internationally accredited 'purple flag' status for evening and night-time economy over the lifetime of the plan. This will have a positive effect on the economy and thus PHH. It could also lead to negative effects on PHH as well as the other SEOs if not monitored.

EDO4 supports/promotes/facilitates the provision of shared co-working spaces/hubs in town centre and other appropriate locations in Castlebar to provide multi-purpose flexible workspace options.

The promotion of objectives (EDO1, EDO2, EDO4) to enhance existing enterprise/employment/shared work spaces are positive in relation to MA, CC and PH SEOs in particular.

Direct, long-term positives in terms of reducing commuting patterns through increased economic activity and direct population and human health effects also relating to reduced commuting patterns for population. The promotion of sustainable transport patterns and modes are positive with the encouragement of public transport options and promotion of walking and cycling, particularly for daily, short trips in particular will have important long-term effects on Castlebar, its population and visitors.

EDO4 protecting/promoting the vitality and viability of the Castlebar, by applying a 'town centre first approach' or sequential test for retail developments.

and EDO5 managing the over proliferation of certain retails uses in the interest of protecting the vibrancy, residential amenity and public realm of Castlebar's town centre will have positive effects on the PHH. EDO6 recognises the role of design for any signage design which will positively enhance the streetscapes and overall Town ambience and contribute to both a sense of place and overall attractiveness of streetscapes and the townscape of Castlebar. EDO7 will be positive for PHH by supporting/promoting/facilitating measures, such as town centre regeneration, implementation of the local transport plan to improve accessibility and public realm improvements and other town centre first initiatives over the

