

Westport Local Area Plan 2022-2028

DRAFT Natura Impact Report
September 23

Mayo County Council
Áras an Chontae,
The Mall,
Co. Mayo.



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Purpose

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Executive Summary

This report contributes to Mayo County Council's legal obligation under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) to carry out a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) on its plans for effects on European sites.

Before a plan can be adopted, the 'competent authority' (Mayo County Council) needs to prove that the plan would have no significant effects on European sites' integrity to the satisfaction of Office of Public Works. An uncertain result is not acceptable and is treated as adverse until proven otherwise.

It is accepted best-practice for the HRA of strategic planning documents to be run as an iterative process alongside the plan development, with the emerging policies/objectives continually assessed for their possible effect on European sites and amended as necessary to ensure the adopted plan will not result in any significant effects on any European site (alone or in-combination). The Westport Local Area Plan (LAP), including the Local Transport Plan (LTP), is currently at the early stages of planning with the current policies/objectives in draft.

The Pre-Screening Assessment, assessing which European sites could be impacted upon by pathways (i.e., surface-water, air pollution etc), identified that two European sites have pathway-receptors for potential likely significant effects arising from the implementation of the Plan, these are:

- Clew Bay Complex SAC
- Brackloon Woods SAC

The AA Screening Assessment, which assesses the LAP policies/objectives and identifies those that could have an adverse impact upon a screened in European site, screened in 30 of the LAP policies/objectives, including nine of the land use zones, as having the potential to cause an adverse impact on the screened-in European sites integrity. The most likely effects of the LAP on these European sites are related to new development pressures including changes to surface and groundwater levels/quality (e.g., surface run-off), air pollution and increased recreational pressures arising from increased population in Westport and an increase in tourism.

In relation to the LTP, the AA Screening Assessment screened in one objective (related to the provision of a long term measure to develop a Southern Bypass) and a number of short term measures that propose new, or improvements to existing, footpaths and cycleways, as having potential to have a likely significant effect on the Clew Bay Complex SAC, due to potential indirect surface/ground water pathways and disturbance pathways.

Therefore, an NIR was required to determine whether the proposed Plan would result in significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the screened in SACs with respect to the site's structure, function, and/or conservation objectives.

The NIR determined that the Westport LAP (including the LTP) is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the screened in European sites due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. Additional mitigation measures in the plan also provide for enhancement and indirect protection of the European Sites through the Water Framework Directive, and protection of ecological corridors which play a supporting role in protecting the Natura 2000 Network.

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Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
CDP	County Development Plan
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
DoEHLG	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
EC	European Community
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
GWB	Groundwater Body
IROPI	Imperative Reason of Overriding Public Interest
LAP	Local Area Plan
LTP	Local Transport Plan
LUZ	Land Use Zone
MCDP	Mayo County Development Plan
NIR	Natura Impact Report
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service

OPW	Office of Public Works
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
PE	Population Equivalent
QI	Qualifying Interest
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPA	Special Protection Area
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
WFD	Water Framework Directive
ZoI	Zone of Influence

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

JBA Consulting Ireland Ltd. has been commissioned by Mayo County Council to undertake a Natura Impact Report (NIR) in relation to the Westport Local Area Plan (LAP) 2023 – 2029.

The Westport LAP sets out the land-use plan and strategy for the development of Westport over the period of 2023-2029 and will replace the previous LAP (2014-2020) when adopted. The LAP also includes the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The strategic aim of the Westport LTP is to provide for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services in Westport that will allow for the generation of a sustainable transport network that can cater for demand.

This NIR documents the Appropriate Assessment process and results in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora).

1.2 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) aims to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest across Europe. The requirements of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive have been transposed into Irish legislation by means of the Habitats Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94 of 1997) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011).

Under the Directive, a network of sites of nature conservation importance have been identified by each Member State as containing specified habitats or species requiring to be maintained or returned to favourable conservation status. In Ireland the network consists of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and also candidate sites, which together form the *Natura 2000* network.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that, in relation to European designated sites (i.e. SACs and SPAs that form the *Natura 2000* network), "*any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to **appropriate assessment** of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives*".

A competent authority (e.g. Local Authority) can only agree to a plan or project after having determined that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.

The competent authority is Mayo County Council.

1.3 Appropriate Assessment Process

Guidance on the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process was produced by the European Commission in 2002, which was subsequently developed into guidance specifically for Ireland by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG 2009 rev 2010). These guidance documents identify a staged approach to conducting an AA, as shown in Figure 1-1.



Figure 1-1: The Appropriate Assessment Process

1.3.1 Stage 1 - Screening for AA

The initial, screening stage of the Appropriate Assessment is to determine:

- whether the proposed plan or project is directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of the European designated site for nature conservation
- if it is likely to have a significant adverse effect on the European designated site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects

For those sites where potential adverse impacts are identified, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, further assessment is necessary to determine if the proposals will have an adverse impact on the integrity of a European designated site, taking into account the sites conservation objectives (i.e. the process proceeds to Stage 2).

1.3.2 Stage 2 - AA

This stage requires a more in-depth evaluation of the plan or project, and the potential direct and indirect impacts arising from it on the integrity and the interest features of the European designated site(s), alone and in-combination with other plans and projects, taking into account the site's structure, function and conservation objectives. Where required, mitigation or avoidance measures will be suggested, this will be reported in the form of a Natura Impact Report (NIR).

The competent authority can only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site(s) concerned. If this cannot be determined, and where mitigation cannot be achieved, then alternative solutions will need to be considered (i.e. the process proceeds to Stage 3).

1.3.3 Stage 3 - Alternative Solutions

Where adverse impacts on the integrity of European sites are identified, and mitigation cannot be satisfactorily implemented, alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the plan or project that avoid adverse impacts need to be considered. If none can be found, the process proceeds to Stage 4.

1.3.4 Stage 4 - Imperative Reason of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)

Where adverse impacts of a plan or project on the integrity of European sites are identified and no alternative solutions exist, the plan will only be allowed to progress if 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' can be demonstrated. In this case compensatory measures will be required.

The process only proceeds through each of the four stages for certain plans or projects. For example, for a plan or project, not connected with management of a site, but where no likely significant impacts are identified, the process stops at stage 1. Throughout the process, the precautionary principle must be applied, so that any uncertainties do not result in adverse impacts on a site.

1.3.5 Recent judgements of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) and how they are used in this assessment

The CJEU issued a ruling on the consideration of avoidance and reduction measures as a result of the case known as *People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta* (Case C-323/17). This judgement stated that measures intended to reduce or avoid effects on a European site should only be considered within the framework of an AA, and it is not permissible to take into account such measures at the screening stage. In practice, this means that any activities that are not integral to the plan or project (i.e. the plan or project could conceivably take place without them) and have the effect of avoiding or reducing an impact on a European site, cannot be considered at the screening stage.

The CJEU ruling in the case of *Grace & Sweetman* [2018] (C-164/17) clarified the difference between avoidance and reduction (mitigation) measures and compensation. Measures intended to compensate for the negative effects of a plan or project cannot be taken into account in the assessment of the implications of a plan or project, and instead are considered under Article 6(4). This means that any plan or project where an effect on the integrity of a European site remains and can only be offset by compensation, would need to proceed under Article 6(4), demonstrating "imperative reasons of overriding public interest".

The judgements referred to as the Dutch Nitrogen cases [2018] (C-293/17 and C-294/17) have important implications for plans and projects that could potentially impact on sites that are exceeding critical thresholds for input of damaging ammonia (but could also reasonably apply where other nutrients are impacting European sites). The judgements state that the use of thresholds to exclude project impacts is acceptable in principle, and that strategic plans can be used as mitigation but only with consideration of the certainty (or otherwise) of the outcomes of those strategic plans. It clarifies that where the status of a habitat type is already unfavourable the possibility of authorising activities which increase the problem is necessarily limited.

The CJEU ruling in the case of *Holohan v An Bord Pleanála* (C-462/17) also clarified the importance in AA of taking into account habitat types and species outside the boundary of the European site, where implications of the impacts on those habitat and species may impact the conservation objectives of the European site. In this assessment functionally linked and supporting habitat for species outside of European site boundaries are assessed where they could potentially impact the conservation objectives of any screened in European sites.

1.3.6 Methodology Guidance Documents

This NIR has been prepared having regard to the Birds and Habitats Directives, the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-15 as amended and relevant jurisprudence of the EU and Irish courts. The following documents have also guided the assessment:

- DoEHLG (2009) *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland* Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Revised 2010.
- European Commission (2000) *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission.
- European Commission (et al. 2002) *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission.
- EC (2013) *Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats*. Version EUR 28. European Commission.
- Fossitt, J. (2000). *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland*. The Heritage Council, Kilkenny.
- *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland - Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal*, Second Ed. (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, (CIEEM 2018)
- (DTA 2022) *The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook*, UK by Tyldesley, D. and Chapman, C. (accessed online only with login requirements)

1.3.7 Data Sources

The data sources below have informed the assessment:

- NPWS website (www.npws.ie), (<https://www.npws.ie/>), where site synopses, Natura 2000 data forms and conservation objectives were obtained along with Annex I habitat distribution data and status reports.
- (NPWS 2019a) *The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland*. Volume 1: Summary Overview. Unpublished NPWS report.
- (NPWS 2019b) *The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland*. Volume 2: Habitat Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report.
- (NPWS 2019c). *The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland*. Volume 3: Species Assessments. Unpublished NPWS report.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA 2021) maps website (<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>)
- Geological Survey Ireland Spatial Resources (GSI 2021) maps website (dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/)

1.3.8 Limitations and Constraints

The assessment necessarily relies on some assumptions, and it was inevitably subject to some limitations. These do not affect the conclusion, but the following points are recorded to ensure the basis of the assessment is clear:

- The LAP is a higher-level plan. Therefore, this assessment cannot include any detailed assessment of any developments that may arise from the implementation of this Plan. Where broad level assessments are required to determine the potential for cumulative or in-combination impacts, the precautionary principle is used.
- Any changes to the Plan will require re-assessment by a suitably qualified Ecologist to determine if further screening and assessment will be required. In all instances of this assessment, the precautionary principle is used.

2 Westport Local Area Plan 2023-2029

2.1 Background

The LAP sets out the overall development strategy and planning policy objectives for the town for coming years. It also seeks to provide for the medium-term planning and development benefit for Westport as a Key Town identified in the Northern & Western Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032 and which is also reflected in the County Development Plan. The Core Strategy, Settlement Hierarchy and Housing Need and Demand Assessment outlined in Chapter 2 of the Mayo County Development Plan (MCDP) sets out the growth agenda for the town of Westport.

The LAP supports economic growth, education service and community related development in line with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The plan's policy objectives, and development management guidelines and standards have also been informed by best practice, national planning guidance and the MCDP, where appropriate. The Local Transport Plan sets out a clear strategy for sustainable development that is closely aligned with sustainable transportation.

2.2 Profile of Westport

Westport (Figure 2-1) is located approximately 10.5km west of Castlebar. The town is located on the convergence of the N59 and N5 national roads, with immediate access from the eastern edge of the town to the Westport-Dublin Railway Line. Westport has been designated as a Key Town in the RSES. Cognisance is attributed to the strategic location of Westport and the importance of cross boundary collaboration with adjoining Local Authorities and other relevant stakeholders as necessary.

The town also benefits from key energy and telecommunications infrastructure which are considered key for the location of industrial and technological companies, for example. Westport is connected to An Bord Gáis gas pipeline network, to ENet and BT fibre network. The town has an important sub-regional role in delivering retail provision, employment and community facilities.

A crucial part of the town's infrastructure is Allergan Pharmaceuticals; the largest industrial employer in Co. Mayo, accountable for producing over 5% of the county's GDP and more than 1.5% of the GDP of the Western region of Ireland. The town is sufficiently serviced with primary and post primary level facilities; however, there will be a requirement for extra school place provision at both primary and post primary levels should population increases occur. Proximity to Castlebar for third level resources is also a key benefit.

In terms of population trends, according to the most recent 2016 Central Statistics Office CSO figures, the total population of Westport was recorded as 6,198 persons, which represents a slight increase on the 2011 recorded population of 6,063.

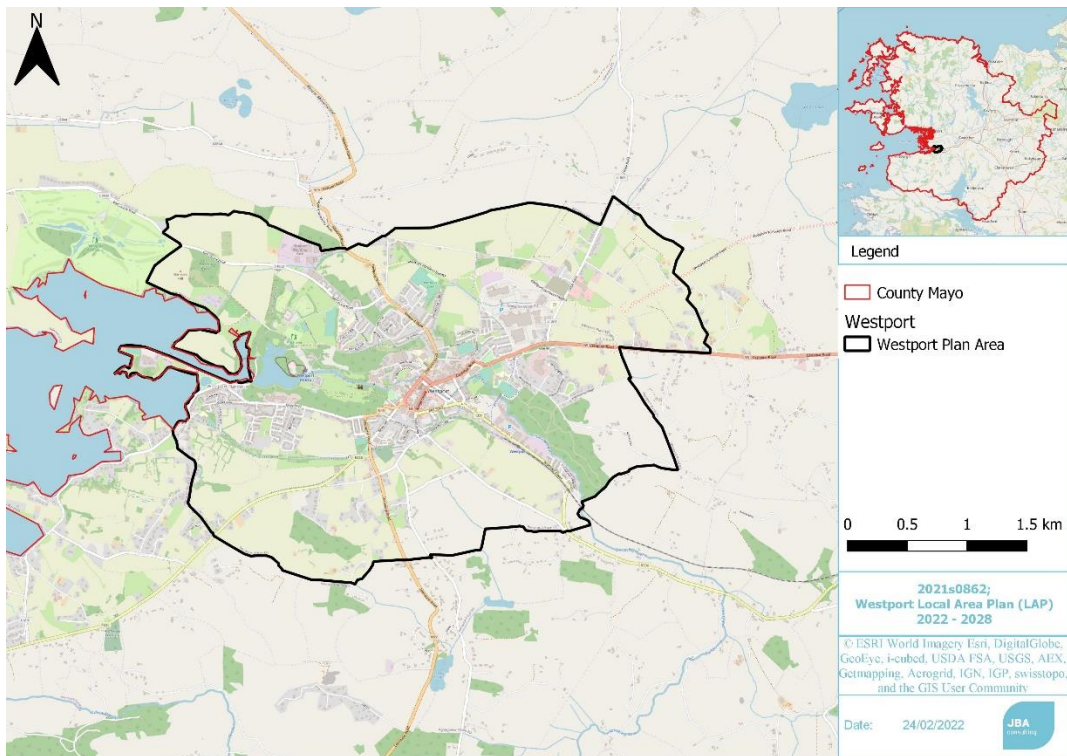


Figure 2-1 Location of Westport and the Plan Boundary

2.3 Vision Statement

The current Westport LAP is in draft and therefore, only draft policies and objectives are available. However, there is a vision statement, which is as follows:

"To support and grow the role of Westport as a key economic driver in the county and as a national tourism hub, capitalising on its significant tourism related assets, including its designation as a Heritage Town and its status as a settlement with strategic development potential of a regional scale, in tandem with the Key Town of Castlebar, within the context of Galway Metropolitan City, Sligo Regional Growth Centre and its location in relation the Atlantic Economic Corridor, in order to facilitate long-term economic growth within the context of a high quality environment supporting a wide range of services and amenities, thereby making it attractive as a place to work, live and invest in."

2.4 Westport Local Transport Plan

2.4.1 Plan Vision

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Westport envisions the development of a transport system that embodies sustainability, accessibility, and community wellbeing. By integrating land use planning and transport planning, the plan aims to create a vibrant and inclusive environment that prioritises people and encourages a shift away from private car usage. The vision is to establish a network of streets that provide seamless connectivity, reduce traffic, and vehicle emissions, while enhancing the quality of public spaces. Through the promotion of active travel and sustainable modes, the plan seeks to improve accessibility for all individuals and journey types, fostering a more inclusive environment.

Through the appropriate management of parking and considering the needs of local businesses and residents, the LTP strives to strike a balance that accommodates everyone's requirements. Ensuring road safety, with a particular focus on vulnerable users, is a fundamental aspect of the vision. By establishing clear objectives and adhering to the principles of climate change mitigation, sustainable development, and community engagement, the Westport LTP aims to create a transport system that enhances the overall quality of life in the town.

2.4.2 Plan Measures

All modes of transport within Westport have been addressed but with a focus on Active Travel incentives. The standard of walking within the centre of Westport will be improved following pedestrian permeability upgrades through existing car parks. Localised widening of footpaths across the town will aim to improve accessibility. Cycling interventions have been proposed to provide a more complete network. This includes segregated cycle tracks and an increased area of shared-use paths.

The measures have been categorised based on the delivery time framework as follows:

- Short-term: Within 5 years
- Medium-term: 6-10 years
- Long-term: More than 10 years

Full details of these measures can be found in Table 5-4 and are shown on Figure 2-2.

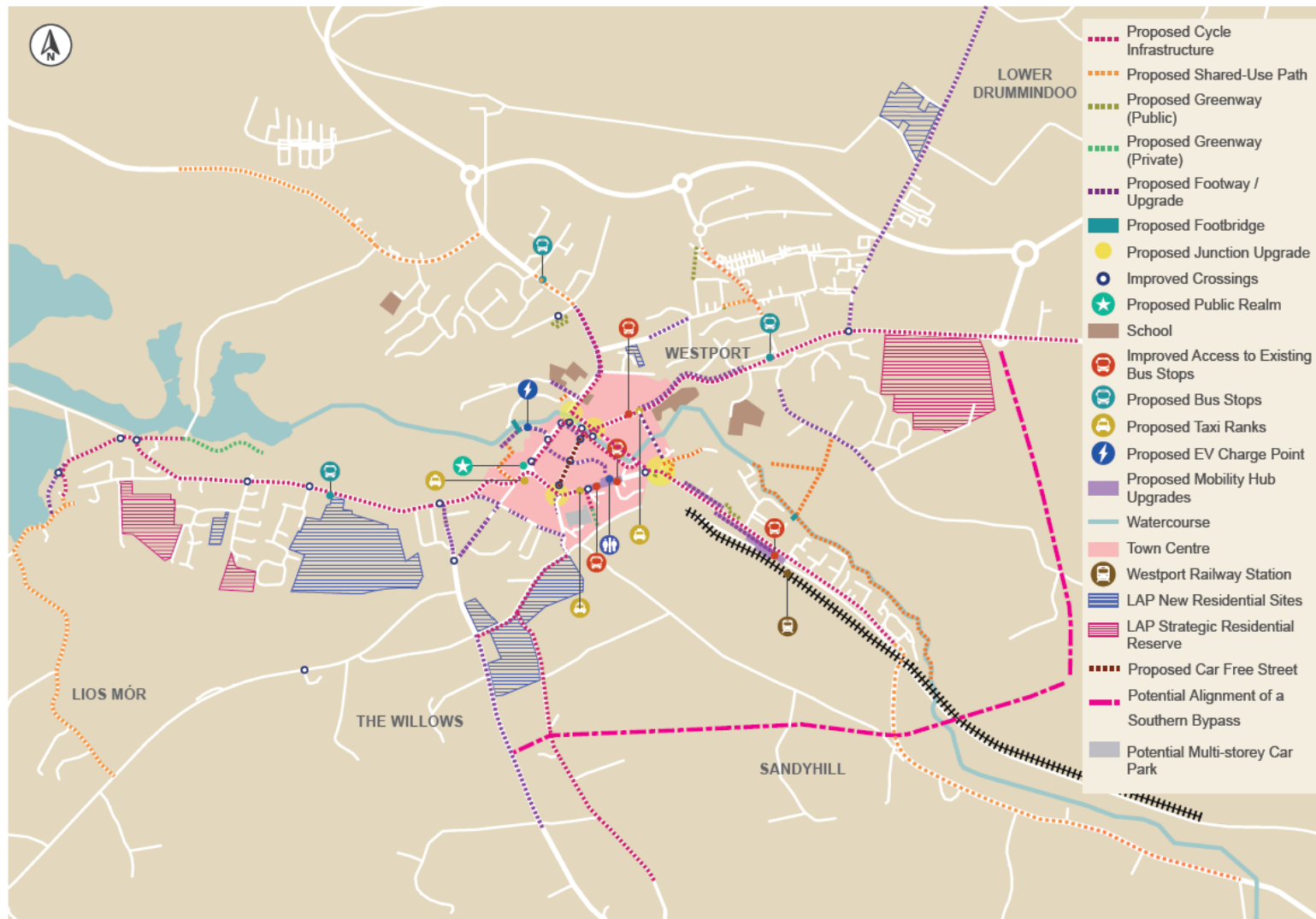


Figure 2-2: Proposed LTP Measures.