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>plan period, to reduce retail and commercial vacancy in Castlebar town centre. EDO9 will also have an overall positive effect on population and human health with the promotion of sustainable routes, a reduction in car dependency and minimising air pollution, maintain/improve ambient air quality and emissions of greenhouse gases, and contribute to a reduction and avoidance of human-induced global climate change. Opportunities to enhance ecological connectivity should be integrated as part of any linking of routes to strengthen and support green infrastructure. It is important to continue the development of a network of greenways in Castlebar and the County but it is imperative that it is achieved in accordance with best practice and where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>It is important that EDO10 recognises the role of design for any signage and interpretation for tourism facilities in the town as they contribute to both a sense of place and overall attractiveness of streetscapes and the townscape of Castlebar. Standardised signage may not suit all locations and situations.</p> <p>EDO11 developing a recreational strategy for Lough Lannagh, in order to aid and enable Castlebar's emergence Lough Lannagh as a major sports and adventure destination in Mayo. This strategy should include assessment of environmental constraints, including potential significant effects on the Natura 2000 Network, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level, thus should incorporate SEA and NIR into its assessment and any other environmental requirements thereafter. The application of the SEA mitigation measure as recommended in Development Strategy as follows will be essential to providing appropriate consideration of environmental effects. <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></p> <p>While all new developments and associated services and infrastructure are welcome, they must adhere to all environmental assessment requirements as noted above. Monitoring and consideration of issues around over-tourism should be recognised and consideration of water, wastewater capacity and increased visitor numbers and seasonality should inform all of these objectives.</p> <p>It is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These objectives must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2022-2028 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection.</p>										
Chapter 6 Housing and Sustainable Communities - Residential Development Policy										
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.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
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.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
HSCP3	Encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in Castlebar for residential accommodation.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
HSCP4	Support new residential development and infill development that occurs in tandem with the delivery of supporting physical and social infrastructure.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
HSCP5	Support approved housing bodies and other sectoral agencies in the provision of a greater diversity of housing type and tenure,	0	↑	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>HSCP2 promotes 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. This will be positive for PHH, SG and MA.</p> <p>HSCP3 encourages residential uses on the upper floors of town centre commercial properties will also enhance the overall vitality of the town centre area. This will be positive for PHH and SG and have positive knock-on effects for all SEOs and their interrelationships.</p> <p>HSCP4 will also be good for PHH and SG with infill using existing physical and social infrastructure in the town. This will have positive knock-on effect on the other SEOs in the long-term.</p> <p>HSCP5 supports approved housing bodies and other sectoral agencies in the provision of a greater diversity of housing type and tenure, including social housing and exploring new models at low-cost rental and affordable homeownership. This policy is positive for PHH. All the above-mentioned Residential Development Policies have the potential to impact most SEOs positively, particularly PHH, MA, SG, AQ-C and their interrelationships.</p> <p>HSCP6 will have direct positive effect on PHH and SG with immediate improvements in quality of life for older people, people with disabilities, the traveling community and with the availability of social housing. The promotion of addition/mixed use of existing buildings in the town centre will contribute positively to altering commuting patterns, promoting adaptive reuse of buildings, and to the town centre viability. Reuse of older structures indirectly contributes to townscape quality and character as promotes soil and geology SEOs as it represents reuse of existing buildings/brownfield.</p> <p>HSCP7's support/implementation of Castlebar as a Gaeltacht Service Town and an Irish Language Plan will be positive for PHH, CH and their interactions. The intangible cultural heritage will also have positive influences on tourism and the economic vitality of Castlebar.</p> <p>HSCP8 embeds age-friendly design in accordance with the Age-Friendly Ireland - Ten Universal Design Features, 2021, and the best-practice guidance outlined in the Building for Everyone – A Universal Design Approach, by the Centre of Excellence in Universal Design which will have a very positive effect for PHH, CH and their interactions. However, this will occur at project level and must integrate all environmental requirements to ensure all SEOs are protected.</p> <p>HSCP9 facilitates/supports a broad range of community, cultural, educational and recreational facilities to serve the future needs of the residents of the Plan area and its wider catchment. This policy is very positive for PHH and CH and will have far-reaching benefits on the health, well-being and cultural diversity/enhancement of all age groups in the community.</p> <p>However, as with all developments each potential development (individually and collectively) will need to be environmental assessed to ensure all SEOs are protected. All developments will have to adhere to National and Mayo CDP requirements with regard to location, scaled, and density of developments which includes amenities and open space provisions. Castlebar LAP is committed to supporting the development of sustainable communities and neighbourhoods, in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), thus these objectives have the potential to affect all SEOs positively with their overarching goal to support the sustainable residential development in appropriate areas in a phased manner to meet the principles set out in the DECLG Guidelines Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas (2009) and the manuals mentions will have positive long-term effects on population and human health, soil and geology (through promoting reuse), landscape/townscape, cultural heritage (regenerate or reuse existing building) and material assets. Regeneration/Reuse of existing buildings contributes to cultural heritage by preserving, restoring and enhancing built heritage. It also enhances streetscapes with indirect long term positive effects on material assets.</p> <p>To develop a robust and design-led urban regeneration and development strategy; to maximise the strengths of the town; and to promote sustainable movement it is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These policies must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2022-2028 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level.</p>										
Chapter 6 Housing and Sustainable Communities - Residential Development Objective										
HSCO1	Support, promote and facilitate the appropriate consolidation, densification and/or redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
	for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area, where appropriate.									
HSCO2	Safeguard the amenity and integrity of completed residential estates and provide for smarter travel options, it is the objective of the Council to ensure that new access proposals to any adjoining lands through an existing completed residential estate is provided for pedestrian or bicycle movements/connectivity only.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
HSCO3	Seek to provide Traveller Specific Accommodation at appropriate locations close to key services, including education, community, health, recreation and public transport facilities in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 (or any updated).	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕	↕
Chapter 6 Housing and Sustainable Communities - Residential Density, Design & Mix Objective										
HSCO4	Require that a good mix of housing types and sizes is provided in all new residential areas and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas within the town centre and existing residential areas, to meet the needs of the population of Castlebar, including the provision of appropriate supported housing and longer-term residential care solutions designed for older people and/or people with disabilities. This will include accommodation provided under Part V requirements.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
HSCO5	Support and promote high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency in traditional buildings. All new buildings will be required to achieve the Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) standard in line with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).	↑	↑	↑	↕	↑	↕	↑	↑	↑
HSCO6	Comply with the Special Policy Planning Requirements (SPPRs) for apartment standards and building heights issued under Section 28(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
Chapter 6 Housing and Sustainable Communities - Gaeltacht Service Town Objective										
HSCO7	Support and assist the formulation and implementation of Irish Language Plans through the lead agency Údarás Na Gaeltachta, within Castlebar as a Gaeltacht service Towns, as defined under the Gaeltacht Act, 2012.	0	↑	0	0	0	0	↑	0	↑
Chapter 6 Housing and Sustainable Communities - Age Friendly Objective										
HSCO8	Support the objectives set out in Mayo Age Friendly County Strategy 2022-2026 and any subsequent strategy, regarding the	0	↑	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>Regeneration, housing supply, employment opportunities and community facilities focus on the delivery of accessible, diverse and equitable community services via collaborations with key stakeholders and in alignment with core/settlement strategies. Thus, above-mentioned objectives have the potential to impact most SEOs positively, particularly PHH and MA, CG, AQ and their interrelationships.</p> <p>HSCO1 supports/promotes/facilitate the appropriate consolidation, densification and/or redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area, where appropriate. This objective will have direct positive effects PHH and SG with infill using existing physical and social infrastructure in the town.</p> <p>HSCO2 will safeguard the amenity and integrity of completed residential estates and provide for smarter travel options, it is the objective of the Council to ensure that new access proposals to any adjoining lands through an existing completed residential estate is provided for pedestrian or bicycle movements/connectivity only. This will have positive effects on PHH and MA by enhancing and improving people's quality of life within the estate and through ambient town connectivity and also on sustainable transport patterns and modes.</p> <p>HSCO3 in relation to Traveller Specific Accommodation is beneficial for PHH, CH and interrelationships with the development of standard, suitable and sustainable accommodation sites for the Traveller community.</p> <p>The NIR screened in objectives HSCO1 and HSCO3. The rationale for screening in these objectives were as follows:</p> <p>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</p> <p>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts arising from 'Construction, operational disturbance for both' for both objectives.</p> <p>The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.</p> <p>HSCO4 will have direct and positive effect on population and human health with immediate improvements in quality of life especially for older people and/or people with disabilities. This will include accommodation provided under Part V requirements. The promotion of addition/mixed use of existing buildings in the town centre will contribute positively to altering commuting patterns, promoting adaptive reuse of buildings, and to the town centre viability. Reuse of older structures indirectly contributes to townscape quality and character as promotes soil and geology SEOs as it represents reuse of existing buildings/brownfield.</p> <p>HSCO5 supports/promotes high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency in traditional buildings. All new buildings will be required to achieve the Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) standard in line with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). This objective will have overall positive effects on all of the SEOs especially PHH, AQ-C, W, BFF and MA. It is important while promoting and rolling out this objective that all SEOs are not compromised particularly cultural heritage and landscape.</p> <p>HSCO6 will be required to comply with the Special Policy Planning Requirements (SPPRs) for apartment standards and building heights issued under Section 28(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). This will have direct positive effects on population and human health. All planning and environmental legislation/requirements must be adhered too. It is important while promoting and rolling out this objective that the SEOs are not compromised.</p> <p>HSCO7 supports/assists the formulation and implementation of Irish Language Plans through the lead agency Údarás Na Gaeltachta, within Castlebar as a Gaeltacht service Towns, as defined under the Gaeltacht Act, 2012. This objective will be positive for population and human health, cultural heritage and their interactions. The intangible cultural heritage will also have positive influences on tourism and the economic vitality of Castlebar.</p> <p>HSCO 8 supports the objectives set out in Mayo Age Friendly County Strategy 2017–2021 etc. in the planning, design and delivery of physical infrastructure, public realm works, business and commercial premises. This objective will have a positive effect on population and human health with far-reaching benefits for all generations to come.</p> <p>HSCO9 encouraging the delivery of facilities and services for older people, at appropriate locations in Castlebar will have a positive effect on population and human health with far-reaching benefits for all generations to come.</p> <p>HSCO 10 (provision of social infrastructure), HSCO11 (education and healthcare), HSCO12 (school sites), HSCO13 (cultural, arts and performance spaces), HSCO14 (sports and recreation land), HSCO15 (playgrounds, amenity spaces and recreational areas for children) and HSCO16 (outdoor running track) will all have positive effects for population and</p>									





		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>While MTP6’s individual positivity may outweigh any negative impacts in the long term it is extremely important that this policy protects all SEOs in the short to long term. This policy makes ‘provisions for the use of electric vehicles through a significant increase in the provision of clearly and exclusively designated electric car charging points on public and private land in partnership with ESB and other relevant stakeholders and landowners.</p> <p>Under MTP7 while new road developments are not desirable, due to present limited options for public transport it is important to ensuring roads are safe and encourage safer driving. However, it will have unclear effects on other SEOs. All road projects will be subject to the appropriate environmental assessments including environmental policies such as S09 (MCDP 2022-2028).</p> <p>It is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future development(s) (regardless of how small they may seem) which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These policies must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2021-2029 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level. Landowners, stakeholders and community groups must be made aware of all of the above so as to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future development(s).</p>										
Chapter 7 Movement and Transport - Sustainable Mobility Objective										
MTO1	<p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
MTO2	Seek the provision of workplace mobility plans for proposals for large scale employment and the development of Smarter Travel Initiatives as set in Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 (or any replacement thereof).	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕
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.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↑	↕	↕	↑	↕
MTO4	Identify appropriate locations on public lands in partnership with ESB for the provision of battery charging infrastructure for electric vehicles in Castlebar.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↑	↕	↕	↑	↕
MTO5	To monitor and review the progress of the Castlebar Local Transport Plan in line with the Monitoring & Review strategy set out in this Plan, and in accordance with its stated goals and objectives.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕



	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>modes. However, overly engineered or routes that adjoin or go through SACs/SPAs or pNHAs can create adverse effects through disturbance, trampling, compaction, habitat fragmentation if not fully informed by appropriate environmental assessments from the outset. The application of SO9 of the MCDP 2022-2028 and other policies and objectives including those that support and require ecological enhancement and connectivity will assist in this assessment. However, application of environmental protection measures from the LAP and the MCDP will apply at project level to provide sufficient mitigation.</p> <p>MTO2 will have positive effects on human health by protecting, enhancing and improving people's quality of life as well as protection from hazards or nuisances arising from incompatible land uses/developments. It will also have a positive effect on sustainable transport patterns and modes. However, it will have unclear effects on other SEOs. At project level potential conflicts would be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan and are identified in Section 8 of this SEA ER and any additional requirements arising through lower tier assessments or granting of permission.</p> <p>MTO3 will incorporate pedestrian and cycling provisions and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing road/street network and proposed active travel network in the town in new residential/mixed use developments. MTO4 will identify appropriate locations on public lands in partnership with ESB for the provision of battery charging infrastructure for electric vehicles in Castlebar. These objectives will continue the positive theme outlined above.</p> <p>MTO5 will monitor and review the progress of the Castlebar Local Transport Plan in line with the Monitoring &amp; Review strategy set out in this Plan, and in accordance with its stated goals and objectives. The Castlebar Local Transport Plan is under preparation and is subject to SEA and AA Screening.</p> <p>The NIR screened in objectives MTO2, MTO3 and MTO9. The rationale for screening in these objectives were as follows:</p> <p>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</p> <p>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts arising from 'Construction, operational disturbance' for MTO2.</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts that 'may result in increased development and operational disturbance' for objective MTO5.</p> <p>The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.</p> <p>MTO6 will protect, enhance and improve people's quality of life but effects on other SEOs are unclear. While road projects are desirable due to present limited options for public transport it is important to sustainable transport at all levels and ensuring roads are safe and encourage safer driving. As included in the objective all road projects will be subject to the appropriate environmental assessments.</p> <p>MTO7 supports the provision of new roads infrastructure by ensuring that the lands along the indicative routes listed in the objective are protected by keeping them free from development that would undermine the delivery of these projects. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets incorporates good planning and design practice to support and encourage more sustainable travel patterns in urban areas. Thus, this objective will have positive effects on human health by protecting, enhancing and improving people's quality of life as well as protection from hazards or nuisances arising from incompatible land uses/developments. It will also have a positive effect on sustainable transport patterns and modes. However, it will have unclear effects on other SEOs.</p> <p>While new road developments are not desirable due to present limited options for public transport it is important to ensuring roads are safe and encourage safer driving. As included in the objective MTO 6 all road projects will be subject to the appropriate environmental assessments.</p> <p>MTO8 will support the implementation of all measures/actions in the Castlebar LTP, including the modal split targets, once completed and adopted by the council in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development. The positive effects associated with the encouragement of public transport options and promotion of walking and cycling, particularly for daily, short trips in particular will have important long-term effects on Castlebar, its population and visitors. Under this objective the LTP will be prepared in conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and relevant stakeholders for Castlebar settlement. This will have positive interactions with SEOs in the longer-term including population and human health, material assets, air quality and climate change once the LTP is prepared 'in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development' as noted in the objective above. At project level potential conflicts would be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan and any additional requirements arising through lower tier assessments or granting of permission.</p>									