3 European Sites, Pathways and Potential Impacts

3.1 Zone of Influence

The Zone of Influence (Zol) within which potential impacts from any proposed project or plan must be considered for significance depends on a variety of factors. This includes the nature, location and extent of the plan or project, the ecological receptors present within the European sites within the area and the potential for in-combination impacts (DoEHLG 2009). The DoEHLG (2009) guidance identifies that Screening for AA of a plan or project should consider the following European sites:

- Any European sites within or adjacent to the plan or project area.
- Any European sites within the likely Zol of the plan or project. This is dependent on the nature and scale of the plan, with 15km generally recommended for plans, but potentially much less for projects.
- Any European sites that are more than 15km from the plan or project area, but may potentially be impacted upon, for example, through a hydrological connection.

When determining the Zol for this Plan, the nature and scale of the proposed policies and objectives are considered in relation to the conservation objectives of the European sites that may be connected to the Plan. For an impact to occur, a Source (potential impacts from the Plan), Pathway (e.g., surface water, groundwater, land, or air connectivity) and Receptor (Qualifying Interests (QIs) of the European sites) must be present.

The study area of the LTP coincides with the Westport LAP boundary.

3.2 European Sites in Zol

There is one European Site located within the Plan area, and a further ten SACs and SPAs within 15km of the plan area. These European Sites include:

- Clew Bay Complex SAC (within Plan area)
- Brackloon Woods SAC
- Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex SAC
- Newport River SAC
- Owenduff/Nephin Complex SAC
- Owenduff/Nephin Complex SPA
- Oldhead Wood SAC
- Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC
- West Connacht Coast SAC
- Lough Carra SPA
- River Moy SAC

Figure 3-1 displays the European site locations in relation to the Plan area. Refer to Table 3-1 for the Qualifying Features for each European site.

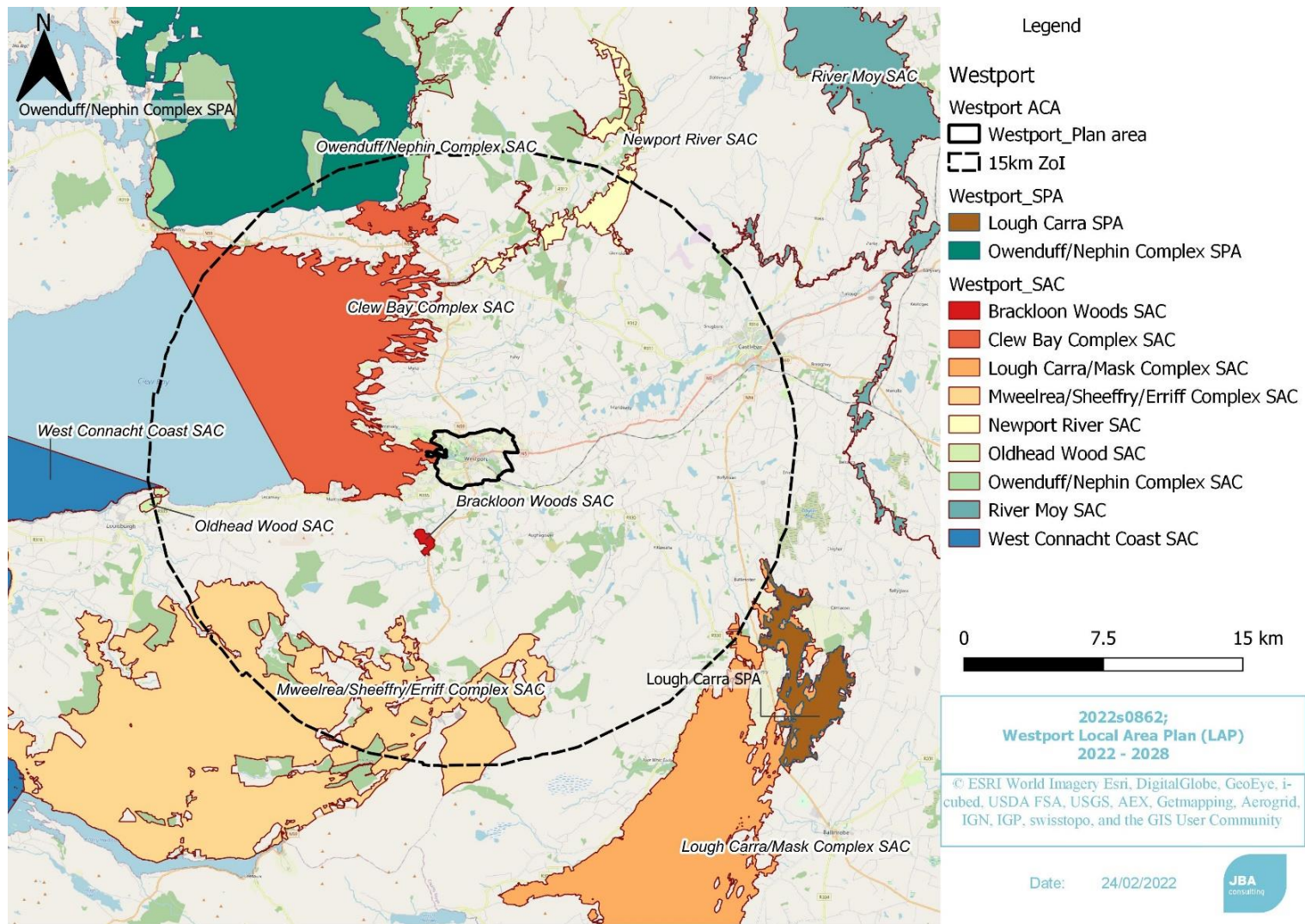


Figure 3-1: European sites located within Westport Local Area Plan and within 15km of the Plan Area

Table 3-1: European Sites within 15km of the Plan Area

Site Code	Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Qualifying Interests	Brief description of site
001482	Clew Bay Complex SAC	0m (adjacent)	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Coastal lagoons [1150]</p> <p>Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]</p> <p>Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]</p> <p>Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]</p> <p>Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</p> <p>Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0]</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]</p> <p>Geyer's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>) [1013]</p> <p>Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]</p> <p>Harbour Seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>) [1365]</p>	<p>Wide, west-facing bay on the west coast of Co. Mayo. The geomorphology of the bay has resulted in a complex series of interlocking bays creating a wide variety of marine and terrestrial habitats. Important populations of Otter and Common (Harbour) Seal are found in Clew Bay, and the snail species <i>Vertigo geyeri</i>, which is also listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, has been recorded from this site.</p>
000471	Brackloon Woods SAC	2.76km SW	<p>Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]</p>	<p>The wood is relatively species-rich with Sessile Oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>), Downy Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>), Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>), Wych Elm (<i>Ulmus glabra</i>), Rowan (<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>) and Rusty Willow (<i>Salix cinerea</i> subsp. <i>oleifolia</i>) occurring Woodland has been fragmented by coniferous plantations, the basic structure persists and Brackloon Woods remain an area of considerable ecological importance.</p>
001932	Mweelrea/Sheefry/Erriff Complex SAC	7.4km S	<p>Coastal lagoons [1150]</p> <p>Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</p> <p>Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</p> <p>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p> <p>Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) [2150]</p> <p>Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170]</p> <p>Humid dune slacks [2190]</p> <p>Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0]</p>	<p>Covers a large area of hills of south Co. Mayo. Site contains a number of extensive and important river systems, and Geyer's whorl snails occur at Dooaghtry. The Erriff River system supports an important population of salmon and otters are known to breed in the lakes at this site. Peat erosion occurs in places. The vast areas which were formerly covered by lowland blanket bog are now fragmented, often by coniferous forestry plantations.</p>

Site Code	Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Qualifying Interests	Brief description of site
			<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</p> <p>Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea [3130]</p> <p>Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]</p> <p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</p> <p>European dry heaths [4030]</p> <p>Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]</p> <p>Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130]</p> <p>Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430]</p> <p>Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</p> <p>Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]</p> <p>Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]</p> <p>Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]</p> <p>Alkaline fens [7230]</p> <p>Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110]</p> <p>Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]</p> <p>Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]</p> <p>Geyer's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>) [1013]</p> <p>Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) [1014]</p> <p>Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029]</p> <p>Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106]</p> <p>Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]</p> <p>Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) [1395]</p> <p>Slender Naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833]</p>	
002144	Newport River SAC	7.9km N	<p>Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029]</p> <p>Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106]</p>	Relatively short, flowing from Beltra Lough to the sea at Newport, Co. Mayo. Flows through wet grassland and wet heath.
000534	Owenduff/Nephin Complex SAC	12.2km N	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</p> <p>Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]</p> <p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</p>	Large area of relatively intact blanket bog and mountains incorporates the catchment of the Owenduff River and much of the Nephin Beg Mountain range. Dystrophic lakes of various sizes are found in areas of low-lying blanket bog. Juniper forms scrub,

Site Code	Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Qualifying Interests	Brief description of site
			<p>Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] Marsh Saxifrage (<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i>) [1528] Slender Green Feather-moss (<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i>) [6216]</p>	<p>relatively rarely, and is confined to the larger and ungrazed islands. Wet heath is widespread throughout the site. Salmon spawning occurs on the Owenduff, the Tarsaghaun River to the east, the Glenadeeghan and the Baunduff/Scardaun, mainly in the upper reaches.</p>
004098	Owenduff/Nephin Complex SPA	12.7km N	<p>Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</p>	<p>Merlin nests within the site (population conservatively estimated at between 4 and 8 pairs). This species prefers heather bog areas, particularly marginal zones between blanket bog and heath/upland grassland. Merlin prey upon small birds, especially Meadow Pipits. A nationally important population of Golden Plover also breeds within the site (15 pairs in 2004).</p>
000532	Oldhead Wood SAC	13.9km W	<p>European dry heaths [4030] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]</p>	<p>The woodland is dominated by Sessile Oak. Extreme development of Atlantic oakwood and is one of the only Irish sites where this habitat occurs directly adjacent to the coast. Dry heath occurs, though parts of this are being overgrazed.</p>
001774	Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC	14.1km SE	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea [3130] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] European dry heaths [4030] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] Alkaline fens [7230] Limestone pavements [8240] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] Lesser Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>) [1303]</p>	<p>The underlying geology results in a good diversity of habitats, which support many scarce and rare plants and animals. Curramore House provides a summer breeding site of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat. Suitable features also make the area fit for otter foraging.</p>

Site Code	Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Qualifying Interests	Brief description of site
002998	West Connacht Coast SAC	14.2km W	<p>Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355] Slender Green Feather-moss (<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i>) [6216] Common Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>) [1349]</p>	<p>Bottle-nosed Dolphin occurs within the site in all seasons and the area comprises a key habitat for the species both regionally and within Irish waters as a whole. Adults closely accompanying calves are commonly observed in summer and autumn months at a number of locations within the site, and group foraging, resting or social behaviour are also regularly recorded.</p>
004051	Lough Carra SPA	14.3km SE	<p>Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]</p>	<p>One of the prime examples in Ireland of a hard water marl lake. It is fringed by a diverse complex of limestone and wetland habitats. The wetland habitats include both Great Fen-sedge (<i>Cladium mariscus</i>) fen and alkaline fen. In addition to the fen habitats, there are widespread reed swamps, wet grassland and some freshwater marsh communities around the lakeshores.</p>
002298	River Moy SAC	14.8km NE	<p>Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510] Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Alkaline fens [7230] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) [1092] Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1095] Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1096] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]</p>	<p>Alluvial woodland occurs at several locations along the shores of the lakes. Some of the bogs include significant areas of active raised bog habitat. Alkaline fen is considered to be well developed within the site. An extensive stand occurs as part of a wetland complex at Mannin and Island Lakes on the Glore River. The Moy system is one of Ireland's premier salmon waters, with Sea Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Otter and White-clawed Crayfish also present. Forestry poses a threat in that sedimentation and acidification can occur. Sedimentation can cover the gravel beds resulting in a loss of suitable spawning grounds.</p>

3.3 Potential Impacts to European Sites from the LAP

Development for housing, business, infrastructure, services, and recreation/tourism promoted as part of the Westport LAP can potentially have adverse impacts on the habitats and species for which European sites are designated.

These impacts can be direct, such as habitat loss, fragmentation, or degradation, or indirect such as disturbance or pollution from construction, transportation etc. They can include long-term effects associated with the operational phase of proposed developments or general population growth, and short-term effects arising from construction phases.

This chapter identifies the potential impacts and their pathways to European sites within and adjacent to Westport which may arise from the Westport LAP and LTP. It then goes on to identify the types of impact/pathway to which the qualifying features present upon the European sites are particularly sensitive.

As outlined in the EC guidance on the assessment of plans and projects affecting European sites (EC, 2002), impacts that could potentially occur through the implementation of Plans are required to be assessed. General potential hazards are as follows in Table 3-2 below:

Table 3-2: Potential Hazards to European sites

Potential Hazard	Description
Habitat loss	This is a loss of habitat within the designated boundaries of a European site – it is expected that there would be no direct loss to development resulting from implementation of the LAP.
Habitat fragmentation	This is where activities result in the separation of available habitats or split extensive areas of suitable habitat. Most likely to affect species.
Changes in physical regime	These are changes to physical process that will alter the present characteristics of the European site e.g., fluvial, and geomorphological processes, erosion processes, deposition.
Physical damage	This includes recreational pressures such as trampling and erosion, and where sites are close to urban areas, other damaging activities may occur such as rubbish tipping, vandalism, arson, and predation, particularly by cats.
Habitat/community simplification	Changes to environmental conditions, due to human activities, which result in a reduction and fragmentation of habitats that will reduce biodiversity.
Disturbance (noise, visual)	Activities which result in disturbance, causing sensitive birds and mammals to deviate from their normal, preferred behaviour, such as construction, recreational, traffic.
Competition from invasive non-native species	Activities may cause the introduction or spread of invasive non-native animals and plants, which could result in changes to community composition and even to the complete loss of native communities.
Changes in water levels or tables	Activities that may affect surface and groundwater levels, such as land drainage and abstraction, may have adverse impacts on water dependant habitats and species.
Changes in water quality	Activities that may impact upon water quality, such as accidental pollution spills, run-off from urban areas, nutrient enrichment from agriculture, and discharge from sewage works, may adversely affect wetland habitats and species.
Changes to surface water flooding	Activities that may result in a reduction or increase in the frequency and extent of surface water flooding, which may affect riverine and floodplain habitats
Turbidity and siltation	Increases in turbidity within water environments can impact upon aquatic plants, fish and wildfowl due to sedimentation and reduction in penetrable light.
Pollution	Activities that may lead to the release of pollutants to the air such as oxides of nitrogen, oxides of sulphur or ammonia, or pollutants deposited on the ground through acidification or terrestrial eutrophication via soil (deposition of nitrogen).

3.3.1 Qualifying Interests and Sensitivity to Hazards

Table 3-3 shows the qualifying features of the European sites within the ZoI of the Westport LAP and identifies the hazards to which they are most sensitive.

It must be noted that during the assessment of the potential impacts of the LAP on a European site, all the potential hazards will be considered.

Table 3-3: Sensitivity of Qualifying Features to Potential Hazards

European site	Qualifying Interest	Habitat loss	Habitat fragmentation	Changes in physical regime	Physical damage	Habitat/community simplification	Disturbance (noise/visual)	Competition from invasive non-native species	Changes in water levels or table	Changes in water quality	Changes to surface water flooding	Turbidity and siltation	Pollution
Clew Bay Complex SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Large shallow inlets and bays												
	Embryonic shifting dunes	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Coastal lagoons	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Annual vegetation of drift lines	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
	Perennial vegetation of stony banks												
	Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
	Machairs (* in Ireland)	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓
	Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brackloon Woods SAC	Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex SAC	Coastal lagoons	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Annual vegetation of drift lines	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
	Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

European site	Qualifying Interest	Habitat loss	Habitat fragmentation	Changes in physical regime	Physical damage	Habitat/community simplification	Disturbance (noise/visual)	Competition from invasive non-native species	Changes in water levels or table	Changes in water quality	Changes to surface water flooding	Turbidity and siltation	Pollution
	Dunes with <i>Salix repens ssp. argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) Humid dune slacks												
	Machairs (* in Ireland)	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓
	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> European dry heaths Alpine and Boreal heaths	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓
	Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓
	Blanket bogs (* if active bog) Transition mires and quaking bogs Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Alkaline fens	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>)	✓			✓			✓					✓
	Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓					✓
	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

European site	Qualifying Interest	Habitat loss	Habitat fragmentation	Changes in physical regime	Physical damage	Habitat/community simplification	Disturbance (noise/visual)	Competition from invasive non-native species	Changes in water levels or table	Changes in water quality	Changes to surface water flooding	Turbidity and siltation	Pollution
	Snail)												
	<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon)												
	<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Newport River SAC	<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Owenduff/Nepin Complex SAC	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> Alpine and Boreal heaths	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓
	Blanket bogs (* if active bog)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Transition mires and quaking bogs	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i> (Marsh Saxifrage)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i> (Slender Green Feather-moss)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Owenduff/Nepin Complex SPA	Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
	Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
Oldhead Wood SAC	European dry heaths	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓

European site	Qualifying Interest	Habitat loss	Habitat fragmentation	Changes in physical regime	Physical damage	Habitat/community simplification	Disturbance (noise/visual)	Competition from invasive non-native species	Changes in water levels or table	Changes in water quality	Changes to surface water flooding	Turbidity and siltation	Pollution
	in the British Isles												
Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp.	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	European dry heaths	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites)	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
	Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Alkaline fens	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Limestone pavements	✓			✓								✓
	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> (Lesser Horseshoe Bat)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
	<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i> (Slender Green Feather-moss)	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓		✓
West Connacht Coast SAC	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Lough Carra SPA	<i>Larus canus</i> (Common Gull)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
River Moy SAC	Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510]	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
	Active raised bogs Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Alkaline fens	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

European site	Qualifying Interest	Habitat loss	Habitat fragmentation	Changes in physical regime	Physical damage	Habitat/community simplification	Disturbance (noise/visual)	Competition from invasive non-native species	Changes in water levels or table	Changes in water quality	Changes to surface water flooding	Turbidity and siltation	Pollution
	Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

3.4 Potential Impacts from the Plan

3.4.1 Introduction

The LAP has the potential to cause a number of direct and indirect effects on European sites via one or more pathways. Such potential effects include long-term effects associated with the operational phase of proposed developments or general population growth, and short-term effects arising from the development construction phases. The main potential effects are described below.

3.4.2 Urbanisation

Urbanisation is a broad term that can act as a pathway to produce a number of often disparate impacts to European sites. The population of Westport from the 2016 census was 6,198, an increase of 2.23% from 2011 which was 6,063.

Population increase in Westport will lead to an increase in impacts from development. Impacts from increased urbanisation may include:

- Habitat loss should the development occur within the boundaries of a European site. Loss of supporting habitats, grazing, and roosting areas used by wetland birds that are not within the boundaries of the designated site but that provide important functional habitat linkages, can also be a significant impact.
- Physical damage, for example from trampling and erosion, and activities such as fly-tipping, littering, vandalism, arson, and predation, particularly by cats.
- Habitat fragmentation, whereby new development results in the separation of available habitats or splits extensive areas of suitable habitat. It is most likely to impact upon species.
- Disturbance (noise and visual) associated with both the construction phase (e.g., from plant movements, machinery) and also the operational phase (e.g., from users of the development undertaking activities such as walking or water sports which generate disturbance) of developments. This typically affects sensitive species such as birds and mammals causing them to deviate from their normal preferred behaviour.
- Air pollution from increased traffic.
- Increased recreational impacts.

3.4.3 Recreational Impacts

Increased recreational pressures from urban populations, including dog walking, jogging, cycling, horse riding, motorbike scrambling, boating and other water-based recreational activities are likely to result from new housing developments and population increases.

Improved access to the countryside and increased tourism will also attract more visitors to the area as well as residents. This can lead to significant pressures on sensitive habitats resulting in damage and disturbance to the species they support. Typical impacts of tourism and recreation include:

- Physical damage, for example from trampling and erosion
- Disturbance to species, such as ground-nesting birds and wintering wildfowl, from walking, cycling and water sports, resulting in increased mortality and nesting failures, and displacement of species
- Air pollution and disturbance from traffic
- Disturbance from dogs and damage from dog excrement.

In addition, where sites are close to urban areas and new developments, recreational pressures can be exacerbated by other damaging activities such as rubbish tipping, vandalism, arson, and predation, particularly by cats.

Many European sites will be vulnerable to some degree of impact resulting from recreational pressure, although the effects of recreational impacts are complex and very much dependent on the specific conditions and interest features at each site. For example, some bird species are more sensitive to disturbance associated with walkers or dogs than others; some habitats will be more sensitive to trampling than others; and some sites will be more accessible than others.

Most recreational activities with the potential to affect European sites are 'casual' and pursued opportunistically (e.g., walking, walking dogs, riding) which makes it difficult to quantify or predict the impacts of these activities on European sites and harder to control or manage. It also means it is difficult to explore in detail all potential impacts of recreational pressures at the strategic level. However, it is possible for plans and strategies to influence recreational use of European sites through the planning process, for example by increasing the amount of green/open space and leisure/recreational facilities required within or near developments if potentially vulnerable European sites are located nearby.

As Clew Bay Complex SAC is located adjacent to the Plan area it is likely to be impacted by recreational activities. A portion of the boundaries of the site are relatively accessible to the public by footpaths and roads. The Bay is likely to be used by pleasure crafts and for other water-based recreational activities.

The screening assessment will consider the potential for recreational pressures on a European site by taking into consideration the vulnerability of their interest features to such pressures, the accessibility of the site to the public, the likely attractiveness of the site and its habitats/species to visitors.

3.4.4 Transport and Related Infrastructure

To enhance the local economy of Westport and to promote residential, commercial, and recreational development, transport and its related infrastructure will likely increase. New or additional transport infrastructure to support expanding development can have impacts, during construction and operation, on European Sites, and can act as a pathway to produce several usually disparate impacts to European sites. This can include:

- Habitat loss should any infrastructure development occur within the boundaries of a European site.
- Loss of supporting habitats, damaging or changing feeding and roosting locations used by wetland birds that are not within the boundaries of the designated site but that provide important functional habitat linkages, can also be a significant impact.
- Habitat fragmentation, whereby new development results in the separation of available habitats or splits extensive areas of suitable habitat. It is most likely to impact upon species.
- Disturbance (noise and visual) associated with both the construction phase (e.g. from plant movements, machinery) and also the operational phase (e.g. increased traffic). This typically affects sensitive species such as birds and mammals causing them to deviate from their normal preferred behaviour.
- Air pollution from increased traffic both during the construction and operational phases.

3.4.5 Hydrological Impacts

New development and population increase can result in hydrological effects to existing watercourses and groundwater resources. Such effects can include changes to surface and ground water flows, quality and levels; this can have subsequent effects on habitats and supported species. The main types of potential hydrological effects are as follows:

- *Water abstraction* – new developments would increase the demand for water resulting in increased levels of water abstraction and subsequently affect surface and/or ground water flow, quality, and levels. Any such effects would be more extreme during the summer as water demand will peak at this time. The assessment of potential effects of increased water demand will consider how the public water supply system operates and how it is regulated with other water-resource consents.
- *Water discharges* – new developments could result in an increase in discharges to water via foul and surface water/storm water drainage (flood risk). This could also occur during construction phases (e.g., oil spillage or other pollution incidents from construction plant and machinery) but would be short-term and of reduced significance. Discharges can also occur during the operational phase of works through the increased use of waterways by motor powered boats and oil from a higher number of cars using roads close to the watercourse network. Such discharges can impact on surface water and ground water quality, quantity, and flows. The water quality effects of the plan are likely to be either controlled by existing consent regimes (which must undergo AA) or have diffuse 'in-combination' effects that are difficult to quantify and therefore any assessment must focus on the development of suitable mitigating policy that will minimise the impacts of development on water quality.

The screening assessment will consider the potential for impacts on a European site due to changes in water levels and/or quality by taking into consideration the vulnerability of their interest features to such impacts, and the pathways i.e. the hydrological connectivity between the site and the areas proposed for development.

In line with the *People over Wind & Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta Case C-323/1*, policy or proposal-level protective and mitigation measures relating to water abstraction and/or water discharges will only be considered at the AA stage (NIR).

A large proportion of the activities which exploit water resources, such as agriculture, flood defence, recreation, power generation, fisheries or nature conservation, will not be directly controlled or influenced by options/policies contained within the LAP. Furthermore, specific consenting regimes, independent of the Local Plan, tend to regulate water supply and exploitation in relation to water-resource sensitive European sites. However, development promoted or supported by the Local Plan will likely increase demand for water.

3.4.6 Air Quality Effects

New developments and an increase in population have the potential to result in increased use of the road network by vehicles, which could have adverse effects on air quality. This could have subsequent effects on habitats sensitive to air quality changes and higher deposits of nitrogen dioxide, particulates, and sulphur dioxide (diesel trains).

It should be noted that the likelihood of this effect is greatly reduced as the distance increases between the deposit area (typically the road network) and the European site. Pollutant levels can be expected to fall noticeably at a distance less than 50m from the source and can be expected to fall to background levels at more than 200m. From a study conducted by (Smithers, et al., 2016), in relation to the amounts of NO_x and NO₂ associated with vehicle emissions, respectively, levels are greatest within the first 50-100m from the road - but could also become evident at increased distances.

The nearest available Air Quality Index for the area is overall good. The nearest air quality station is Castle Bar, Co. Mayo, this is located 13.2km north-east from the Plan boundary. (EPA, 2021).

3.5 An Initial Screening of European Sites within 15km of the Plan Area

Eleven European sites are located within 15km of the Plan boundary. No further sites are hydrologically linked.

Some of these European Sites can be further screened out based on lack of pathways from the plan. In Table 3-4 below, these sites are further screened for pathways including surface water, groundwater, and air pathways, as well as disturbance to species if applicable. European sites are screened-in if at least one pathway is identified in the Zol.

Table 3-4: European Sites Pre-Screening based on ZOI and Potential Pathways

Site Code	European Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Surface water pathway	Groundwater pathway	Air Pathway	Disturbance pathway	Pathway?
001482	Clew Bay Complex SAC	0m (adjacent)	Yes - Carrowbeg River flows through plan area	Yes - located within same groundwater body as the plan (Newport, IE_WE_G_0023)	Yes - SAC is within 5km of plan boundary	Yes - SAC designated for Otter which may be present within the plan boundary.	Yes
000471	Brackloon Woods SAC	2.76km	No - On Owenwee River which does not flow through plan area	Yes - located within same GWB as the plan (Clifden Castlebar, IE_WE_G_0017)	Yes - SAC is within 5km of plan boundary	N/A (no species Qualifying Interest (QI)).	Yes
001932	Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex SAC	7.4km	No - site is located in different sub catchments from Plan	No - The site is located a significant distance from the plan and is unlikely to be impacted upon by any alterations to groundwater as a result of the Plan	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Geyer's Whorl Snail, Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail, Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Salmon and Otter are qualifying interests of this site, however, there is not considered to be any direct disturbance pathway between the Plan area and these species.	No
002144	Newport River SAC	7.9km	No - On Newport River which does not flow through the plan area	No - The site is located a significant distance from the plan and the river is unlikely to be impacted upon by any alterations to groundwater as a result of the Plan	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Freshwater Pearl Mussel and Salmon are QI's of the SAC, however, there is not considered to be any direct disturbance pathway between the Plan area and these species.	No
000534	Owenduff/Nepin Complex SAC	12.2km	No - site is located in different sub catchments from Plan	No - located within different GWB from plan (Malranny, IE_WE_G_0027)	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Salmon, Otter, Marsh Saxifrage and Slender Green Feather-moss are QI's, however, due to the distance from the plan area there is not considered to be any direct disturbance pathway between the Plan area and these species.	No
004098	Owenduff/Nepin Complex SPA	12.7km	No - site is located in different sub catchments from Plan	No - located within different GWB from plan (Malranny, IE_WE_G_0027)	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Merlin and Golden Plover are QI's for the site. Due to the habitats these species utilise there is not considered to be any direct disturbance pathway between the Plan area and these species.	No
000532	Oldhead Wood SAC	13.9km	No - site is located in different sub	No - The site is located a significant distance from the plan and is unlikely	Unlikely pathway due to distance	N/A (no species QI).	No

			catchments from Plan	to be impacted upon by any alterations to groundwater as a result of the Plan			
001774	Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC	14.1km	No - site is located in different sub catchments from Plan	No - located within different GWB's from plan	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Lesser Horseshoe Bat, Otter and Slender Green Feather-moss are QI's of the SAC. Due to the distance from the plan area there is not considered to be any direct disturbance pathway between the Plan area and these species.	No
002998	West Connacht Coast SAC	14.2km	No- Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - not located within GWB	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Common Bottlenose Dolphin are not expected to be impacted upon by noise or visual disturbance.	No
004051	Lough Carra SPA	14.3km	No - site is located in different sub catchments from Plan	No - located within different GWB's from plan	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Common Gull are a qualifying interest feature however, there is not considered to be any direct disturbance pathway between the Plan area and this species.	No
002298	River Moy SAC	14.8km	No - site is located in different sub catchments from Plan	No - located within two different GWB's from plan (Swinford, IE_WE_G_0033 & Foxford, IE_WE_G_0034)	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - White-clawed Crayfish, Sea Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Salmon and Otter are QI's for the SAC. Due to the distance from the plan area there is not considered to be any direct disturbance pathway between the Plan area and these species.	No

3.6 Summary of Pre-Screening

Due to lack of pathways based on preliminary screening on Sites within the ZoI of 15km (4-4), the following European Sites will not be further assessed for potential impacts:

- Owenduff/Nephin Complex SAC
- Owenduff/Nephin Complex SPA
- Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC
- West Connacht Coast SAC
- Lough Carra SPA
- River Moy SAC
- Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex SAC
- Newport River SAC
- Oldhead Wood SAC

The two European sites that were identified which have pathway-receptors for potential likely significant effects arising from the implementation of the Plan are:

- Clew Bay Complex SAC - surface water, groundwater, air and disturbance pathways
- Brackloon Woods SAC - groundwater and air pathways

4 Cumulative and/or in-combination Impacts

As part of the AA, in addition to considering the proposed Plan itself, other relevant Projects and Plans in the region that may impact upon European Sites in-combination with the LAP must also be considered. As such, the sections below identify other Plans and Projects that are relevant to Westport LAP and that may interact to cause cumulative and/or in-combination effects to European sites and QIs.

4.1 Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2021-2027

The draft Mayo County Development Plan (MCDP) (2021 - 2027), to replace the MCDP 2014 – 2020, is currently being prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000, having recently gone through a public consultation process. The LAP for Westport will be amended following the adoption of the draft report.

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 Westport LAP complements the implementation of the current MCDP.

The Natura Impact Report is being produced to assess potential impacts to European Sites as a result of the plan. Actions that may arise from the Mayo CDP will be considered at a project level where appropriate, which will ensure that any cumulative or in-combination impacts are addressed. However, due to the high-level nature of this Plan, it is not possible to determine with confidence the likely impacts or mitigation measures required yet in detail.

Therefore, cumulative or in-combination impacts may arise as a result of projects that may occur as a result of this Plan and will be subject to AA which will assess these in detail and provide suitable mitigation measures where appropriate. Mitigation measures that may be required are discussed in Section 7.

4.2 National Planning Framework - Project Ireland 2040

National Planning Framework - Project Ireland 2040 is the government's long-term overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all of its people. Alongside the development of physical infrastructure, Project Ireland 2040 supports business and communities across all of Ireland in realising their potential. The National Development Plan and the National Planning Framework combine to form Project Ireland 2040. Actions that may arise as a result of Project Ireland 2040 will be considered at a project level, which will ensure that any cumulative or in-combination impacts are addressed. Due to the high-level nature of this Plan, it is not possible to determine with confidence the likely impacts or mitigation measures required yet in detail.

Therefore, cumulative or in-combination impacts may arise as a result of projects that may occur as a result of Project Ireland 2040. Any developments that may arise as a result of this plan will have a project level AA which will assess these in detail and provide suitable mitigation measures where appropriate.

4.3 Third Cycle River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027

The first cycle of River Basin Management Plans included the Eastern River Basin District - River Basin Management Plan (ERBDMP) 2009 – 2015 (WFD (2010)). The plans summarised the waterbodies that may not meet the environmental objectives of the WFD by 2015 and identified which pressures are contributing to the environmental objectives not being achieved. The plans described the classification results and identified measures that can be introduced in order to safeguard waters and meet the environmental objectives of the WFD.

- Prevent deterioration of water body status.
- Restore good status to water bodies.
- Achieve protected areas objectives.
- Reduce chemical pollution of water bodies.

The second cycle changed the first to merge and include all River Basin Districts in as one national River Basin District, with planning to provide a more coordinated framework to improve the quality of

water for public health, the environment, water amenities and to sustain water-intensive industries which include agri-food and tourism.

The third and current cycle aims to build particularly on the initiatives of the second cycle, particularly the governance and implementation structures, and to improve the establishment of Irish Water, An Forum Uisce, the Local Authority Waters Programme and the Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme.

These objectives support the policies in the LAP. However, any developments that may arise as a result of this plan will be required to have a project level AA which will assess these in detail and provide suitable mitigation measures where appropriate.

4.4 Mayo County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

Mayo County Council has developed a 5-year Climate Adaptation Strategy – Climate Ready Mayo which sets out a vision for a climate ready County, who understands how climate change will affect their communities and businesses. As well as setting out how the County will work together to reduce the risk and avail of the opportunities that climate change will bring. The strategy has been through a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and an AA screening, where the AA concluded that the strategy will have no significant effect on European sites.

5 Screening Assessment

This section considers the development policies, objectives and land use zoning of the Westport LAP (including the objectives and intervention measures of the LTP) and identifies whether they are likely to have significant effects on European sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans.

Section 4 identified that the following European Sites have pathway-receptors for potential likely significant effects arising from the implementation of the Plan:

- Clew Bay Complex SAC
- Brackloon Woods SAC

5.1 Introduction

Assessment of the potential impacts of the Westport LAP aims, objectives, strategies and policies is required under regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011).

This section aims to identify whether the proposed Plan aims, objectives, strategies and policies are likely to have a significant effect, either alone, or in-combination with other projects and plans, on the European Sites within the Zol.

The 'screening' process addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive:

- Is the plan or programme directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site; and
- Will the plan or programme, alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, have a significant effect on a European site in view of its conservation objectives.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant or uncertain, then the plan or programme that is under assessment is subject to a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment, reported in the form of a NIR.

The aims, objectives, strategies and policies of Westport LAP are not directly connected to the management of any European Sites; however, they could have potential to cause significant effects on European Sites.

5.2 Screening Methodology

In accordance with DEHLG guidance, the key to determining if an AA is required for a Plan, is in the assessment of whether the plan and its policies and objectives are likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

For this process, the screening of this plan has been broken down into 4 steps.

1. Description of the plan (Section 2);
2. Screening of European sites within the Zol of the plan dependent on the presence of potential pathways and nature of the qualifying interests.
3. Assessing the policies and objectives to identify potential impacts. Determining the significance of these potential impacts and the requirement for follow up assessments.
4. Screening Statement with conclusions. This is presented in Section **Error! Reference source not found.**

5.2.1 The Precautionary Principle

If there is uncertainty, and it is not possible, based on the information available, to confidently determine no likely significant effects on a site then the precautionary principle will be applied, and the plan will be subject to an AA.

5.2.2 Mitigation, Avoidance and Protective Measures

Following the *People over Wind & Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta* Case C-323/17, the assessment does not consider protective, avoidance or mitigation measures for stage 1 Screening. These measures are carried forward and considered as part of the stage 2 AA.

5.3 Development Policies and Objectives

The development policies and objectives, including the LTP objectives, have initially been screened following the methodology set out in the DTA Publications Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook (DTA 2021). Each policy or objective is allocated one or more screening categories, shown in Table 5-1 below. The results of the initial screening are shown in Table 5-2 and Table 5-3. Where a number of categories to screen out a policy or objective are applicable, the most relevant category is listed in the table. The screening outcome includes any relevant in-combination assessment outcomes.

Table 5-1: Screening Categories for the Development Policies and Objectives (adapted from DTA, 2021)

Screening Category	Description	Screening Outcome
A	General statement of policy/ general aspiration.	Out
B	Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability / sustainability of proposals.	Out
C	Proposal referred to but not proposed by the plan.	Out
D	Environmental Protection / site safeguarding policy.	Out
E	Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects.	Out
F	Policy that cannot lead to development or other change.	Out
G	Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a European site.	Out
H	Policy or proposal, the actual or theoretical effects of which cannot undermine the conservation objectives (either alone or in combination with other aspects of this or other plans or projects).	Out
I	Policy or proposal with a likely significant effect on a site alone.	In
J	Policy or proposal with an effect on a site but not likely to be significant alone, so need to check for likely significant effects in combination.	Dependant on in-combination test
K	Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Screened out after in-combination test
L	Policy or proposal likely to have a significant effect in combination.	Screened in after in-combination test.