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>MTO9 and MTO10 supporting a pedestrian town, an enhanced the public realm through traffic management and transport interventions and providing ‘park and stride’ facilities in accordance with the LTP recommendations in partnership with relevant stakeholders will have positive effects on all of the SEOs. Overall, it will have significant positive effects on people’s quality of life and all associated SEOs, e.g., water quality and air quality. It will also support the promotion of sustainable transport patterns and modes. The positive effects associated with the encouragement of public transport options and promotion of walking and cycling, particularly for daily, short trips in particularly will have important long-term effects on Castlebar, its population and visitors.</p> <p>The NIR screened in objective MTO9. The rationale for screening in this objective were as follows:</p> <p>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</p> <p>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</p> <p>The NIR identified potential impacts that ‘may result in increased development and operational disturbance’ for objective MTO9.</p> <p>The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.</p> <p>MTO11’s Park &amp; Stride would support the promotion of sustainable transport patterns and modes. Overall, Park and Stride would have a positive effect on the human population with improved air quality by minimising all forms of air pollution and maintain/improve ambient air quality and minimising emissions of greenhouse gases and contribute to a reduction and avoidance of human-induced global climate change. While cars are still in use Park &amp; Stride would reduce car dependency within the plan area by way of an integrated approach to sustainable urban transport (AQ4).</p> <p>The SEA ER of the NW RESSS regarding national road objectives highlights the following:  <i>The national road network is economically and socially important at region and national level to ensure intra- and inter-connectivity with long-term positive impacts for MA and PHH, the construction of any linear transport option has inherent potential for negative impacts on BFF, CH, LandS, LS and W, as a result of long-term permanent operational impacts, namely through habitat loss, species loss/disturbance and long- erm emissions to air, soil and water. There is also potential for permanent loss of greenfield land. Road traffic also contributes to emissions of nitrogen oxides and particulate matter, which can cause indirect impacts to PHH and direct negative impacts for AQ. Emissions from the transport sector also have long-term negative impacts on CF through emissions of greenhouse gases (where not offset by electric vehicles/alternative fuels).</i></p> <p>It is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future development(s) (regardless of how small they may seem) which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These policies must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2021-2029 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level. Landowners, stakeholders and community groups must be made aware of all of the above so as to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future development(s).</p>										
Chapter 8 Built Environment - Built Heritage Conservation Policy										
BEP1	Maintain, conserve and protect the architectural quality, character and scale of the town.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑
BEP2	Encourage high quality and well-designed buildings, structures, public spaces and streets and support and promote healthy place-making and quality of life.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑
BEP3	Protect the town centre by ensuring all new development is compatible with the existing character and visual amenity of Castlebar.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
BEP4	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.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↑
BEP5	Have regard to Mayo Shopfronts Design Guide for shopfronts and signs and to encourage the use of traditional shopfront designs and materials and signs.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑
Chapter 8 Built Environment - Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures Policy										
BEP6	Encourage the rehabilitation, renovation, climate-proofing and re-use of existing protected structures and vernacular buildings within the plan area, where appropriate, over the demolition of same and new-build on-site	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Chapter 8 Built Environment - Archaeological Heritage Policy										
BEP7	Support and promote the protection, appropriate management and sympathetic enhancement of the archaeological heritage within the Plan area, in particular by implementing the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended).	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Chapter 8 Built Environment - Placemaking & Views & Prospects Policy										
BEP8	Encourage and facilitate improvements to the physical fabric and environment of the town, including streetscape, street furniture, landscaping (hard and soft), signage and wirescape, while recognising that both private and public developments can contribute to effective public realm.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕
BEP9	Promote the regeneration of Castlebar town centre by making better use of underutilised land and buildings, particularly within the existing built-up areas to achieve compact growth.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
SEA Comments:		<p>Policies BEP1 to BEP5 will positively enhance the unique identity, character and built heritage of Castlebar by maintaining, conserving and protecting the architectural quality, character and scale of the town including shopfront design. They will also improve PHH quality of life through the application of healthy placemaking, encouraging high quality and well-designed buildings, structures, and public spaces being underpinned by good urban design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive social interaction. To compliment this the town centre will be protected by ensuring all new development is compatible with the existing character and visual amenity of Castlebar.</p> <p>In addition, residential uses on the upper floors of town centre commercial properties, will be encouraged where appropriate, and the retention of residential use, except where an alternative use has been established, will be encouraged to maintain and enhance the overall vitality of the town centre area. This will have positive knock-on effects for all SEOs and their interrelationships.</p>								



		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
BEO4	Ensure that any alterations or interventions to protected structures shall be executed to a high conservation standard in order to protect their significance or value. Any applications for development of protected structures shall be accompanied by an assessment carried out in accordance with the Councils requirements by an accredited conservation architect.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕
BEO5	Identify places of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, and to define them as Architectural Conservation Areas over the lifetime of the Plan and to undertake an assessment to inform the potential ACA designation for the following areas: Chapel Street, The Mall, Main Street or any other special character areas considered by the Planning Authority worthy of such protection in County Mayo.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Chapter 8 Built Environment - Archaeological Heritage Objective										
BEO6	Protect and preserve in situ (or upon agreement preservation by record) items of archaeological interest provided for on the Sites and Monuments Record ( <a href="http://www.archeology.ie">www.archeology.ie</a> ) from inappropriate development that would adversely affect and/or detract from interpretation and setting of these sites.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
BEO7	Ensure proposals contribute to the protection and preservation of the archaeological value of sites including underwater sites associated with the Castlebar River, Lough Lannagh and Saleen Lough.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑

SEA Comments:

In general, these objectives will protect (individual and collectively) archaeological and architectural structures and their cultural value and otherwise. They will also positively enhance the unique identity, character and built heritage of Castlebar by maintaining, conserving and protecting the architectural quality, character and scale of the town including shopfront design. Additionally, all of the objectives will help to enrich the quality of life for Castlebar residents and visitors alike as it looks to protect and enhance the existing built heritage of the town through the application of healthy placemaking, encouraging high quality and well-designed buildings, structures, and public spaces being underpinned by good urban design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive social interaction.

To compliment this the town centre will be protected by ensuring all new development is compatible with the existing character and visual amenity of Castlebar. These more tangible objectives relating to any new development concurrent with the existing historic furniture and streetscape further are positive for MA. Newer developments to enhance the character or setting of existing protected structures and promote sustainable building design, best conservation practice and the appropriate maintenance, adaption and reuse of historic buildings, which is also positive for SEOs relating to soil. In addition, residential uses on the backlands/upper floors of town centre commercial properties, will be encouraged where appropriate, and the retention of residential use, except where an alternative use has been established, will be encouraged to maintain and enhance the overall vitality of the town centre area. This will have positive knock-on effects for all SEOs and their interrelationships.

BEO1 will have additional positive effects on biodiversity through reducing/removing light pollution and may help reduce energy consumption. BEO2 and BEO3 will protect/preserve protected structures with positive effects for all SEOs. While BEO4 is also positive care must be taken to ensure while protecting one element of value others are not damaged/destroyed.