Table 5-2: Screening Table of Westport LAP Policies and Objectives

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
Chapter 2 - Development Strategy			
DSP1	Support and facilitate the sustainable growth of social, economic and residential in Westport 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).	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSP2	Support the compact growth of Westport to ensure that new development proceeds in a sustainable manner and at an appropriate scale, density and in line with the Core Strategy.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSP3	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 Plan area.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSP 4	Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Westport and to ensure Westport maintains its status as one of Mayo's Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
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.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
DSP 6	Ensure that all new development within the plan area accords with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development 2022-2028, in respect of wastewater systems.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSP 7	Support the effective and efficient use of land in Westport, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSP 8	Require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications in the plan area to have regard to the information, data and requirements of Appropriate Assessment, Natura Impact Report, SEA Environment Report and Strategy Flood Risk Assessment Report that accompany this LAP. There shall be a requirement of Ecological Impact Assessment as appropriate in the Plan area.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices E - Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSO 1	Deliver at least 30% of all new homes in Westport within the existing built-up footprint of the town.	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	In
DSO 2	Seek the sustainable intensification and consolidation of the existing built environment in accordance with the objectives for compact growth in higher-level spatial plans	A - General statement policy/general aspiration	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	through appropriate infill, brownfield development, supported by the necessary physical and community infrastructure.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
DSO 3	Monitor the scale, type, tenure and location of constructed and permitted developments in Westport during the lifetime of the Plan and apply appropriate development management standards to ensure compliance with the Core Strategy to achieve the delivery of strategic plan-led and coordinated balanced development within the town.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSO 4	Promote sustainable economic development, enterprise and employment opportunities and prioritise the town centre as the primary location for retail and services.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSO 5	Promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, whilst protecting and improving existing road infrastructure.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSO 6	Protect, conserve and enhance the built environment, through promoting awareness, utilising relevant heritage legislation and ensuring quality urban design principles are applied to all new developments, respecting historic and architectural heritage.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSO 7	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.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
DSO 8	Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied to all new developments.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSO 9	Guide the future development of Westport in accordance the Town Centre First policy approach seeking to bring people and appropriate business/services back into the heart of Westport through place-making, good quality urban design, sustainable mobility and control of development in other locations which might undermine this objective.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSO 10	Ensure the future development of Westport supports the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable and climate-neutral economy, implementing national policy to reduce gas emissions, improve environmental quality and contribute to meeting national targets for climate action.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
Chapter 3 - Climate Action			
CAP 1	Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are: a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations. 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. c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies. d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	<p>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.</p> <p>f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from land-fill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option.</p> <p>g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development.</p> <p>h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.</p>		
CAP 2	<p>Promote and encourage development which is resilient to climate change by ensuring that development proposals demonstrate sustainable design principles for new buildings/ services/site, including:</p> <p>a) measures such as green roofs and green walls to reduce internal overheating and the urban heat island effect.</p> <p>b) ensuring the efficient use of natural resources (including water) and making the most of natural systems both within and around buildings.</p> <p>c) minimising pollution by reducing surface water runoff through increasing permeable surfaces and use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).</p> <p>d) reducing flood risk, damage to property from extreme events, including residential, public and commercial.</p> <p>e) reducing risks from temperature extremes and extreme weather events to critical infrastructure such as roads, communication networks, the water/ drainage network, and energy supply.</p> <p>f) promoting and protecting biodiversity and green infrastructure.</p>	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
CAP 3	<p>Promote low carbon development within the County which will seek to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and which will meet the highest feasible environmental standards during construction and occupation. New development should generally demonstrate/provide for:</p> <p>a) Building layout and design which maximises daylight, natural ventilation, active transport and public transport use.</p> <p>b) Sustainable building/services/site design to maximise energy efficiency.</p> <p>c) Sensitive energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings.</p> <p>d) Energy efficiency, energy conservation, and the increased use of renewable energy in existing and new developments.</p>	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
CAP 4	<p>Support 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.</p>	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p>	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
CAP 5	Support the designated and any future Decarbonising Zone (DZ) in Westport and associated implementation plan promoting measures to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and improve general environmental conditions in this area.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAP 6	Promote and encourage positive community and/or co-operative led climate action initiatives and projects in Westport that seek to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency, enhance green infrastructure and encourage awareness on climate change issues.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAP 7	Support and encourage the development of small-scale wind renewable facilities/micro- renewable energy production.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAP 8	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.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAP 9	Support the development of sustainable low-carbon climate resilient communities and encourage a climate adaptation and mitigation approach to developments which will enable regeneration.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
CAP 10	Encourage innovation and facilitate the development of pilot schemes in Westport that support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAO 1	Ensure all development proposals shall have regard to the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019), any revised or forthcoming adaptation, mitigation or climate action strategies in the formulation of any plans and when assessing planning application for future developments.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAO 2	Consider a variation of the development plan within a reasonable period of time, or to include such other mechanism, as may be appropriate, to ensure that the development plan will be consistent with the approach to climate action recommended in the revised Local Area Plan Guidelines when adopted or any other relevant guidelines.	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	In
CAO 3	Promote the use of smart climate change, energy and carbon off-setting solutions in new developments. In the cases of large industrial, commercial or newly constructed public buildings, the incorporation of renewable technologies, such as solar energy in the design will be encouraged, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria. The Council encourages the NZEB standard of building or equivalent for all new development and the use of blue green infrastructure as a mechanism for surface water management and improving public realm.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAO 4	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.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
CAO 5	<p>Have regard to Goal 3 of the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024: Increase the Resilience of Natural and Cultural Capital:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build awareness of Nature Based Adaptation Solutions and Green Infrastructure. 2. Support bio-diversity for its intrinsic value within the natural environment and its importance in climate change adaptation. 3. Develop a database of impacts of climate change on Mayo's Natural Environment. 4. Identify Cultural and Heritage Sites vulnerable to climate change and develop adaptation and management policies. 	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold policies</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
Chapter 4 - Town Centre and Regeneration			
TCP 1	Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community and tourism services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the County Development Plan	<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>	In
TCP 2	Seek to develop and improve areas within the town 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.	<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>	In
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.	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
TCP 4	Actively encourage, support and facilitate environmental and public realm improvements in Westport to address environmental quality, urban design, safety, identity and traffic impact.	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold policies</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
TCP 5	Support the development of the further public realm projects in Westport that will enhance the aesthetics of the town's built and natural character and improve the overall ambience and visitor experience of the town.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
TCP 6	Embed an age-friendly approach to the design of the public realm.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
TCP 7	Support and encourage the principle of healthy place-making in Westport	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
TCO 1	Encourage and facilitate the development of Opportunity Sites in Westport 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.	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	IN
TCO 2	Continue to develop and regenerate the town centre in partnership with the Rural Regeneration Development Fund and other funding sources as may be available	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
TCO 3	(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	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	<p>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 shall 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>	K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
TCO 4	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.	<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>	In
TCO 5	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.	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
TCO 6	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	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
TCO 8	Developers will be required (where appropriate) to prepare urban design frameworks/masterplan for the Opportunity Sites in Westport Town Centre to inform future development proposals.	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
TCO 9	Maintain and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre by addressing and	A - General statement policy/general	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	controlling leakage of social, economic and service activities to areas outside the Town Centre.	aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
TCO 10	Prepare a plan for the improvement of the public realm in Westport, including proposals for improving the pedestrian environment for residents and visitors, and traffic management in the town.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
TCO 11	Prevent the use of film or screening that obscures the glazed areas of a shopfront window where it negatively impacts upon the streetscape.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
TCO 6	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	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
Chapter 5 - Economic Development, Retail and Tourism			
EDP 1	Encourage the development of employment areas in a comprehensive and sequential manner which uses existing infrastructure effectively and efficiently, ensuring they are designed to the highest architectural and landscaping standards, with natural site features, such as watercourses, trees and hedgerows be retained and enhanced as an integral part of the development/scheme.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDP 2	Support the development and expansion of enterprise and employment within Westport and to co-operate with all stakeholders, landowners and relevant agencies to attract investment.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		combination	
EDP 3	Support and promote the development of economic and enterprise development and activity in Westport in a manner which contributes to the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable, and climate-neutral economy.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDP 4	Support the retail function of Westport as a Regional Tier 2 Category town in the Retail Hierarchy, and to consolidate existing retail development within the town centre.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDP 5	Support and facilitate the development of retail, retail services and niche retailing in the town centre area, including new/infill development and redevelopment of an appropriate scale.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDP 6	Support and facilitate the development of retail led tourism associated with the natural and built heritage assets of Westport.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDP 7	Promote the sustainable development and enhancement of Westport as a major tourism centre in the West of Ireland and to continue to promote the tourism sector in the town, whilst recognising that there is an interdependency between preserving the character of the landscape, heritage and tourism.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDP 8	Encourage the development of tourism activities such as water-based activities, cultural and food tourism including festivals and food markets in Westport.	I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone	In

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination	
EDP 9	Support the development of new tourist facilities or the upgrading / extension of existing tourist facilities.	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	In
EDP 10	Promote festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town.	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	In
EDP 11	Encourage linkages to other tourism locations such as Castlebar to realise the tourism potential of the Castlebar Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG).	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDO 1	Engage with IDA Ireland and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in seeking to attract Foreign Direct Investment into Westport.	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	In
EDO 2	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'.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
EDO 3	To extend the Westport Industrial Estate in accordance with the proposals contained in the forthcoming Phase III extension of the facility.	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	In
EDO 4	Support, promote and facilitate the provision of shared co-working spaces/hubs in town centre and other appropriate locations in Westport to provide multi-purpose	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	flexible workspace options.	testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
EDO 5	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 Westport town centre, including applying a 'town centre first approach' or sequential test for retail developments.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDO 6	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 the town centre of Westport.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
EDO 7	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 Mayo Shopfronts Booklet (Mayo County Council).	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDO 8	Support and facilitate the development of an integrated network of greenways and heritage trails, including links to the Castlebar Urban Greenway and to the Murrisk, Louisburg, Roonagh greenway, to link into the network of National Greenways	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	In
EDO 9	Develop a Masterplan for Roman Island over the lifetime of the LAP to further develop Roman Island and The Quay area as an amenity area for the town and to realise its potential with regard to civic amenity and marine related tourism and activities.	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	In
EDO 10	Work with all relevant stakeholders and Failte Ireland to facilitate the provision of standardised signage and interpretation for tourism facilities and tourist attractions throughout the town.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	
Chapter 6 - Housing and Sustainable Communities			
HSCP 1	Encourage the compact growth of Westport and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.	I - 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	In
HSCP 2	Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Westport, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCP 3	Encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in Westport for residential accommodation.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCP 4	Support new residential development and infill development that occurs in tandem with the delivery of supporting physical and social infrastructure.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
HSCP 5	Support 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.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
HSCP 6	Require that an appropriate sustainable mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas, and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas to meet the needs of the population of Westport, including the provision of special needs housing.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
HSCP 7	Promote an age-friendly town, which seeks universal accessibility and age-friendly homes 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.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCP 8	Facilitate and support a broad range of community, cultural and recreational facilities to serve the future needs of the residents of the Plan area and its wider catchment.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
HSCO 1	Support, promote and 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, including living above the shop opportunities.	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	In
HSCO 2	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.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 3	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).	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 4	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 Westport, 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	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 5	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).	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		combination	
HSCO 6	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).	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 7	Support the objectives set out in Mayo Age Friendly County Strategy 2022–2026 and any subsequent strategy, regarding the implementation of Age Friendly principles in the planning, design and delivery of physical infrastructure, public realm works, business and commercial premises.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 8	Encourage the delivery of facilities and services for older people, at appropriate locations in Westport.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
HSCO 9	Actively engage with the Department of Education and Skills in the identification and delivery of school sites to address the emerging demands.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 10	Support, promote and facilitate the development of cultural, arts and performance spaces in Westport.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
HSCO 11	Encourage the development of new facilities and improvements to and expansion of existing facilities for educational, early learning, childcare and healthcare facilities, at appropriate locations in Westport.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		combination	
HSCO 12	Support, promote and facilitate the development of cultural, arts and performance spaces in Westport.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
HSCO 14	Support the endeavours of sports and community groups in their acquisition and/or use of lands for sports and recreation purposes.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a site	Out
HSCO 15	Facilitate and promote the development of a network of playgrounds, amenity spaces and recreational areas for children of all ages which are universally designed throughout the town and its environs.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 16	Develop sea swimming facilities at the Quay.	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	In
HSCO 17	Seek the development of additional municipal facilities that are available for all users within the town of Westport and its surrounding areas.	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	In
Chapter 7 - Movement and Transport			
MTP1	Improve accessibility and movement within Westport, 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.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
MTP 2	Engage and co-operate with the Department of Transport, National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Irish Rail, Local Link and other stakeholders to improve the provision of public transport and public transport facilities in Westport.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
MTP 3	Ensure that new developments are designed to comply with Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) including making provision for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and enhancing connectivity and accessibility to the town.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
MTP 4	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 Westport Local Transport Plan (as adopted) and subject to traffic and pedestrian safety.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
MTP 5	Make 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.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
MTO 1	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. 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.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
MTO 2	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).	I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone	In

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination	
MTO 3	<p>a) Ensure that all proposals within the plan area for residential and mixed-use developments at design stage will consider/incorporate pedestrian and cycling provisions and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing and proposed active travel network in the town.</p> <p>b) Promote sustainable, compact development by ensuring that all proposals for residential and mixed-use developments, including infill and brownfield incorporate provisions for pedestrian and cyclist activity and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing road/street network and existing/proposed active travel network in the town.</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>	In
MTO 4	Identify appropriate locations on public lands in partnership with ESB for the provision of battery charging infrastructure for electric vehicles in Westport.	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
MTO 5	To monitor and review the progress of the Westport Local Transport Plan in line with the Monitoring and Review Strategy set out in this Plan, and in accordance with its stated goals and objectives.	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
MTO 6	<p>Support the provision of new roads infrastructure by ensuring that the lands along the indicative routes* (as listed below) are protected by keeping them free from development that would undermine the delivery of these projects.</p> <p>a) N5-N59 Southern By-Pass</p> <p>*these routes are indicative only and are/ will be subject to change</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>	In
MTO 7	Carry out improvements at the junction of the Lodge Road (L-805-0) and Local Road L-5847-0.	K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
MTO 8	<p>Support the implementation of all measures and actions set out in the Westport Local Transport Plan, where appropriate, in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development to facilitate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective integration of land use and transport planning to reduce number of car trips. • Reduction of traffic movements through and within the town to reduce vehicle emissions and create opportunities to enhance placemaking by road space reallocation. 	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement of mode shift to active travel and sustainable modes and improvement of accessibility for all users and all journey types • Accommodation of the needs of businesses and local resident, by suitable provision and appropriate allocation and management of parking • Enhancement of road safety with focus on vulnerable users 		
<p>MTO 9</p>	<p>Support the implementation of the following proposed LTP measures (but not limited to):</p> <p>Walking:</p> <p>New footpaths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leenaun Road (N59) from Pound Road to Daybreak at Carrowbaun; • High Street – provide accessible pedestrian link from greenway to John’s Row on the west side of street; • Lodge Road from its junction with the N5 (Castlebar Rd) to Slogger / Carrownaclea / Fahy crossroads; • Greenway to Mill Street via High Street car park; • Mill Street to Laneway connecting to Bridge Street, via Mill Street car park; • James St to Bridge St via James St Car Park and Distillery Ct; • Knockranny Road footpath extension from Knockranny Lodge B&B to Drummindoo Stud farm junction; and • Horkan’s Hill to Carrowbeg Estate. <p>Cycling:</p> <p>Greenway / off road paths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Carrowbeg Riverside path from Ashwood to Tesco (Phase 1) with potential northern connection through Knockranny Woods / Colonel’s Wood (Phase 2); • Develop a Greenway through Westport House from Church Street to Cloonmonad; and • Improved connection through Pairc Na Coille connecting Greenway Golf Course Road <p>Greenway improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pinewoods accessibility improvements to greenway; • Provide a new crossing on R335 at Slí Na Miséan housing development to access greenway; • Provide a new crossing on Leenaun Road near the junction with Tober Hill Street to access greenway; • Increase the width of the offroad path between Church Street and Leisure Centre car park to make it accessible to cycling; • Provide resting places and benches at longer walking routes / key approaches into town; 	<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>In</p>

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accessible connection from the Greenway to Altamont Street; and • High Street car park accessible access to Greenway (switchback ramp). Provide new shared use paths on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golf Course Road to new GAA pitches; • Newport Road from Pinewoods to King's Hill; • Carrowbeg Estate and • R330 (Ballinrobe Road) from Ashwood residential area to L5863. Provide a Primary Cycle Network consisting of segregated cycleways on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Mall from Mill Street to Newport Road (including junction upgrades); • Altamont Street / R330 from Distillery Road junction to Ashwood residential area at local road L5864, via the railway station; • Bridge Street from Castlebar Road to Circle K / Spar; • Castlebar Road from North Mall to Corrib Oil service station; • Shop Street from The Octagon to Mill Street; • Mill Street from Bridge Street to High Street Car Park; and • Quay Road from The Octagon to The Quay. 		
MTO 10	Explore the feasibility of providing 'park and stride' facilities at appropriate locations in the town in accordance with the recommendations of the Westport LTP and in partnership with the relevant stakeholder.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
MTO 11	Facilitate the provision of: a) Public car parks in its own role and/or in partnership with third parties, in its control of on-street parking and off-street parking to provide for short term shopping and business parking requirements and for the needs of local residents, rather than long term commuter parking. b) Investigate the possibility of providing coach parking within the Plan Area.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
Chapter 8 - Built Environment			
BEP 1	Maintain, conserve and protect the architectural quality, character and scale of Westport.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		a significant effect either alone or in combination	
BEP 2	Encourage high quality and well-designed buildings, structures, public spaces and streets and support and promote healthy place-making and quality of life.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEP 3	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.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEP 4	Protect the town centre by ensuring all new development is compatible with the existing character and visual amenity of Westport.	G - Policy or proposal that could not have any conceivable effect on a European site. K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Out
BEP 5	Have regard to Mayo Shopfronts Design Guide for shopfronts and signs and to encourage the use of traditional shopfront designs and materials and signs.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEP 6	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.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEP 7	Support and promote the protection, appropriate management and sympathetic enhancement of the archaeological heritage within the Plan area, in particular by	A - General statement policy/general aspiration	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	implementing the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended).	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
BEP 8	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.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEO 1	To ensure the preservation of the special character of the ACA in this LAP, as indicated on Map 3, with particular regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, building lines, height, general land use, fenestration, signage, and other appendages such as electrical wiring, building materials, historic street furniture, paving and shopfronts.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEO 2	Prohibit the use of plastic and neon lit shop signs within the town core and at other locations where the planning authority deem them unsuitable.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEO 3	Preserve the protected structures and their settings in Westport that are included on the Record of Protected Structures for County Mayo and seek to prevent the demolition or inappropriate alteration of Protected Structures, which would adversely impact on the character and special interest of the structure where appropriate.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEO 4	Preserve the form and character of the protected structures by ensuring that any proposed sub- division of protected structures for multiple residential units does not	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	impair the character of the protected structure.	of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
BEO 5	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, in accordance with the Councils requirements.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
BEO 6	Protect and preserve in situ (or upon agreement preservation by record) items of archaeological interest provided for on the Sites and Monuments Record (www.archeology.ie) from inappropriate development that would adversely affect and/or detract from interpretation and setting of these sites.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
Chapter 9 - Westport House and Demesne			
WHDO1	Protect the natural and built environment and cultural heritage of the historic core of Westport House and Demesne, as identified on Map 2. (in the LAP)	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
WHDO2	Retain the setting of the Parkland/Woodland in the Demesne and to protect and enhance the parkland and woodland area around the Demesne.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
WHDO3	Encourage and facilitate, where possible, the integration of Westport House & Demesne with the town through pedestrian links and planned traffic management generally in accordance with Map 2. (in the LAP)	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
Chapter 10 - Natural Environment			
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"> • Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Westport, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 Network. • Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and • Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces. <p>Where appropriate proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, is maintained.</p>	<p>A - General statement of policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>E - Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
NEP 2	<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>	<p>A - General statement of policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>E - Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
NEP 3	<p>Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green Infrastructure network in Westport and to strengthen links to the wider regional network. This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.</p>	<p>A - General statement of policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p>	Out
NEP 4	<p>Support the implementation of the Biodiversity Plan for Westport and any subsequent Biodiversity Plan for the Plan area over the lifetime of the Plan.</p>	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in</p>	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		combination	
NEP 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
NEP 6	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>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
NEP 7	To protect sensitive landscapes, including elevated lands, from development.	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
NEO 1	Ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the Clew Bay SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, geological, water and landscape value of the SAC/pNHA and, where possible, to integrate these important attributes into all such development schemes.	<p>A - General statement of policy/general aspiration</p> <p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>E - Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have</p>	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		a significant effect either alone or in combination	
NEO 2	To promote and protect native riparian vegetation along all watercourses and ensure that a minimum 10m vegetated riparian buffer from the top of the riverbank is maintained/reinstated along all watercourses within any development site.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
NEO 3	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.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
NEO 4	To preserve the Views and Prospects listed in Map 3 and to ensure they are protected from development which would interfere with such Views and Prospects.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
NEO 5	To require that significant development proposals shall be accompanied by a visual impact assessment demonstrating that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
Chapter 11 - Infrastructure and Environmental Services			
IESP 1	Maintain and enhance the existing surface water drainage systems in Westport and to protect surface and ground water quality in accordance with the Water Framework Directive.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 2	a) Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater, including reducing the discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 (DHPLG) and associated Programme of Measures. b) Require all planning applications to include surface water design calculations to establish the suitability of drainage between the site and the outfall point; where appropriate and feasible. c) Encourage the use of SuDS in public and private developments and within the public realm to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 3	Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in Westport in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 and future cycles of this Plan.	I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone D - General plan-wide environmental protection/site safeguarding/threshold polices E - Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects. L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination	In
IESP 4	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	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	Guidelines 2009.	a significant effect either alone or in combination	
IESP 5	Manage flood risk in Westport 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).	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 6	a) Support the implementation of the Uisce Eireann Investment Plans. b) Liaise with Uisce Eireann, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate existing and future growth.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 7	Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan 2022-2028, and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan.	I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone D - General plan-wide environmental protection/site safeguarding/threshold polices E- Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects. L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination	In
IESP 8	Support and promote 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.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 9	Promote and encourage the use of renewable energy technologies, at appropriate locations, for developments of existing and proposed building stock, such as district heating, micro generation (photovoltaic, micro-wind, micro hydro and micro combined	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	heat and power) and other renewable energy technologies, which do not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.	D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
IESP 10	Support and liaise with statutory and other energy providers in relation to power generation, in order to ensure adequate power capacity for the existing and future needs of Westport.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 11	Protect environmental quality in Westport through the implementation of European, national and regional policy and legislation relating to air quality, greenhouse gases, climate change, light pollution, noise pollution and waste management.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 12	Support waste reduction and sustainable waste management through prevention, reduction and recycling and by facilitating the provision of adequate waste infrastructure, such as bring banks, at locations that will not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 13	Seek the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone and television cables in the town including the town centre and in residential and amenity areas.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 14	Co-operate with the relevant agencies to facilitate the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone and television cables in urban areas wherever possible, in the interests of visual amenity. Where undergrounding of cables is being pursued, proposals should demonstrate that environmental impacts including the following are minimised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat loss as a result of removal of field boundaries and hedgerows (right of way preparation) followed by topsoil stripping (to ensure machinery does not destroy soil structure and drainage properties); 	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short to medium term impacts on the landscape where, for example, hedgerows are encountered; • Impacts on underground archaeology; • Impacts on soil structure and drainage; and • Impacts on surface waters as a result of sedimentation 	<p>polices</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	
IESP 15	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.	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
IESO 1	Encourage the use of SuDS within public and private developments and within the public realm to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks.	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
IESO 2	Work with Uisce Eireann to separate the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers within the plan area, in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems, where possible.	<p>A - General statement of policy/general aspiration</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
IESO 3	<p>a) Manage flood risk in accordance with the requirements of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DECLG and OPW (2009) and any revisions thereof and consider the potential impacts of climate change in the application of these guidelines.</p> <p>b) Require applications in areas at risk of flooding to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment. All flood risk assessments should have regard to ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ (DEHLG and OPW, Nov.2009) as revised by Circular PL 2/2014, national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the River Shannon Catchment Flood Risk and Management Plan.</p> <p>c) Minimise flood risk arising from pluvial (surface water) flooding in Westport by promoting the use of natural flood risk management measures including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), minimising extent of hard surface/paving, and smart solutions such as innovative green infrastructure.</p> <p>d) 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.</p> <p>e) Have regard to the most up to date Flood Mapping as presented on the Office of Public Works (OPW) maps.</p>	<p>B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals</p> <p>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold polices</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	f) To apply the avoidance approach for new development vulnerable to flooding within a 30m margin from any unmapped watercourse within the plan area, or where an avoidance is not possible, require a detailed flood risk assessment to minimise the potential of future flood risk in accordance with the requirements of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DECLG and OPW (2009) and any revisions thereof and consider the potential impacts of climate change in the application of these guidelines.”		
IESO 4	Discourage the over-concentration/proliferation of individual septic tanks and treatment plants by requiring developments to connect to the public sewer and public water mains where at all possible, subject to a connection agreement with Uisce Eireann, in order to protect all waters in the plan area, and also to consolidate the urban structure and to control ribbon development along approach roads into Westport.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold policies K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESO 5	Support and facilitate the delivery of free outdoor drinking water refilling stations throughout the plan area.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site safeguarding/ threshold policies K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESO 6	Ensure that private wastewater treatment plants, where permitted, are operated in compliance with EPA’s Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (PE. ≤10) (EPA 2021), as may be amended.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESO 7	Require all commercial and residential developments to be provided with adequate internal and external space for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials. This is particularly important in relation to shared bin spaces such as apartment developments. In such cases the following must be provided for: a) Adequate space must be given for waste to be segregated and stored in an appropriate manner; b) A multi-occupancy development will require a designated, ventilated waste storage area of sufficient size which allows for the segregation of waste; and	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	c) 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.		
IESO 8	Promote the prevention, reduction and recycling of waste in new developments, new development proposals shall be required to submit proposals demonstrating 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.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESO 9	Adequately maintain recycling facilities and secure the provision of additional facilities, as required, including in conjunction with new developments.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESO 10	Facilitate the installation, if required, of bring bank(s) at suitable locations within the plan area, which do not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESO 11	Ensure that all new development proposals, incorporate communications service infrastructure broadband, including ducting on an open access basis.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESO 12	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.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
Chapter 12 - Land Use Zoning			
LUZO1	Ensure that development progresses in accordance with the land use zoning objectives as set out in Table 11.1 and the Land Use Matrix contained in Table 12.2 of the LAP.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
		combination	
LUZ 1 - Town Centre Inner (TCI) & Outer (TCO)	To maintain and enhance the vitality, viability and environment of the town centre and provide for appropriate town centre uses.	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	In
LUZ 2 - Enterprise & Employment	To provide land for industrial, enterprise and employment uses.	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	In
LUZ 3 - Educational	To provide for the protection of lands for schools and educational uses.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
LUZ 4 - Existing Residential	To protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
LUZ 5 - New Residential	To provide for high quality new residential development and other services incidental to residential development.	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	In
LUZ 6 - Strategic Residential Reserve	To protect and safeguard suitable, undeveloped lands for future multiple residential developments. These lands are generally not developable during the lifetime of this plan for multiple residential developments. This position will be reviewed by the Planning Authority periodically over the lifetime of the plan to ensure housing growth targets are achieved (Core Strategy Table). Where it is apparent that 'New Residential' lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development maybe considered within Strategic Residential Reserve. Single houses shall only be considered on a limited basis, where it has been established that the lands in question do not adversely impact on the intended future use of these lands; form part of the overall family landholding and no other appropriately zoned lands are available within of the plan boundary; and a	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	In