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>BEO5 and BEO6 will ensure ACAs and SMRs are identified/assessed/protected. However, as with all developments each potential development (individually and collectively) will need to be environmental assessed to ensure all SEOs are protected in particular the archaeological value of sites including underwater sites associated with the Castlebar River, Lough Lannagh &amp; Saleen Lough. The conservation, protection and avoidance of loss of diversity and integrity of designated habitats, geological features, species or their sustaining resources in designated and non-designated ecological sites must be at the fore for all of the Built Heritage objectives. Thus, it is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These objectives must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2021-2028 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level.</p>										
Chapter 9 Natural Environment - Designated Sites Policy										
NEP1	<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 <b>informed by ecological assessment to ensure it is robust and appropriate for wildlife and nature conservation</b> along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</li> </ul>	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
NEP2	<p>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.</p>	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Chapter 9 Natural Environment - Ecological Corridor Policy										
NEP3	<p>Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green and Blue Infrastructure network in Castlebar and strengthen links to the wider regional network. <b>This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.</b></p>	↕/↑	↑	↕/↑	↕↑	↕↑	↕↑	↕↑	↑	↕↑
Chapter 9 Natural Environment - Trees & Hedgerows Policy										
NEP4	<p>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,</p>	↑	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕

		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
	<p>carried out by a qualified Tree Specialist to justify the exceptional circumstances for their interference.</p> <p>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.</p>									
NEP5	<p>Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features such as hedgerows and surface water features into the design and construction of new development and public realm. Where the loss of the existing features is unavoidable new biodiversity features should incorporate native species, and species of local provenance to replace the existing hedgerow.</p>	↑	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕

SEA Comments:

NEP1 pertains to compliance with the EU Habitats Directive, EU Birds Directive and associated national legislation and protection of Natural 2000 Sites. It also pertains to the protection and conservation of non-designated habitats and species, i.e., local biodiversity, and protecting enhancing and incorporating existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm, and the biodiversity value of existing open spaces. The impacts of policy NEP 1 are positive for all the SEOs. The opportunity to enhance open spaces through public realm improvements and/or green and blue infrastructure measures contribute positively longer term to biodiversity, water and climate change adaptation SEOs in particular. The use of lands for recreation and amenity use will have positive implications for population and human health, material assets, water and soil. **Mitigation recommended.**

- 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.

NEP2 seeks 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 which is positive across all the SEOs.

The Castlebar LAP will not in itself, cause any adverse impacts to the overall integrity of the European sites within the Zol of the Plan, due to policies NEP1 and NEP 2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. However, projects/development that arise as a result of the Plan may have adverse effects. Thus, it is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These policies must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2021-2028 policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. All strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level.

NEP 3 will protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green Infrastructure network in Castlebar and strengthen links to the wider regional network. This will have positive effects on all of the SEOs particularly population and human health and biodiversity once protected (see note below). **Additional mitigation measure recommended to protect integrity of existing green and blue green infrastructure and to ensure this is informed by appropriate ecological advice and assessment. See below:**

NEP 3: 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**



		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>NEO2 will support and work with the local community in the development of blue and green infrastructure in the town and in the enhancement of the biodiversity and conservation value of the river and lakes corridors. This will have positive effects on all of the SEOs particularly population and human health, biodiversity, water, and air. Particular care should be taken where there are archaeological sites to ensure there is no disturbance.</p> <p>NEO3 will enhance local biodiversity, visual amenity and surface water management thus will have a positive effect on biodiversity, population and human health, water, climate change and landscape as well as indirect positive effects on the other SEOs. This objective will have tangible outputs as the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 and relevant stakeholder partnerships will provide guidance, and development planning applications can be assessed and monitored to ensure this objective becomes reality.</p> <p>It is very important to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These objectives must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2022-2028 policies and objectives, as well as existing environmental protection measures in the LAP especially in relation to environmental protection. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level.</p> <p>SEA recommends removal of text 'subject to available resources' in many cases such as reducing mowing regime, resource savings are made via lighter management regime .</p>										
Chapter 10 Infrastructure and Environmental Services - Flood Risk Management Policy										
IESP 1	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).	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
IESP 2	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.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Chapter 10 Infrastructure and Environmental Services - Drinking Water & Wastewater Policy										
IESP3	Discourage the over concentration/proliferation of individual septic tanks and treatment plants to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
IESP4	<p>a) Support the implementation of the Irish Water Investment Plans.</p> <p>b) Liaise with Irish Water, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate both the existing and future growth.</p>	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕



		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
	stripping (to ensure machinery does not destroy soil structure and drainage properties); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short to medium term impacts on the landscape where, for example, hedgerows are encountered;</li> <li>• Impacts on underground archaeology;</li> <li>• Impacts on soil structure and drainage; and</li> <li>• Impacts on surface waters as a result of sedimentation</li> </ul>									
IESP12	Seek the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone and television cables in the town including the town centre and in residential and amenity areas.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
IESP13	Discourage a proliferation of above ground utility boxes in the town and to seek screening measures and discreet locations in conjunction with the provision of such structures.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↑	↑	↑	↕

SEA Comments:

With regard to flood risk in IESP1 all developments are required to comply with flood risk requirements in conjunction with the OPW 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).

IESP2 will ensure that extensions of existing uses/minor development within flood risk areas will be supported once there is no obstruction of 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.

IESP3 discourages the over-concentration/proliferation of individual septic tanks and treatment plants to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution. IESP4s implementation of the Irish Water Investment Plans must comply/adhere to their associated environmental assessments. The positive effects for PHH must be balanced with the delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate both the existing and future growth of Castlebar and the potential negative effects on all of the other SEOs.

IESP5 supports the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant RBMP 2022-2027 and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan. The NIR screened in this policy. The rationale for screening in this objective were as follows:

I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone

L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination

The NIR identified potential impacts arising from 'Construction and operation arising from alterations to existing plans'.