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	demonstrable economic or social need has been established (Objective RHO 1 of the Mayo County Development Plan).		
LUZ 7 - Community Services / Facilities	To provide land for social, health, public administration and educational services and facilities.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
LUZ 8 - Recreation & Amenity	To protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.	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	In
LUZ 9 – Agriculture	To reserve land for agricultural and rural uses and to preserve the amenity of the town setting. Developments for single houses within areas zoned Agriculture will be considered on their merits having regard to the Rural Housing policies and objectives of the Mayo County Development Plan 2023-2028 and issues such as access, services and siting.	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	In
LUZ 10 – Open Space	To preserve, provide for and improve active and passive recreational public and private open space.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
LUZ 11 – Tourism and Related	To provide, maintain and enhance tourist related facilities	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	In
LUZ 12 - Infrastructure & Utilities	To provide land for public infrastructure and public utilities.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
LUZ 13 - Marine Related Tourism	The objective of the Marine related Tourism land use is to provide for marine related tourism development whilst having regard to the existing natural and built environment. Land uses generally permitted in this zone include tourist accommodation, open space, small scale retail units for the sale of marine related goods, sailing	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

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
	club, restaurants, public houses, marina, pontoons, moorings, boat yards, bathing facilities, public utilities, parking, information boards and sporting and leisure facilities.	in-combination	
LUZ – 14 Westport House and Demesne	The objective of the Westport House & Demesne land use is to facilitate appropriate development in accordance with Chapter 9 of this plan, in order to ensure the viability and conservation of the estate. Permitted uses in this zone are set out in Chapter 9 and Map 2 of the LAP.	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	In
LUZ 15 - Ancillary Uses	To ensure that developments ancillary to the parent use of a site are considered on their merits irrespective of what category the ancillary development is listed under in the zoning matrix of this County Development Plan.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
LUZ 16 - Established Use/Non-Conforming Uses	To generally support reasonable extensions and improvements to premises that accommodate established/non-conforming uses, where it is considered by the Planning Authority that the proposed development would not be injurious to the amenities of the area and would be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
Chapter 13 - Implementation and Monitoring			
IMO 1	Monitor development for compliance with the objectives of the Core Strategy and adjust, where necessary, the approach taken to the consideration of development proposals in order to ensure effective alignment with the National, Regional and County policies and objectives.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

Table 5-3: Screening Table of Westport LTP Objectives

Objective No.	Description	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
OBJECTIVE 1	<p>More effective integration of land use and transport planning to reduce number of car trips.</p> <p>The following interventions will aid the LTP to meet Objective 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extend provision of footways out to surrounding communities, particularly where new developments are proposed and / or existing centres aren't served. ▪ Undertake a review of wayfinding and signage to encourage walking among residents and visitors. By introducing improved wayfinding, residents can be made aware of active mode opportunities between their homes and destinations. ▪ Review off-street car parking for locations where better pedestrian permeability can be provided. ▪ The provision of additional bus stops will make bus services more accessible from current land uses, therefore reducing people's likelihood of using the private car for trips ▪ Working with public transport operators to review the existing bus services (including their routes and timetables) will help to ensure that they are fit for purpose, link people to their destinations, support the evening economy and are a more attractive alternative to the private car. 	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
OBJECTIVE 2	<p>Reduce traffic movements through and within the town to reduce vehicle emissions and create opportunities to enhance placemaking by road space reallocation.</p> <p>The following interventions will aid the LTP to meet Objective 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the feasibility of providing increased public realm opportunities in the Western half of The Octagon by reallocating parking spaces; ▪ Review street lighting on key routes for enhanced pedestrian safety; ▪ Continue development of a Southern Bypass between the N5 and the N59 south of Westport which would enable through traffic to avoid Westport town centre. This would also support Objective 3, as detailed below; ▪ Engage with business owners to reduce instances where street furniture blocks pedestrian movements or other uses; ▪ Reduce on-street parking and encourage use of off-street parking in order to allow better urban realm. Additionally, the potential conversion of an off street ground level car park to multi-storey, enabling greater capacity for relieving on-street car parking; and ▪ Work with public transport operators on a review of bus and rail fares to provide a competitive, integrated public transport alternative to the car. 	<p>The provision of a Southern Bypass would require a crossing of the Carrowbeg River. This could result in construction impacts (water quality, disturbance of species) and possible operation disturbance.</p> <p>All other interventions under this objective assessed as not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	In

Objective No.	Description	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
OBJECTIVE 3	<p>Encourage mode shift to active travel and sustainable modes and improve accessibility for all users and all journey types.</p> <p>The following interventions will aid the LTP to meet Objective 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce speed limits to 30km/h throughout central Westport; ▪ Convert “Speed Tables” into formal zebra crossings, to provide greater pedestrian priority and safety; ▪ Engage with business owners to reduce instances where street furniture blocks pedestrian movements or other uses; ▪ Consider Cycle Hire Scheme providing electric cycles to compensate for the town’s hills; ▪ Increase the cycle network by providing safe cycle routes through off-street car parks; ▪ Develop existing bus stops or provide new bus stops with full facilities to enable access for people with disabilities; ▪ Provide formal taxi space at key destinations in town. These should support taxi use by passengers with reduced mobility; ▪ Review town for locations where additional electric vehicle charging could be provided; ▪ Complimentary measures including workplace travel plans, mobility management plans and An Taisce Green Schools programme; and ▪ Consider provision of additional public toilets, including at least one Changing Place toilet. 	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
OBJECTIVE 4	<p>Accommodate the needs of businesses and local residents by suitable provision and appropriate allocation and management of parking.</p> <p>The following interventions will aid the LTP to meet Objective 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide additional, preferably sheltered, cycle parking at various locations across the town; ▪ Develop a Parking Management Plan for the town; ▪ Enforce existing loading bays to ensure they’re not blocked by parked cars; ▪ Provide temporary parking spaces in underused areas such as schools during the holiday period with agreement from landowners to accommodate parking demand in the tourist season; ▪ Explore opportunities to provide new or improve existing Park and Ride / Park and Stride facilities; ▪ Review accessible parking provision within the town; ▪ Relocate railway station cycle parking to avoid conflict with car park use; and ▪ Provide car sharing facilities. 	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out

Objective No.	Description	Screening Category	Screening Outcome
OBJECTIVE 5	<p>Enhance road safety with focus on vulnerable users.</p> <p>The following intervention will aid the LTP to meet Objective 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30km/h speed limits ▪ Convert “Speed Tables” into formal zebra crossings, to provide greater pedestrian priority and safety; ▪ Review street lighting on key routes for enhanced pedestrian safety to ensure vulnerable road users are more visible in the dark and / or poor weather conditions; ▪ Provide new cycle tracks on key roads to encourage modal shift; ▪ Consider on-street parking charges or restrictions, to encourage use of off-street parking; ▪ This shift from on-street to off-street would enable urban realm improvements; ▪ Work with partner organisations to facilitate the development a delivery hub location on the edge of Westport, enabling freight consolidation and a reduction in the number of vans circulating the constrained town centre; and ▪ Consider support for cargo bikes for short freight journeys within town. 	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out

5.4 Land Use Zoning

Land use zonings proposed by the LAP have been screened for impacts upon European Sites. Existing residential, Community Services and Facilities, Educational, Open space and Infrastructure and Utilities, Ancillary Uses and Established Use/Non-Conforming Uses are not presented here, as they are confined to existing zonings, are small scale in nature and/or have low potential for impact by their nature and are therefore screened out.

Those with the potential for impact were reviewed in more detail and are discussed in the following sections.

5.4.1 LUZ 1 - Town Centre Inner and Outer

Figure 5-1 shows the proposed Town Centre Inner and Outer Zoning. Whilst much of this land is already developed, Table 11.2 in the LAP identifies a number of development types which would be permitted within these zones. There are a number of zones which are located immediately adjacent to or within the Clew Bay Complex SAC and the Carrowbeg River upstream of the SAC. Developments could lead to additional discharges of surface water/foul into the SAC, as well as construction-related impacts through pollution incidents and disturbance.

The Town Centre Inner and Outer zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

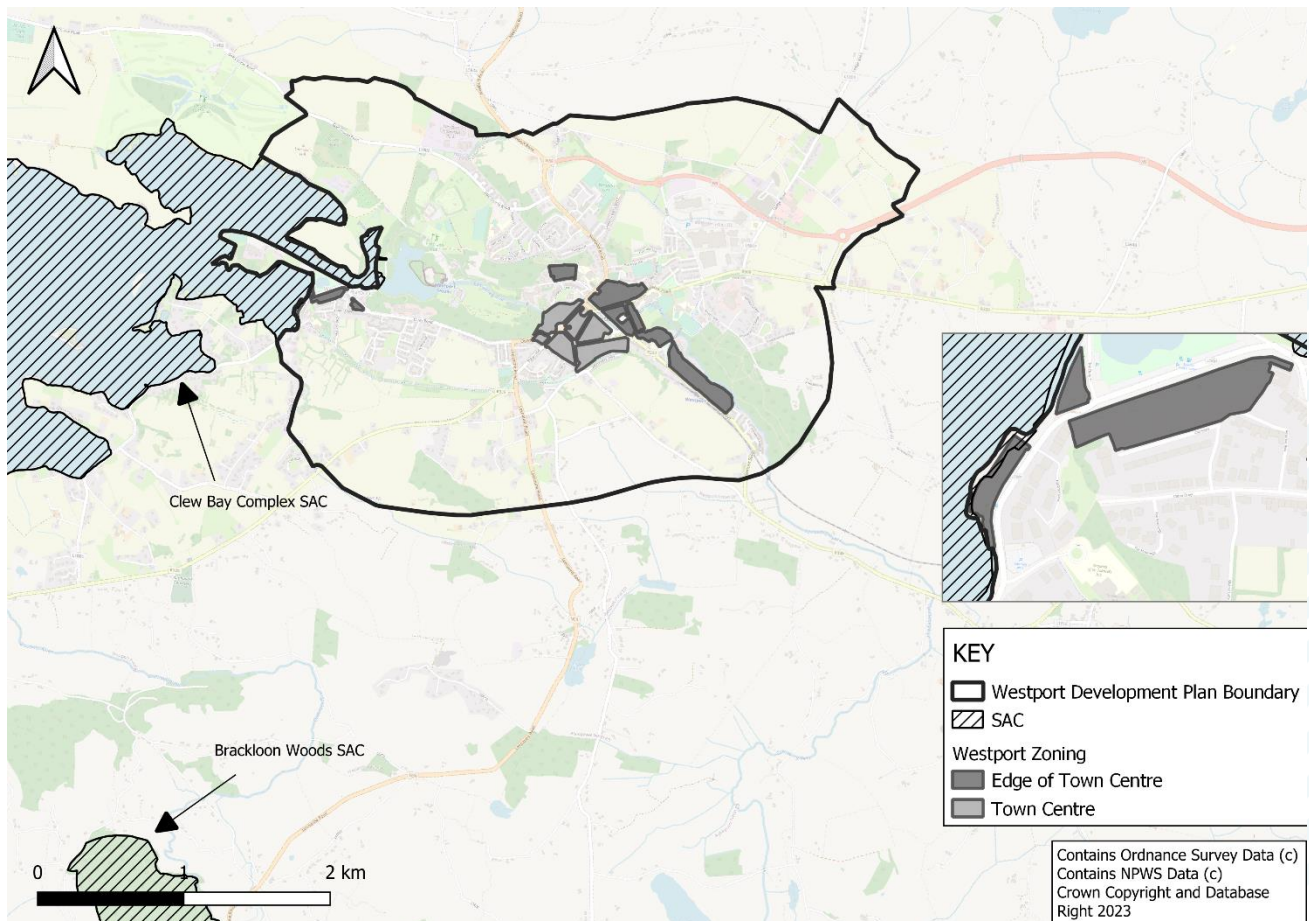


Figure 5-1: Town Centre and Inner and Outer Zoning

5.4.2 LUZ 2: Enterprise and Employment

Figure 5-2 shows the proposed enterprise and employment zoning. Given the distance from the SACs no direct impacts are anticipated. Impacts identified are primarily the potential for construction related pollution, although there is also the potential for additional discharges through foul and surface waters impacting the river catchment and the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

The Enterprise and Employment zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

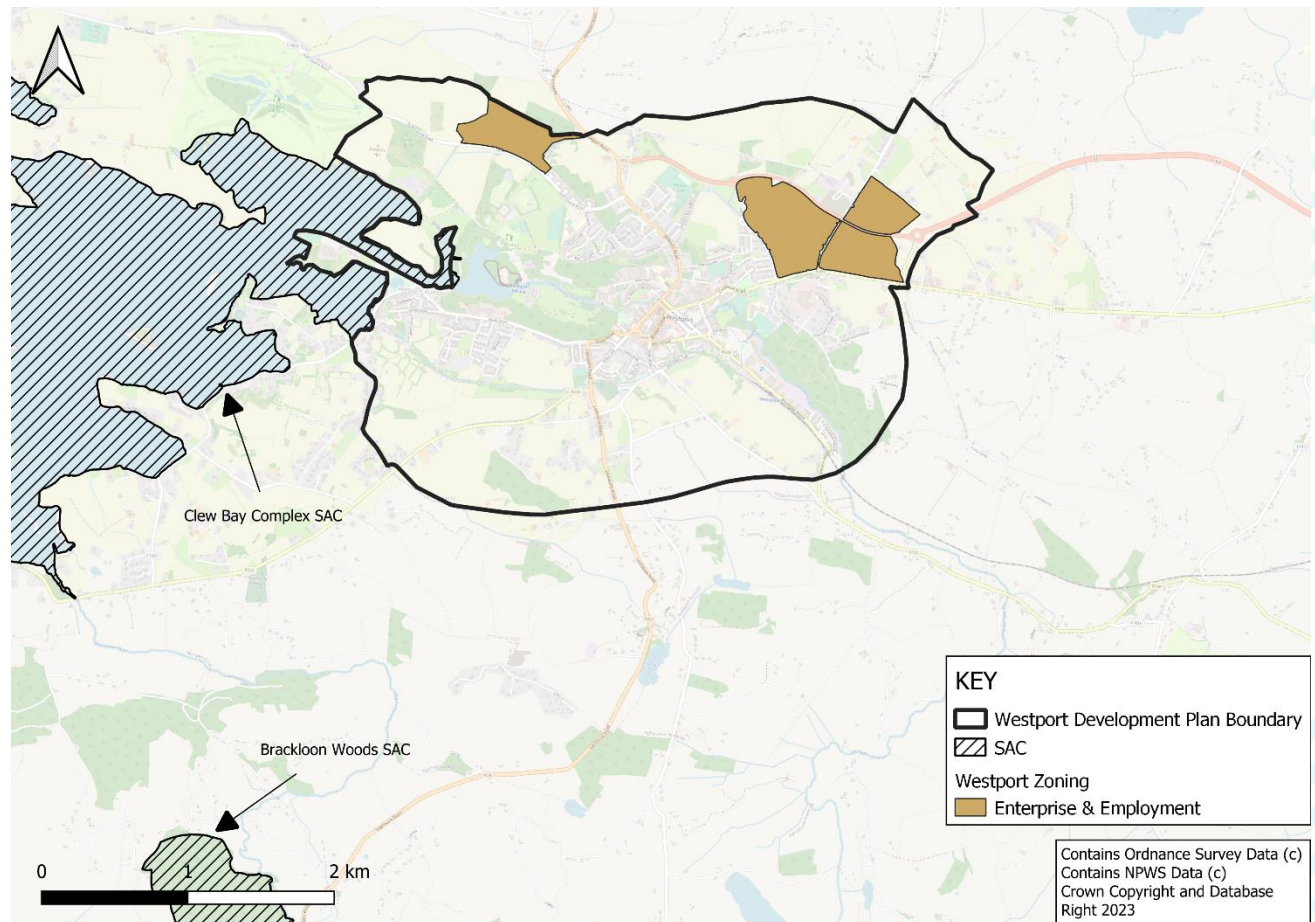


Figure 5-2: Enterprise and Employment Zoning

5.4.3 LUZ 5: New Residential

Figure 5-3 shows the proposed New Residential zoning. All of these zones have been screened in at this stage of the assessment as having the potential to cause likely significant effect upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC. The impact pathways identified include potential pollution impacts during construction and potential for increases in recreational disturbance.

The New Residential zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

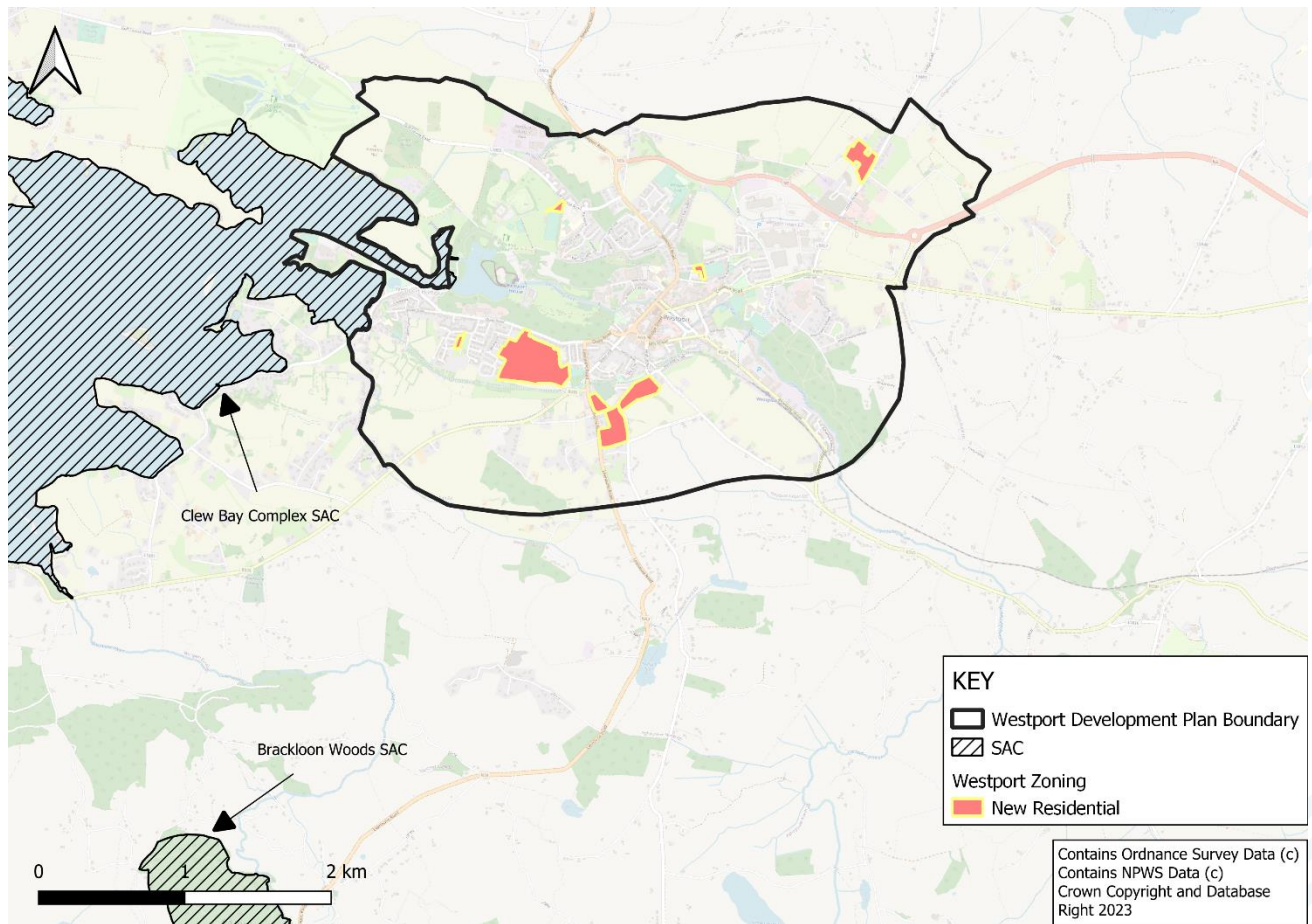


Figure 5-3: New Residential Zoning

5.4.4 LUZ 6: Strategic Residential

Figure 5-4 shows the proposed Strategic Residential zoning. All of these zones have been screened in at this stage of the assessment as having the potential to cause likely significant effect upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC. The impact pathways identified include potential pollution impacts during construction and potential for increases in recreational disturbance.

The Strategic Residential zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

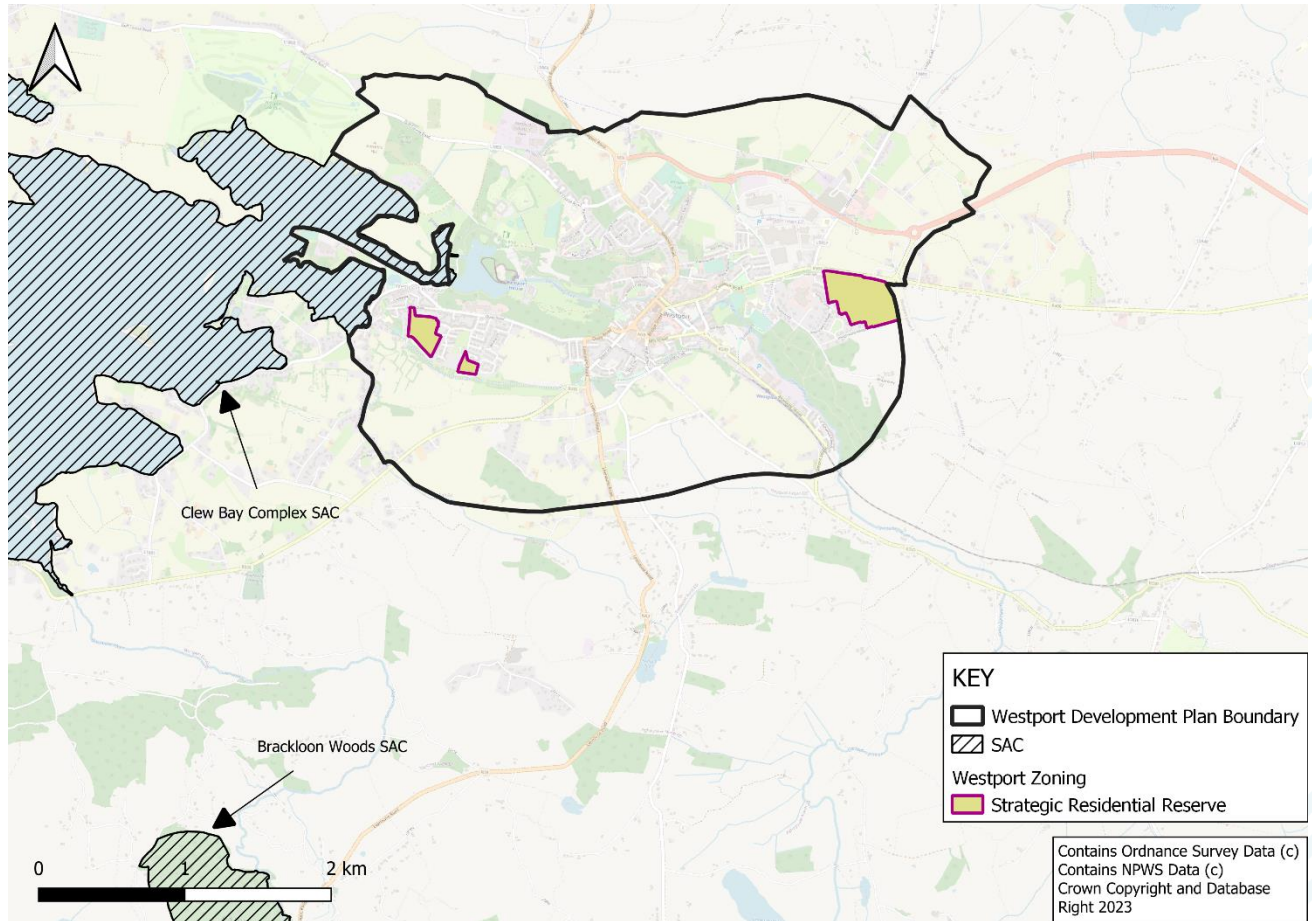


Figure 5-4: Strategic Residential Zoning

5.4.5 LUZ 8: Recreation and Amenity

Figure 5-4 shows the proposed Recreation and Amenity zoning. There are a number of zones which are located immediately adjacent to or within the Clew Bay Complex SAC and the Carrowbeg River upstream of the SAC. The impact pathways identified potential for pollution impacts during construction, potential for increases in recreational disturbance and increases in visitor numbers to the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

The Recreation and Amenity zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

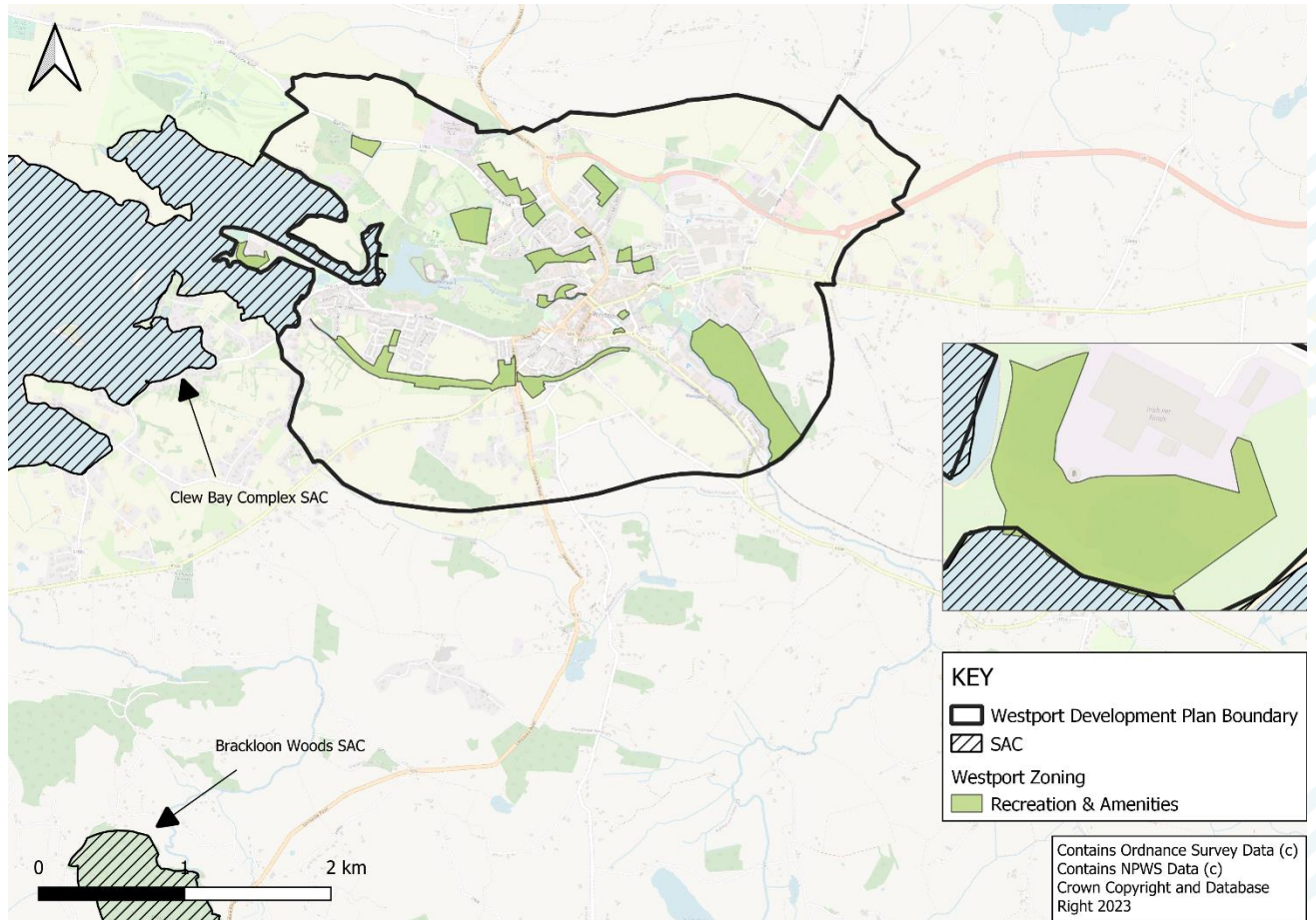


Figure 5-5: Recreation and Amenity Zoning

5.4.6 LUZ 9: Agriculture

This is the main zoning type within the plan boundary. No significant change in zoning for agriculture is presented in this Plan. However, as shown in Figure 5-6, the agriculture zones are within the catchment of the Carrowbeg River and Clew Bay Complex SAC and in some cases, immediately adjacent to the SAC. Continuing to permit or promoting new agricultural activities in this catchment could therefore lead to increased diffuse and point-source pollution and nutrient input into the SAC in the future unless efforts are made to control these activities effectively and could also lead to direct impacts to habitats within the SAC.

The Agriculture zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

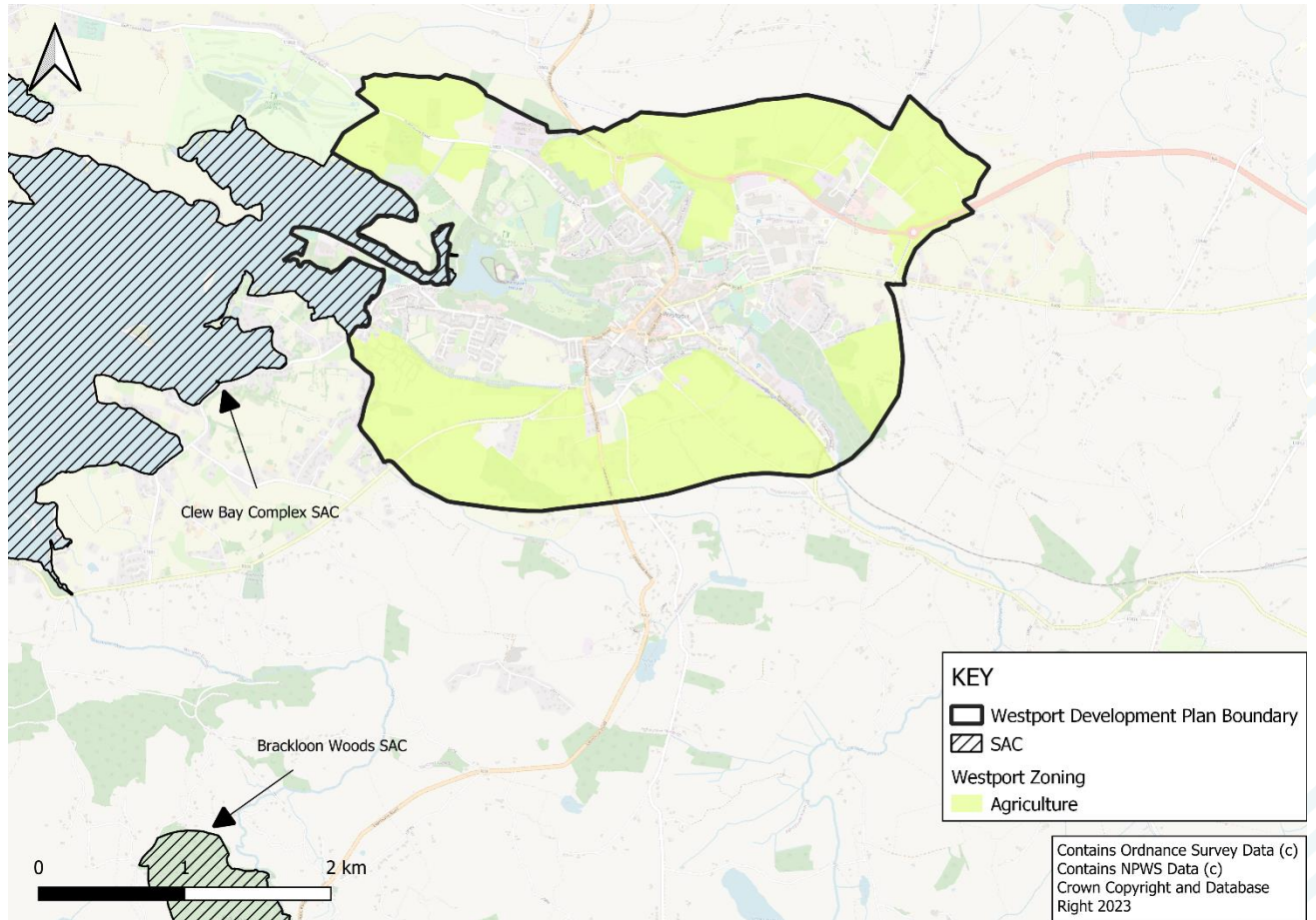


Figure 5-6: Agriculture Zoning

5.4.7 LUZ 11: Tourism and Related and LUZ 13: Marine Related Tourism

Figure 5-5 and Figure 5-6 show the proposed Tourism and Related zoning. There are a number of zones which are located immediately adjacent to or within the Clew Bay Complex SAC and the Carrowbeg River upstream of the SAC. The impact pathways identified potential for pollution impacts during construction, potential for increases in recreational disturbance and increases in visitor numbers to the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

The Tourism and Related and Marine Related Tourism zonings therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