The NIR determined that the Castlebar LAP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the single screened in European site due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. All developments will be required to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and any potential impacts are considered to be addressed through mitigation at development management level.

IESP6 supports and promotes the sustainable improvement and expansion of the electricity transmission and gas distribution network that supply the Plan area, while taking into consideration landscape, residential, amenity and environmental considerations. This policy will also be required to adhere to National legislation and policy. The promotion of renewable energy technologies in IESP7 will have positive effects on all of the SEOs particularly PHH and MA in the short- to long-term especially as the policy incorporates the protection of residential amenity and environmental quality. However, there are concerns for all of the other SEOs. IESP8 will be positive for population and human health and material assets, but it could have negative effects on the other SEOs. While policy IEP8 notes the importance of liaising with the statutory and other energy providers it is also important to 'liaise with all environmental authorities' to ensure environmental protection.





		BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
	- New and re-designed commercial buildings and apartment complexes should have waste facilities designed in a manner that waste can be collected directly from them and where possible waste and recyclables should not have to be collected on the street or at the front of the premises.									
IESO6	Promote the prevention, reduction and recycling of waste in new developments, new development proposals shall be required to show how this is to be achieved and shall seek to ensure on site provision for waste storage and segregation (bio-waste/dry recyclables/residual waste) pending collection at all new domestic and non-domestic premises.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
IESO7	Adequately maintain recycling facilities and secure the provision of additional facilities, as required, including in conjunction with new developments.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
IESO8	Facilitate the installation of bring bank(s) at suitable locations within the plan area, which do not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality of the area.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Chapter 10 Infrastructure and Environmental Services – Information Communications Technology and Broadband Objective										
IESO9	Ensure that all new development proposals, incorporates communications service infrastructure broadband including ducting on an open access basis.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
IESO10	Facilitate the provision of adequate telecommunication infrastructure within the plan area, including telephone and broadband services, to the requirements of the relevant service providers and in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
SEA Comments:		<p>IESO1 a flood risk management objective will have positive effects on PHH and in the long-term all of the other SEOs. It will focus on managing flood risk based on “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DECLG and OPW (2009) (as revised by Circular PL 2/2014) considering the potential impacts of climate change in the application of these guidelines, national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the River Shannon Catchment Flood Risk and Management Plan. Applications in flood risk areas must have a comprehensive flood risk assessment, minimise flood risk arising from surface water flooding by promoting the use of natural flood risk management measures including SuDS, minimising extent of hard surface/paving, and smart solutions such as innovative green infrastructure, and demonstrate that future development will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow paths, where compensatory storage/storm water retention measures shall be provided on site, and must have regard to the most up to date Flood Mapping as presented on the Office of Public Works (OPW) maps.</p>								

	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>IESO2 will ensure that any on-site private wastewater treatment plants, where permitted, are operated in compliance with the EPA's Code of Practice – Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent 10) (2021).</p> <p>Under IESO3 new developments will be obliged to connect to the public sewer and public water mains, subject to a connection agreement with Irish Water, so as to protect all waters in the plan area, and also to consolidate the urban structure and to control ribbon development along approach roads into Castlebar. This will have a positive effect on PHH, W and MA, as well as to marine environments and potentially to all of the other SEOs due to controlled ribbon development and will ensure the overall health of the interrelationships between biotic and abiotic components of the environment.</p> <p>IESO4 by supporting/facilitating the delivery of free outdoor drinking water refilling stations at appropriate locations will have positive effects on PHH and W.</p> <p>IESO5 focuses on both commercial and residential developments requirement to provide adequate internal and external space, segregation and ventilation for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials, with no street or at the front of the premises for new and re-designed commercial buildings and apartment complexes.</p> <p>IESO6 promotes the prevention, reduction and recycling of waste in new developments, new development proposals shall show how this is to be achieved and shall seek to ensure on site provision for waste storage and segregation (bio-waste/dry recyclables/residual waste) pending collection at all new domestic and non-domestic premises.</p> <p>While, IESO7 and IESO8 focuses on maintaining recycling facilities, securing the provision of additional facilities and facilitation bring bank installations which do not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.</p> <p>Finally, objectives IESO9 and IESO 10 will be positive for PHH. IESO9 will ensure that all new development proposals, incorporates communications service infrastructure broadband including ducting on an open access basis.</p> <p>IESO10 facilitates the provision of adequate telecommunication infrastructure within the plan area, including telephone and broadband services, to the requirements of the relevant service providers and in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. IESO10 acknowledges the requirements of proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>The use of SuDS in developmental proposals are beneficial for all SEOs as it manages surface water runoff from construction sites to minimise detrimental effects to its surrounding environment. These basins also serve as biodiversity habitat for species that are commonly found in urban watercourses and can act as a substitute for natural waterbodies around areas with anthropogenic interference. The use of green infrastructure, similarly, can supplement SuDS in urban sites to regulate ecosystem functions, provide habitats for species and increase human wellbeing from proximity to nature.</p> <p>Any infrastructure development will be required to ensure all environmental parameters are protected and considered in any future developments which must be environmentally assessed. It is essential to incorporate and consider all of the SEA environmental parameters and their interrelationships. These objectives must adhere to all of the relevant planning and environmental legislation, and the MCDP 2021-2028 policies and objectives and the draft LAP environmental protection policies and objectives, especially in relation to environmental protection. All Strategies and Plans should include the assessment of environmental constraints, to allow for avoidance of impact at design level.</p>									
Chapter 11 Land Use Zoning - Land Use Zoning Objectives									
It is an Objective of the Council to implement the following land use zoning objectives in Castlebar:									
<p>LUZ 1</p> <p>Area: 2019.77 ha (total area)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>SEA Comments: General support statement of consistency with landuse zoning objectives in 10.1</p>									

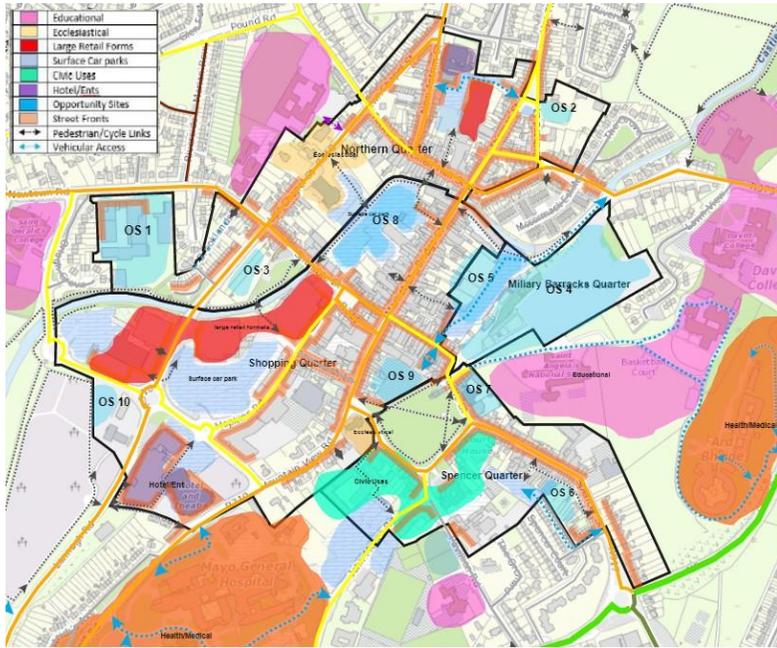
	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
NIR Screened out.									
LUZ 2 - Town Centre Inner and Outer Objective: To maintain and enhance the vitality, viability and environment of the town centre and provide for appropriate town centre uses.	↕	↑	↕	↑	↑	↑	↕	↑	↕
<p>SEA Comment:</p> <p>Town centre viability and support 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.</p> <p>The NIR screened this out.</p> <p>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.</p>									
LUZ 3 - Enterprise & Employment Objective: To provide land for light industrial and appropriate commercial development.	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
<p>SEA Comment:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>NIR: screened this out&gt; 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.</p> <p>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.</p>									
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
<p>SEA Comment:</p> <p>Confirms existing land use.</p>									
LUZ 6 - New Residential Area: 40.61 ha	↕	↑	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↑	↕

	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
Objective: To provide for high quality new residential development and other services incidental to residential development.									
<p>SEA Comment:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>									
<p>LUZ 8 - Community Services / Facilities</p> <p>Area: 72.97 ha</p> <p>Objective: To provide land for social, health, public administration and educational services and facilities.</p>	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑	↑
<p>SEA Comment:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p> <p>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.</p>									
<p>LUZ Quarry/Mining</p> <p>Area: 38.14 ha</p> <p>Objective: To provide for extraction / quarrying and associated activities including processing of extracted materials and land restoration.</p>	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
<p>SEA Comment:</p> <p>Application of policy SO 9 and measures in the MCDP will apply</p> <p>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</p>									

	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	IR
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>									
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.	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕	↕
<p>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.</p> <p><b>NIR:</b>  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.</p>									
LUZ - Agriculture Area: 1017.01 ha Objective: To reserve land for agricultural and rural uses and to preserve the amenity of the town setting.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
<p>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.</p> <p>The SFRA provides the following assessment of Agriculture landuse zoning:  Indicative Primary vulnerability: Water compatible / highly vulnerableJT not needed for water compatible. For farm housing the Justification Test applies in Flood Zone A/B.</p>									
LUZ Recreation and Amenity Objective: To protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.	↕	↑	↑	↕	↑	↑	↕	↕	↕
<p>SEA Comment:</p>									



FIGURE 1 OPPORTUNITY SITES



Opportunity Site	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	
Opportunity Site 1									
<p><b>Site Size:</b> 1.9 HA (Circa)</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Opportunity Site 1, locally referred to as The Old Hat Factory /Forde site, is located along Newtown Rd and contains several buildings/structures. It would appear that most of the old factory buildings is vacant, with only a few commercial units along the main road operational.</p> <p><b>Potential:</b> The location of the site along Newtown Rd provides potential for a logical extension of the town centre, including the provision of active street frontage (at ground level) with accommodation above. Given the size of this brownfield site, and its proximity to both residential areas and the commercial core, there is potential for residential purposes to further contribute to the rejuvenation and revitalisation close to and within the town Centre subject to Flooding Guidelines. Limited retail which does not impact negatively on the vitality and vibrancy of the Inner Town Centre (Retail) Core may be considered.</p>	↕	↑	↕	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	



Opportunity Site	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	
<p><b>Site Size:</b> 0.4 HA (Circa)</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Opportunity Site 3 is located immediately east of Lannagh Rd, on the northern bank of the Castlebar River. These lands consist of undeveloped backlands to the rear of properties along Shamble Street. A proportion of the of the site is under Flood Zone A &amp; B as shown in Map LR3.</p> <p><b>Potential:</b> The site is an infill site, with potential for town centre uses at this location. This site has potential for dual aspect with active frontage along Lannagh Rd and also facing the river &amp; urban greenway that runs along its southern perimeter. Considering its location, it could thrive as a public amenity space/park. Limited retail which does not impact negatively on the vitality and vibrancy of the Inner Town Centre (Retail) Core may be considered.</p>	⇅	↑	⇅	⇅	⇅	⇅	⇅	⇅	⇅
<p><b>SEA Comment:</b> ⇅↑⇅</p> <p>A review of aerial photography indicates this area supports heavy vegetation, and mature trees and the river. To the south is a pathway that goes through the park (urban greenway) area to the north of the river running along the south of the site. Given the environmental sensitivities it is important that application of ecological impact assessment and potential bat surveys are recommended and landscape proposals to support the All Ireland Pollinator Plan measures.</p>									
Opportunity Site 4									
<p><b>Site Size:</b> 3.7 HA (Circa)</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Opportunity Site 4 is comprised of the old Military Barracks / Former convent.</p> <p><b>Potential:</b> <b>The Military Barracks has significant potential as a catalyst for re-energising the centre of Castlebar. Underpinning ambitions for the project are the development of highest quality public-realm spaces, connectedness, relevance, civic value, economic value, innovation and transformational place-making. Through a mix of commercial, community and civic uses the project will provide an anchor for the regeneration of Castlebar.</b></p>	⇅	↑	⇅	⇅	↑	⇅	⇅	↑	
<p><b>SEA Comment:</b></p> <p>The aerial photos show the old walls covered in vegetation and presence of vegetation along the north west corner. The retention of built heritage features and consideration of ecological enhancement plus if appropriate bat surveys are recommended.</p>									