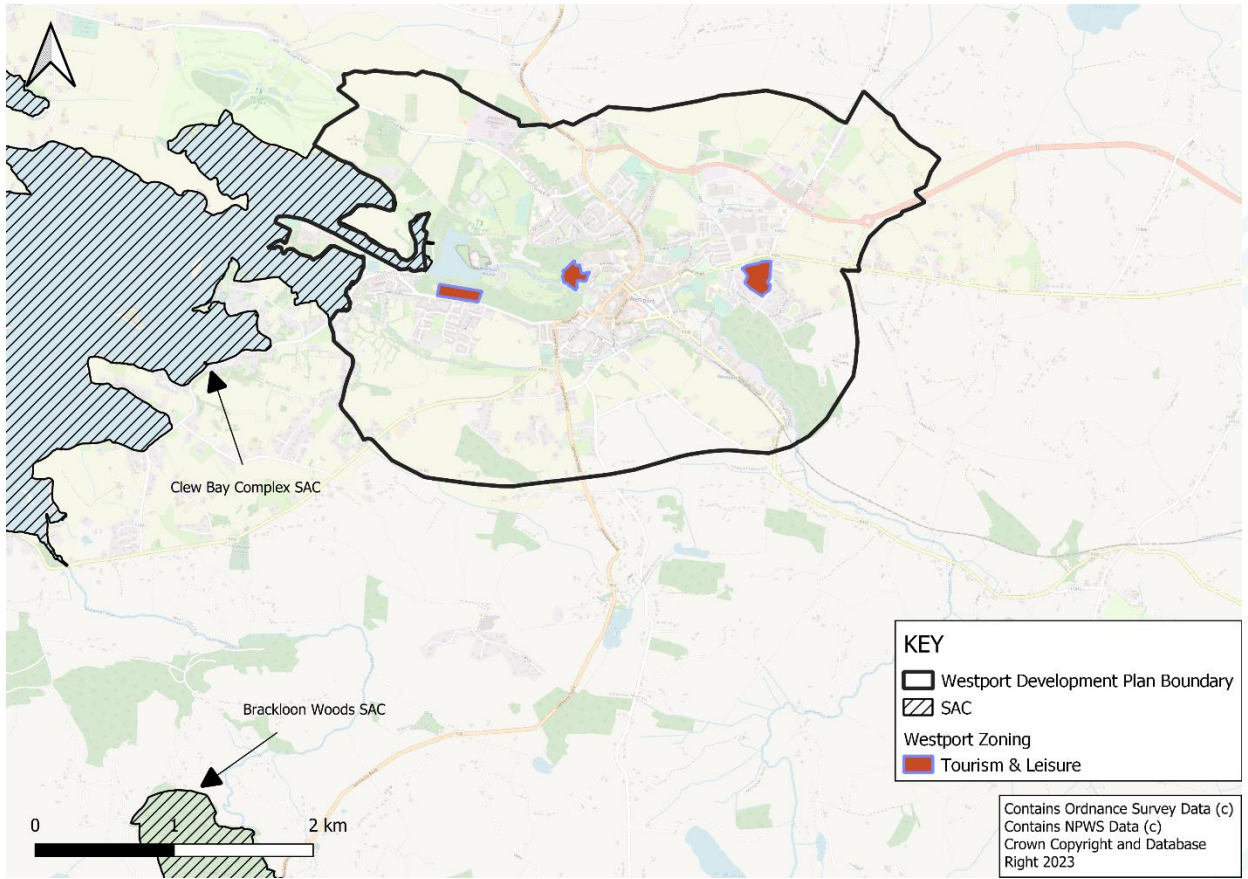


Figure 5-7: Tourism and Related Zoning

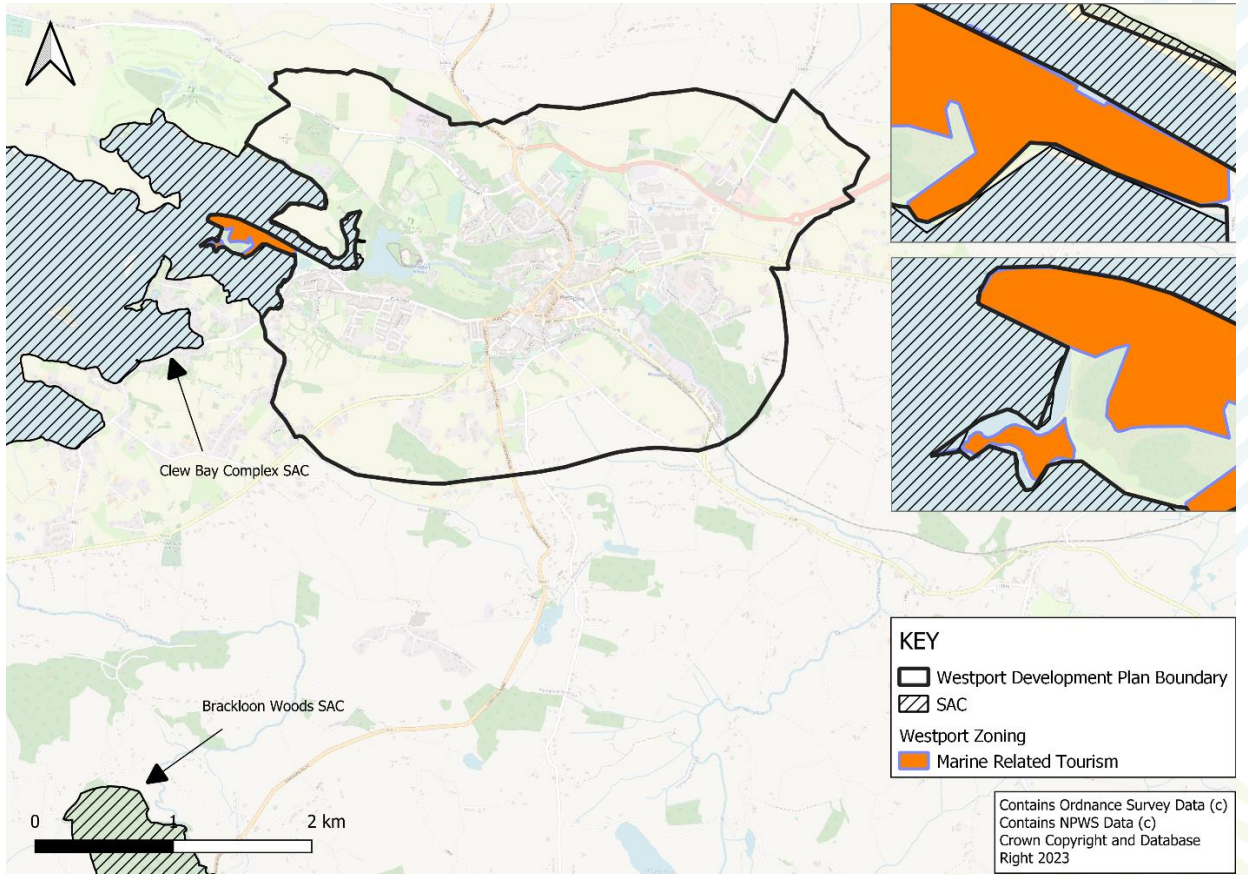


Figure 5-8: Marine Related Tourism Zoning

5.4.8 LUZ 14: Westport House and Demesne Zoning

The objective of this zoning (Figure 5-9) is to facilitate appropriate development to ensure the viability and conservation of the estate. Such development includes potentially hotels, leisure centres, public houses, offices, open space, park & stride facilities, retail, sports pitches/clubs, cafes and single residential developments. The zone is located immediately adjacent to and slightly within the Clew Bay Complex SAC and the Carrowbeg River upstream of the SAC. The impact pathways identified potential for pollution impacts during construction, potential for increases in recreational disturbance and increases in visitor numbers to the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

The Westport House and Demesne zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

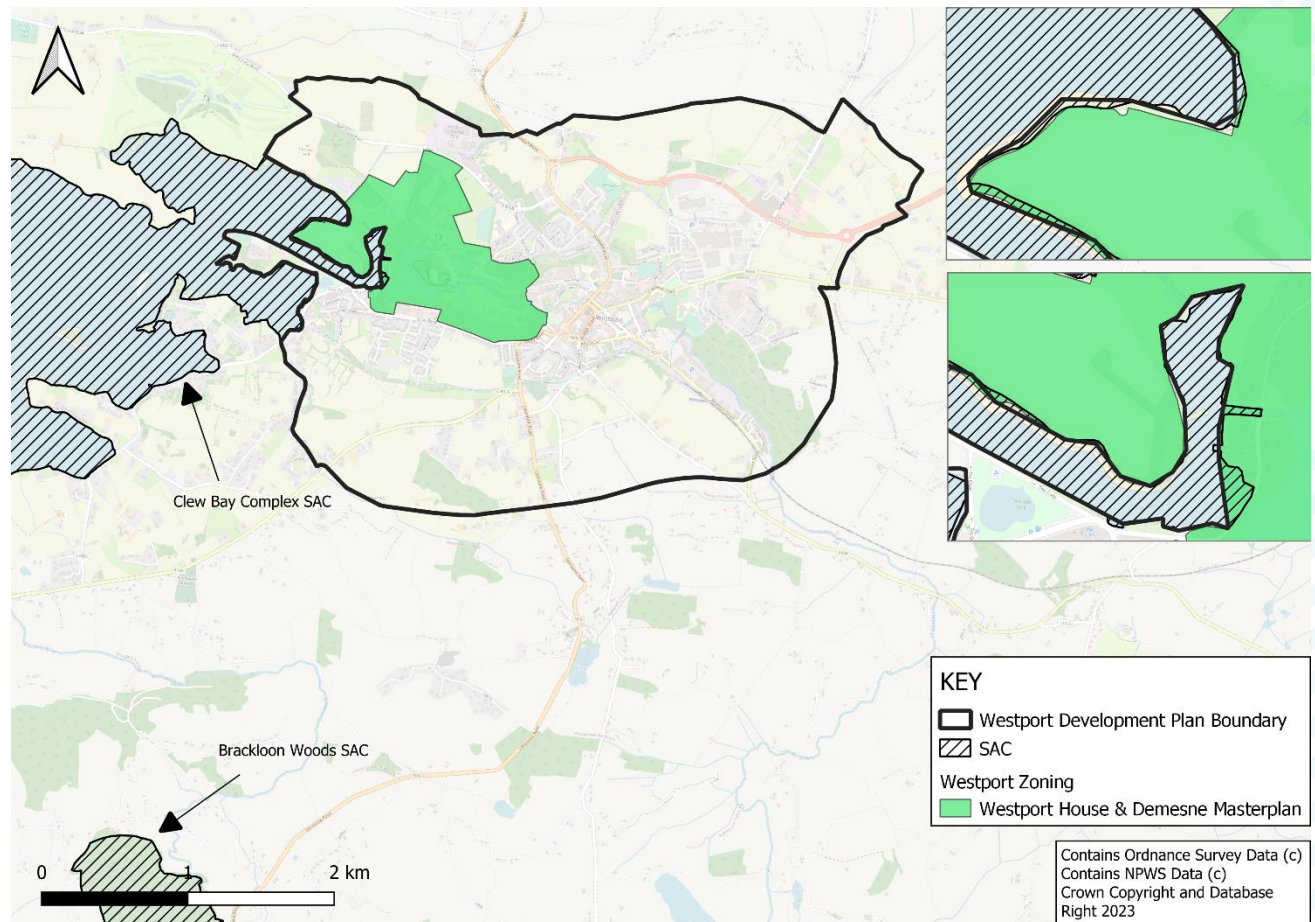


Figure 5-9: Westport House and Demesne Zoning

5.5 Screening of Proposed LTP Measures

The LTP proposes a range of intervention measures for walking, cycling, public transport and parking and highway. These measures have been categorised based on the delivery time framework as follows:

- Short-term: Within 5 years
- Medium-term: 6-10 years
- Long-term: More than 10 years

Table 5-4 describes the measures and their potential to impact upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

Table 5-4: Screening Table of Westport LTP Measures

Measure	Description	Potential for LSE	Screening Outcome
Town Wide Complimentary Measures			
Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a Local Area Model of Westport Town (based on NTA’s Western Regional Model). - Establish Mobility Management Plans for 7 schools in main study area to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote and support green schools initiative; • Establish walking and cycling buses to primary schools; and • Provide School Zones interventions in front of all schools including area of influence. - Ensure Workplace Travel Plans are developed for new developments and extensions to existing residential areas. - Deliver Mobility Hubs including cycle parking, public car share, bike share etc. (Mill Street, Train Station, Town Centre). - Implement findings from accessibility review and parking management plan. - Work with partner organisations to facilitate the development of a delivery hub location on the edge of Westport, enabling freight consolidation and a reduction in the number of vans circulating the constrained town centre. - Relocate and increase railway station cycle parking to avoid conflict with car park use. - Ensure streets are clutter free and at least 2m is clear for pedestrians by engaging with business owners and enforcement where required. 	<p>These measures aim to change existing travel behaviours to help support a reduction in private car reliance and help towards national climate action objectives. The interventions identified in the LTP mainly target utility journeys such as trips to school and work and will encourage and inform people about alternative travel options for these everyday journeys.</p> <p>Such measures not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.</p>	Out
Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rejuvenate land located on the junction between Mill Road and Altamont Street (old convent grounds). - Consider provision of additional public toilets, including at least one Changing Place toilet. This will enable people to access the town centre by sustainable modes without being dependent on private bathrooms. 	Given the nature of these measures they are not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Out
Long Term	None proposed.	n/a	n/a
Walking			
Short Term	<p>New footpaths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leenaun Road (N59) from Pound Road to Daybreak at Carrowbaun; • High Street – provide accessible pedestrian link from greenway to John’s Row on the west side of street with new footpath provision and removal of steps; • Lodge Road from its junction with the N5 (Castlebar Rd) to Slogger / Carrownaclea / Fahy crossroads. This work would be a combination of new footpath sections and enhancements to the existing, narrow sections; • Greenway to Mill Street via High Street car park; • Mill Street to Laneway connecting to Bridge Street, via Mill Street car park; • James St to Bridge St via James St Car Park and Distillery Ct; 	<p>New footpaths and improvements to existing footpaths could result in construction impacts (water quality, disturbance of species) and possible operation disturbance, particularly where these are proposed adjacent to the SAC (Quay area) and along/across the Carrowbeg River upstream of the SAC.</p>	In

Measure	Description	Potential for LSE	Screening Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knockranny Road footpath extension from Knockranny Lodge B&B to Drummindoo Stud farm junction; and • Horkan’s Hill to Carrowbeg Estate. <p>Upgrade existing footpaths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tober Hill – address local pinch points to provide continuous footpath; • Leenaun Road – footpath widening from Quay Road to Toberhill; • Peter Street – steps and accessibility improvements; • Hillside – footpath widening, relocate street furniture blocking the footpath; • Johns Row – footpath widening (minimum footpath width), continue raised footpath; • Church Street – provide accessible pedestrian access to Westport House, tactile paving, widening of footpath; • High Street – footpath widening and resurfacing on north end; • Altamont Street – provide footpath widening and provision on both sides of the road; • Distillery Road – Provide at least 1.8m wide footpath to address pinch points (bridge) and provision on both sides of the road; • Castlebar Road (east of distillery Road to Father Angelus Park) – provide wider footpaths, relocate street furniture, highlight route through Father Angelus Park; • New Road – footpath widening; • Newport Road (Scoil Phadraig to Pinewoods) – footpath widening; • Horkans Hill – provide accessible continuous footpath to Upper Carrowbeg Estate; • Harbour View – dropped kerbs, tactile paving, localised widening, improved crossings; • Quay Road (The Octagon to N59) – Footpath widening and improved crossing over Church Street; and • Increase footway width on South Mall. <p>Potential Permeability Improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Carrowbeg Estate to the Greenway; • King’s Hill to Fairways; • Upper Carrowbeg Estate and Carrowbeg Estate/Glenlara Park; • St. Mary’s Crescent (Order of Malta) to provide improved connection to the Greenway from the town centre (filtered permeability with shared use path); and • Direct link from Octagon to leisure centre car park. 		

Measure	Description	Potential for LSE	Screening Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand the signage / wayfinding strategy. - Enhance street lighting on Altamont Street, Quay Road, Castlebar Road, Newport Road, Leenaun Road, West Road and the Greenway to improve safety. - Consider the feasibility of providing increased public realm opportunities in the western half of The Octagon by reallocating parking spaces. - Explore the potential for active travel infrastructure along Ardmore and Harbour View, tying in with existing infrastructure on the R335. - Develop a monitoring / audit process for identifying and reporting ongoing accessibility issues. - Update parklet design guide. - Consider converting existing raised pedestrian courtesy crossings to formal zebra or signalised crossings in areas of high pedestrian footfall. - Review and standardise provision of drop kerbs, tactile paving and consider the potential to reduce corner radii to enable a consistent access experience for people with disabilities. - Provide an enhanced east – west pedestrian connection from High Street Car Park to the Leisure Centre Car Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New footpath in High Street car park from Greenway access to Mill Street; • Introduction of new signalised pedestrian crossing on Mill Street between High Street car park and Mill Street car park; • New footpath in Mill Street car park from Mill Street to laneway connecting to Bridge Street; • New footpath through James Street car park; • Reallocate car parking spaces either side of the entrance to James St car park; and • Improved footpath in the Leisure Centre car park including improved pedestrian access. 		
Medium Term	Extend shared use path on Golf Course Road to the Golf Course and Rugby club	Given the small-scale of these works they are considered not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	
Long Term	Explore the potential to pedestrianise Bridge Street following a reduction in through traffic. The recently opened Northern Relief Road and the development of a Southern Bypass would present opportunities to provide alternative routes for through traffic.	The oedestrianisation of Bridge Street is considered not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	

Measure	Description	Potential for LSE	Screening Outcome
Cycling			
Short Term	<p>Greenway / off road paths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Carrowbeg Riverside path from Ashwood to Tesco (Phase 1) with potential northern connection through Knockranny Woods / Colonel's Wood (Phase 2); • Develop a Greenway through Westport House from Church Street to Cloonmonad; and • Improved connection through Pairc Na Coille connecting Greenway Golf Course Road <p>Greenway improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pinewoods accessibility improvements to greenway; • Provide a new crossing on R335 at Slí Na Miséan housing development to access greenway; • Provide a new crossing on Leenaun Road near the junction with Tober Hill Street to access greenway; • Increase the width of the offroad path between Church Street and Leisure Centre car park to make it accessible to cycling; • Provide resting places and benches at longer walking routes / key approaches into town; • Provide accessible connection from the Greenway to Altamont Street; and • High Street car park accessible access to Greenway (switchback ramp). <p>Provide new shared use paths on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golf Course Road to new GAA pitches; • Newport Road from Pinewoods to King's Hill; • Carrowbeg Estate and • R330 (Ballinrobe Road) from Ashwood residential area to L5863. <p>Provide a Primary Cycle Network consisting of segregated cycleways on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Mall from Mill Street to Newport Road (including junction upgrades); • Altamont Street / R330 from Distillery Road junction to Asshwood residential area at local road L5864, via the railway station (requires existing roundabout to be upgraded to signalised T junction with cycle phase); • Bridge Street from Castlebar Road to Circle K / Spar; • Castlebar Road from North Mall to Corrib Oil service station; • Shop Street from The Octagon to Mill Street; • Mill Street from Bridge Street to High Street Car Park; and 	<p>New and improvements to existing cycleways, greenways and shared use paths could result in construction impacts (water quality, disturbance of species) and possible operation disturbance, particularly where these are proposed adjacent to the SAC (Quay area) and along/across the Carrowbeg River upstream of the SAC.</p>	In

Measure	Description	Potential for LSE	Screening Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quay Road from The Octagon to The Quay. - Provide secure sheltered cycle parking throughout the town. - Relocate and increase railway station cycle parking to avoid conflict with car park use. - Investigate the potential and feasibility of providing a new bridge across the Carrowbeg River at St. Mary's Crescent. The recently delivered Castlebar Riverwalk project demonstrated that such infrastructure can be delivered at a reasonable cost. - Explore the potential for active travel infrastructure along Ardmore and Harbour View, tying in with existing infrastructure on the R335. - MCC to provide support for the delivery of public cycle hire scheme including e-bikes. A similar scheme was introduced in Castlebar in September 2022. - Incentivise the use of cargo bikes for short freight journeys within the town by providing allocated on street parking bays and facilities. There is also potential to establish a 'bicycle library' at local schools for families to trial or include cargo bikes in a public bike hire scheme. 		
Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to increase the cycle network reflecting the CycleConnects Plan. - Extend the shared use path on Golf Course Road from GAA pitches to Rugby Club - Provide cycle connections in and to new residential areas identified in the LAP including sites adjacent to Leenaun Road. 	This measure is considered not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Out
Long Term	Ensure that walking and cycling corridors aren't severed by the Northern Relief Road and connect with existing facilities and sustainable infrastructure associated with new developments in the area.	This measure is considered not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Out
Public Transport			
Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formalise and provide accessible bus stops on Mill Street, Castlebar Road (outside The Castlecourt Hotel) and at the railway station. This would include, at minimum, provision for level boarding, a flag marking the stop and a timetable for relevant services. Additional infrastructure could include real time passenger information (RTPI), seats and shelters. - Consider the provision of additional bus stops in collaboration with key stakeholders to increase the portion of the town with access to public transport services. - Engage with Bus Éireann and other operators to encourage a bus network and schedule which is fit for purpose, supports a thriving economy and provides an attractive alternative to the car. 	Improvements to the bus network and infrastructure are considered not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Out
Medium Term	Assess the potential of providing a dedicated Westport town bus service through engagement with the National Transport Authority.	This measure is considered not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Out

Measure	Description	Potential for LSE	Screening Outcome
Long Term	None proposed.	n/a	n/a
Parking and Highway			
Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with partner organisations where required to introduce a town wide 30 km/h speed limit. - Develop a Parking Management Plan (PMP) for Westport including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional electric vehicle charging points in off-street car parks supported by the Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022 - 2025; • Provide taxi ranks on Castlebar Road, The Octagon, Mill Street (Interchange); • Consider cost increases and further restrictions; • Formalise the provision of temporary car parks in schools for the tourist season with temporary mobility hubs including bike share, shuttle buses etc. The temporary mobility hubs will occupy off-street car parks such as James Street, and make use of school parking facilities such as Holy Trinity car park. The shuttle bus could loop through the town to provide stops throughout the town; • Review accessible parking provision in off-street car parks and on street – design improvement to bring to standard; • Enhance and strengthen enforcement of loading and parking violations; and • Provide new and improved existing park and ride / park and stride facilities. 	Improvements to parking within the town are considered not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Out
Medium Term	Consider the potential to convert off-street ground level car park to multi-storey, enabling greater capacity for relieving on-street car parking subject to robust analysis and informed by the PMP.	Changes to existing car parks are considered not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination.	Out
Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore the feasibility of providing an alternative route for through traffic to bypass the town centre with a Southern Bypass linking the N5-N59. - Explore price-based demand management policies to discourage single occupancy car journeys. 	The provision of a Southern Bypass would require a crossing of the Carrowbeg River. This could result in construction impacts (water quality, disturbance of species) and possible operation disturbance.	In

5.6 Screening Statement and Conclusions

5.6.1 Pre-screening conclusion

Due to lack of pathways based on preliminary screening of Sites within the Zol of 15km, the following European Sites were screened out:

- Owenduff/Nephin Complex SAC
- Owenduff/Nephin Complex SPA
- Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC
- West Connacht Coast SAC
- Lough Carra SPA
- River Moy SAC
- Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex SAC
- Newport River SAC
- Oldhead Wood SAC

The European sites that were identified as having pathway-receptors for potential likely significant effects arising from the implementation of the Plan was:

- Clew Bay Complex SAC
- Brackloon Woods SAC

5.6.2 LAP Policies and Objectives

A number of policies and objectives have been screened out alone and in-combination with other plans or projects. A total of 30 policies and objectives have been screened in. The screened in policies could lead to development and increased tourism and therefore could impact sites via the pathways described in Section 4.