Opportunity Site	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	
Opportunity Site 5									
<p><b>Site Size: 1.2 HA (Circa)</b>  <b>Description:</b>  Opportunity Site 5 includes a portion of backlands to the rear of Market / Bridge St adjoining the Castle St carpark. The urban greenway link traverses the northern boundary of the site.</p> <p><b>Potential:</b>  Creation of a new streetscape and meaningful sustainable linkages through redevelopment of vacant/underutilised backlands and opportunities for the creation of a civic space and improved public realm.</p> <p>Redevelopment of this area will provide an important interface between the Central Spins shopping areas and the Military Barracks to form a new dynamic place within the town centre.</p>	↕	↑	↕	↑	↑	↑	↕	↑	
<b>SEA Comment:</b> based on aerial photographs this would appear to support recolonising bare ground and scrub. The infall and town centre location is positive for several SEOS.									
Opportunity Site 6									
<p><b>Site Size: 0.3 HA (Circa)</b>  <b>Description:</b>  Opportunity Site 6 consists of a portion of backlands to the rear of Spencer St, on the eastern side of the Hazel Grove development. The area identified contains large swathes undeveloped/underutilised land. There is an existing access road to carpark, with an established pedestrian access (via laneway) from the car park to Spencer Street.</p> <p><b>Potential:</b>  Creation of a new streetscape along Hazel Grove and to create new improved permeable and legible corridors within the urban street/ footpath network.</p>	↓	↑	↕	↑	↑	↑	↕	↑	

Opportunity Site	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	
<p>SEA Comment: This site is a mixture of sheds/built land and vegetation with some mature tree. It is in poor condition so regeneration will be positive for streetscape and connectivity of town sections</p>									
Opportunity Site 7									
<p><b>Site Size:</b> 0.33 HA (Circa)  <b>Description:</b>            Opportunity Site 7 consists of the Former Imperial Hotel, the Motor Tax offices, vacant/underutilised buildings fronting the Mall and Rock Square.  <b>Potential:</b>            Revitalise and rejuvenate the north-eastern side of the Mall which consists of many vacant and underutilised historic buildings fronting the Mall and the Rock Square.            Owing to its location on The Mall and a potential The Mall ACA, particular attention would be required in terms of scale and design solutions.</p>	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
<p>SEA Comment: ↓↑↑            The repurposing the existing buildings within the site will have positive effects on all of the SEOs and their interrelationships. This is due to reuse and renovation of existing building with positive interactions around circular economy, cultural heritage and embedded carbon. The site further represents a central location and contributes to town centre uses and compact growth. The application of existing environmental protection measures will apply at project level.</p>									
Opportunity Site 8									
<p><b>Site Size:</b> 0.9 HA (Circa)  <b>Description:</b>            Opportunity site 8 is located to the rear of the Central Spine shopping area within the current Mill Lane carpark area and adjoins the church grounds. The Castlebar River runs along the western and northern boundaries of the Opportunity Site, the flood extend of the river touches the boundary (see Map ML3).  <b>Potential:</b>            Create new streetscape to rear of Main Street along the River corridor incorporating the urban greenway link and other urban linkages between the church grounds, the parking area and the surrounding primary streets.</p>	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
<p>SEA Comment: ↓↑↑            Creating a new streetscape to rear of Main Street along the River corridor incorporating the urban greenway link and other urban linkages between the church grounds, the parking area and the Main St. will have positive effects on all of the SEOs and their interrelationships.</p>									

Opportunity Site	BFF	PHH	W	SG	AQ C	LA	CH	MA	
Opportunity Site 9									
<p><b>Site Size:</b> 0.45 HA (Circa)</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Opportunity site 9 is located to the rear of properties along Ellison Street, and adjoins The Green (The Mall). There is a history of planning applications on the site but none have materialised. The site is dominated by an abandoned yellow cement silo centrally located within the site. The site has vehicular access points from Castle Street and Ellison Street</p> <p><b>Potential:</b> Create new development that has potential for higher densities and taller buildings. Owing to its location proximate to The Mall and a potential The Mall ACA, particular attention would be required in terms of scale and design solutions.</p>	↕	↑	↕	↕	↑	↕	↕	↑	
<p><b>SEA Comment:</b> ↓↑↕</p> <p>Based on aerial imagery, this site supports scrub with old buildings and mature treeline on the southern boundary. The potential for bats and nesting birds on the mature trees and old buildings, as well as potential loss of foraging habitat means the site should be subject to ecological surveys as appropriate. Proximity to the ACA would require a careful and high quality architectural design that contribute to the townscape character.</p>									
Opportunity Site 10									
<p><b>Site Size:</b> 0.2 HA (Circa)</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Opportunity site 10 is located along the Hopkins Rd link road, to the rear of McDonalds and Casey's petrol station. The site is enclosed on all sides by fencing and contains no structures, the site can be accessed from the north and the south.</p> <p><b>Potential:</b> The site is located in one of the busiest thoroughfares in Castlebar and is provides an opportunity to have active street frontage to the north. Limited retail which does not impact negatively on the vitality and vibrancy of the Inner Town Centre (Retail) Core may be considered.</p>	0	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	
<p><b>SEA Comment:</b> A review of aerial photography indicates this is built land and artificial surface. Positive or no interaction effects relating to SEOS</p>									
<p><b>NIR:</b> The opportunity sites are largely confined to the built up area in the town centre, and are more infill developments. These may have the standard construction and development type impacts associated with them, but in a zoning sense they do not pose a threat to the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. Those sites in proximity to the river should be particularly careful to mitigate against impact via the hydrological connection to the River Moy</p>									