The policies and objectives screened in are:

- DSO 1
- TCP 1 and 2, TCO 4
- EDP 8, 9 and 10 and EDO 1, 3, 8 and 9
- HSCP 1 and HSCPO 1, 16 and 17
- MTO 2, 3, 6 and 9
- IESP 3 and 7
- LUZ 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14

5.6.3 Land Use Zoning

Land use zones 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13 and 14 have been screened in due to potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

5.6.4 LTP Objectives

The five objectives of the LTP were screened for likely significant effects on the Clew Bay Complex SAC. Four of these objectives have been screened out alone and in-combination with other plans or projects. Only Objective 2 was identified as having potential to have an impact upon the SAC in relation to the proposed development of a Southern Bypass Road, which would require a crossing over the Carrowbeg River, upstream of the SAC.

5.6.5 LTP Measures

The LTP proposes a number of short, medium and long term measures for walking, cycling, public transport and parking and highway. Short term measures that propose new, or improvements to existing, footpaths and cycleways, and the long term measure to develop a Southern Bypass road have been identified as having potential to have likely significant effects on the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

5.6.6 Conclusion

Clew Bay Complex SAC and Brackloon Woods SAC were screened in during the pre-screening process as having the potential to be impacted by the Plan. The screened in LAP policies and objectives could impact upon both of these SACs and the land use zones and LTP were assessed as having potential for likely significant effects upon the Clew Bay Complex SAC and therefore, both of these sites are taken forward to AA.

6 Natura Impact Report

This Natura Impact Report (NIR) aims to determine whether the proposed Plan would result in significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any European site with respect to the site's structure, function, and/ or conservation objectives. It also aims to provide supporting information for the competent authority to carry out an AA of the proposed Plan.

The AA Screening identified that the Westport LAP could potentially have significant adverse effects on the following sites:

- Clew Bay Complex SAC (and LTP)
- Brackloon Woods SAC

This section details the AA of the potential effects of the Westport LAP on the integrity of the screened in European sites.

6.1 Description of Screened-in Sites

The Westport LAP Draft could potentially have significant adverse effects alone on the Screened-in European Sites which are further described in this section.

6.1.1 Clew Bay Complex SAC

Clew Bay is a wide, west-facing bay on the west coast of Co. Mayo. The drumlin landscape was formed during the last glacial period when sediments were laid down and smoothed over by advancing ice. The sea has subsequently inundated the area, creating a multitude of islands. The geomorphology of the bay has resulted in a complex series of interlocking bays creating a wide variety of marine and terrestrial habitats.

6.1.1.1 Qualifying Interests

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

- Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats [1140]
- Coastal Lagoons* [1150]
- Large Shallow Inlets and Bays [1160]
- Annual Vegetation of Drift Lines [1210]
- Perennial Vegetation of Stony Banks [1220]
- Atlantic Salt Meadows [1330]
- Embryonic Shifting Dunes [2110]
- Marram Dunes (White Dunes) [2120]
- Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0]
- Old Oak Woodlands [91A0]
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*) [1355]
- Common (Harbour) Seal (*Phoca vitulina*) [1365]

6.1.1.2 Conservation Objectives

The conservation objects for Crew Bay Complex SAC are provided in Appendix A.1.

6.1.1.3 Site Vulnerabilities

As part of the Standard Data Form for European sites, the negative impacts and activities with high effect on the SAC are detailed to identify where future Plans, or Projects, could have an impact on a European site if a threat/ pressure is likely to be exaggerated due to the Plan. The threats and pressures upon Clew Bay Complex SAC are listed in Table 6-1 below. The identified pressures which are most likely to result from the LAP are nautical sports, pollution, urbanisation, walking/horse riding/non-motorised vehicles, pollution, transportation and bridge.

Table 6-1: Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on Clew Bay Complex SAC (NPWS, 2021c)

Code	Threats and pressures	Rank	Source
A10	Restructuring agricultural land holding	L	i
G01.01.02	Non-motorized nautical sports	L	l
A08	Fertilisation	M	l
G01.01	Nautical sports	H	l
H	Pollution	M	o
D	Transportation and service corridors	M	i
G01.02	Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles	L	b
J02.04.01	Flooding	M	b
F03.01	Hunting	M	i
B	Sylviculture, forestry	M	o
G05.05	Intensive maintenance of public parcs /cleaning of beaches	M	i
F01	Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture	H	i
L07	Storm, cyclone	H	i
D03.01	Port areas	M	i
D01.05	Bridge, viaduct	L	i
C01.01	Sand and gravel extraction	M	i
E	Urbanisation, residential and commercial development	H	b
D03.01.02	Piers / tourist harbours or recreational piers	M	i
G01.01.01	Motorized nautical sports	L	i
K01.01	Erosion	H	i
D02	Utility and service lines	L	i
F06	Hunting, fishing or collecting activities not referred to above	M	i

Key: H = high; M = medium; L = Low; b = both; i = inside, o = outside

6.1.2 Brackloon Woods SAC

This wood is situated approximately 7 km south-west of Westport. The area is underlain by soils derived from schist and gneiss. Brackloon Wood is an Old Oak Wood. The Owenee River forms the eastern boundary of the site and a number of small streams run through the wood forming small patches of marshy ground.

6.1.2.1 Qualifying Interests

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

- Old Oak Woodlands [91A0]

6.1.2.2 Conservation Objectives

The conservation objects for Brackloon Woods SAC are provided in Appendix A.2.

6.1.2.3 Site Vulnerabilities

Brackloon Woods SAC is vulnerable to several potential impacts, including invasive non-native species and forestry activities. The negative impacts and activities with high effect on the SAC are listed in Table 6-2 below. The identified threats are considered to be at low risk of arising from the Westport LAP due to the distance between the site and the LAP.

Table 6-2: Threats, Pressures and Activities with Impacts on the Brackloon Woods SAC (NPWS, 2018)

Code	Threats and pressures	Rank	Source
I01	Invasive non-native species	H	i
B02	Forest and Plantation management & use	M	i
Key: H = high; M = medium; L = Low; b = both; i = inside, o = outside			

6.2 Potential Significant Effects of the LAP on Screened-in European Sites

As outlined in Section 3.4, the potential impacts that could occur through the implementation of the Plan are;

- Loss/ reduction of habitat area
- Disturbance to key species
- Habitat or species population fragmentation
- Reduction in species density
- Changes in key indicators of conservation value, such as changes in water quality and quantity
- Air pollution.

6.2.1 Loss or reduction of habitat area

Direct habitat loss is caused where there is complete removal of a habitat type. Loss of habitat can also occur through the deterioration of habitat quality and therefore a loss of the function of that habitat. This can be due to factors such as land-take requirements, physical alterations and introduction of invasive non-native species as a result of development or works necessary to promote sustainable or any type of development. The outcomes of the objectives, aims, strategies and policies of the Plan, such as development leading to population increase and the support of the economic growth of Westport could potentially cause these impacts.

There is potential that the European sites screened into this assessment may be adversely affected in this manner through the implementation of the proposed Plan.

Indirect habitat loss may also occur through disruption of hydrological links to a designated site that supports surface or ground water dependent habitats such as the habitats designated within Clew Bay Complex SAC including Atlantic Salt Meadows, mudflats and sandflats and coastal lagoons. Therefore, implementation of SuDs and diversion of water flows that may occur due to new housing or other development may have an impact upon the qualifying interest features of Clew Bay Complex SAC.

The implementation of environmental mitigation measures for development and growth, although primarily beneficial in the provision of refuges for species and the protection and restoration of habitats including bog and wetland habitats, may result in changes of land use within the LAP area. If measures are inappropriately implemented, habitat loss or degradation of habitat quality may occur.

Mitigation measures are detailed in Section 7 to ensure the potential for habitat loss will not adversely affect the integrity of a European site due to the implementation of the proposed Plan.

6.2.2 Disturbance to key species

Key species are those species listed within the annexes of the Habitats Directive for which European sites are designated. Disturbance to species supported by a European site may result due to physical disturbance of a habitat that may result in direct mortalities or displacement of the species. Sources of disturbance may also take the form of increased noise, visual presence of people, vibration and increased illumination of areas through increased or expanded development without mitigation measures in place. Increased disturbance levels within the sensitivity threshold of a species may cause the displacement or flight of a species from their respective habitat.

In relation to the proposed Plan, activities that may potentially disturb key species are those that will result in physical disturbance due to works being carried out, such as the implementation of the policies and/or objectives of the Plan including increased recreation and tourism, population growth or development in general. These objectives may pose sources of disturbance during construction of

works and their operation. The works may also cause disturbance to the resting and/ or breeding places and foraging areas of these key species.

The policies and objectives of the proposed Plan have the potential to cause disturbance impacts to key species of the European sites screened into this assessment. However, as these policies and objectives are set at a high level, the significance of disturbance to key species will be assessed at project level and will be dependent on the final locations and detailed design of any development/activity resulting from the implementation of the proposed objectives and/or policies. As an example, disturbance to Otter which are a QI of Clew Bay Complex SAC may be caused by an increase in development and recreation on or near the SAC or supporting habitats e.g. the Carrowbeg River.

Mitigation measures are detailed in Section 7 to ensure that disturbance to key species due to the implementation of the proposed Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

6.2.3 Fragmentation

Habitat and species population fragmentation occurs when the connectivity between habitats and species is restricted or lost and impedes the natural movement of a species. This can result in singular habitat units being formed and isolated species communities. Fragmentation can arise as a result of barriers to migratory movements where important corridors exist, e.g. riparian corridors. The inappropriate installation of measures that may act as a barrier to free movement of a species and/ or physically separate a habitat, will result in fragmentation.

The implementation of the policies and/or objectives of the plan including increased recreation and tourism, population growth or development in general may pose sources of disturbance during construction of works and their operation that can lead to fragmentation. They may result in the installation of structures that may impede movement of a species. An increase in development, can lead to fragmentation of foraging and commuting habitats for the Otter of Clew Bay Complex SAC, potentially impacting the success of this species.

Mitigation measures are detailed in Section 7 to ensure that fragmentation due to the implementation of the proposed Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

6.2.4 Reduction in species density

Reduction in the density of species may arise due to the factors discussed above; habitat loss or degradation, disturbance and fragmentation. As outlined above, the policies and objectives of the proposed Plan have the potential to cause these impacts. Impacts from recreation, agriculture, infrastructure and development may cause fragmentation or direct habitat loss may result in reduction of species density. In addition, water quality could be impacted upon by development, infrastructure and agricultural activities due to the hydrological pathway via the Carrowbeg River to Clew Bay Complex SAC which contain species sensitive to water quality (i.e., Otter).

Avoidance/mitigation measures are detailed in Section 7 to ensure that reduction in species density due to the implementation of the proposed Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

6.2.5 Changes in key indicators of conservation value

The key indicators of conservation value for the European sites likely to be affected by the implementation of the proposed Plan include surface water and groundwater quality and quantity. Water bodies are one of the key pathways for impact and are easily affected by impacts themselves. Any deterioration in water quality could potentially result in adverse impacts, either directly or indirectly, to habitats such as Atlantic salt meadows and Coastal lagoons within the Clew Bay Complex SAC. Maintaining the hydrological regime, e.g. recharge, flow rates and direction, of these habitats is also very important for the function and structure of the habitats and the species that they support.

The outcomes of the objectives and policies of the Plan, such as development leading to population increase and the support of the growth of the town could potentially cause impacts to water quality and quantity. These pressures would mainly arise from the activity of both land-based and in-stream works, where there is the potential for discharge of silt laden runoff and pollutants such as hydrocarbons into the Carrowbeg River which flows into Clew Bay Complex SAC. Hydrological alterations may also occur through the potential diversion of flows and implementation of SuDs and natural flood risk management measures that are used for sustainable development and growth. Therefore, all developments/projects that arise as a result of the objectives and policies of this Plan must be appropriately assessed for their suitability at a given location.

Mitigation measures are detailed in Section 7 to ensure that changes in key indicators of conservation value due to the implementation of the proposed Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

6.2.6 Air pollution

Developments and population increases can lead to increased use of the road network by vehicles and in turn have an adverse effect on air quality. Clew Bay Complex SAC contain habitats that are sensitive to air pollution such as the dune habitats.

The outcomes of the objectives and policies of the Plan which will likely lead to population increase and increased use of the road network within and surrounding Westport will likely reduce air quality in the Plan area. However, the dune habitats are not within close proximity to Westport, with the nearest area of dunes located more than 7km west of the plan. Therefore, the likely impact of air pollution upon these habitats is low.

Mitigation measures are detailed in Section 7 to ensure that changes in key indicators of conservation value due to the implementation of the proposed Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

6.2.7 Potential Impacts Arising from the Screened In LAP Policies and Objectives

Table 6-3 describes the potential impacts of the screened in policies and objectives of the Westport LAP on European sites.

Table 6-3 Screened In Policies and Objectives and Potential Impacts

Screened in ID	Screened in Policy / Objective	Potential Impact
DSO1	Deliver at least 30% of all new homes in Westport within the existing built up footprint of the town.	Possible construction and operational based impacts
CAO2	Consider a variation of the development plan within a reasonable period of time, or to include such other mechanism, as may be appropriate, to ensure that the development plan will be consistent with the approach to climate action recommended in the revised Local Area Plan Guidelines when adopted or any other relevant guidelines.	Construction and operation arising from alterations to existing plans
TCP1	Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community and tourism services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the County Development Plan.	May result in increased development, water based discharges
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.	May result in increased development, water based discharges
TCO4	Work with landowners and other stakeholders in the redevelopment of the identified (and any future) 'opportunity sites' for appropriate town centre uses over the lifetime of the Plan.	Possible construction and operational based impacts
EDO1	Engage with IDA Ireland and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in seeking to attract Foreign Direct Investment into Westport.	May result in construction, increased development
EDO3	To extend the Westport Industrial Estate in accordance with the proposals contained in the forthcoming Phase III extension of the facility.	Possible construction and operational based impacts
EDP8	Encourage the development of tourism activities such as water-based activities, cultural and food tourism including festivals and food markets in Westport.	Possible recreational disturbance impacts in relation to Clew Bay Complex SAC
EDP9	Support the development of new tourist facilities or the upgrading / extension of existing tourist facilities.	May result in construction/development based impacts. Tourism impacts can extend outside the town to the hinterland including the Natura 2000 Network.
EDP10	Promote festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town.	Tourism impacts can extend outside the town to the hinterland including the Natura 2000 Network.
EDO8	Support and facilitate the development of an integrated network of greenways and heritage trails, including links to the Castlebar Urban Greenway and to the Murrisk, Louisburg, Roonagh greenway, to link into the network of National Greenways	May result in construction, particularly in proximity to watercourses with hydrological connection to the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

Screened in ID	Screened in Policy / Objective	Potential Impact
EDO9	To develop a Masterplan for Roman Island over the lifetime of the LAP to further develop Roman Island and The Quay area as an amenity area for the town and to realise its potential with regard to civic amenity and marine related tourism and activities.	May result in construction/development based impacts. Possible recreational disturbance impacts in relation to Clew Bay Complex SAC. Tourism impacts can extend outside the town to the hinterland including the Natura 2000 Network.
HSCP1	Encourage the compact growth of Westport 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.	May result in construction, increased development, water based discharges
HSCO1	Support, promote and 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, including living above the shop opportunities.	May result in construction, increased development, water based discharges
HSCO16	Develop sea swimming facilities at the Quay.	May result in construction/development based impacts. Possible recreational disturbance impacts in relation to Clew Bay Complex SAC.
HSCO17	Seek the development of additional municipal facilities that are available for all users within the town of Westport and its surrounding areas.	May result in construction, increased development, water based discharges
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).	May result in construction.
MTO3	a) Ensure that all proposals within the plan area for residential and mixed-use developments at design stage will consider/incorporate pedestrian and cycling provisions and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing and proposed active travel network in the town. b) Promote sustainable, compact development by ensuring that all proposals for residential and mixed-use developments, including infill and brownfield incorporate provisions for pedestrian and cyclist activity and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing road/street network and existing/proposed active travel network in the town.	May result in construction.
MTO6	Support the provision of new roads infrastructure by ensuring that the lands along the indicative routes* (as listed below) are protected by keeping them free from development that would undermine the delivery of these projects. a) N5-N59 Southern By-Pass *these routes are indicative only and are/ will be subject to change	Infrastructure projects, construction and development, possible operation disturbance
MTO9	Support the implementation of the following proposed LTP measures (but not limited to): Walking:	Infrastructure projects, construction and development, possible operation and

Screened in ID	Screened in Policy / Objective	Potential Impact
	<p>New footpaths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leenaun Road (N59) from Pound Road to Daybreak at Carrowbaun; • High Street – provide accessible pedestrian link from greenway to John’s Row on the west side of street; • Lodge Road from its junction with the N5 (Castlebar Rd) to Slogger / Carrownaclea / Fahy crossroads; • Greenway to Mill Street via High Street car park; • Mill Street to Laneway connecting to Bridge Street, via Mill Street car park; • James St to Bridge St via James St Car Park and Distillery Ct; • Knockranny Road footpath extension from Knockranny Lodge B&B to Drummindoo Stud farm junction; and • Horkan’s Hill to Carrowbeg Estate. <p>Cycling:</p> <p>Greenway / off road paths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Carrowbeg Riverside path from Ashwood to Tesco (Phase 1) with potential northern connection through Knockranny Woods / Colonel’s Wood (Phase 2); • Develop a Greenway through Westport House from Church Street to Cloonmonad; and • Improved connection through Pairc Na Coille connecting Greenway Golf Course Road <p>Greenway improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pinewoods accessibility improvements to greenway; • Provide a new crossing on R335 at Slí Na Miséan housing development to access greenway; • Provide a new crossing on Leenaun Road near the junction with Tober Hill Street to access greenway; • Increase the width of the offroad path between Church Street and Leisure Centre car park to make it accessible to cycling; • Provide resting places and benches at longer walking routes / key approaches into town; • Provide accessible connection from the Greenway to Altamont Street; and • High Street car park accessible access to Greenway (switchback ramp). <p>Provide new shared use paths on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golf Course Road to new GAA pitches; • Newport Road from Pinewoods to King’s Hill; • Carrowbeg Estate and 	<p>recreational disturbance</p>

Screened in ID	Screened in Policy / Objective	Potential Impact
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R330 (Ballinrobe Road) from Ashwood residential area to L5863. <p>Provide a Primary Cycle Network consisting of segregated cycleways on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Mall from Mill Street to Newport Road (including junction upgrades); • Altamont Street / R330 from Distillery Road junction to Asswood residential area at local road L5864, via the railway station; • Bridge Street from Castlebar Road to Circle K / Spar; • Castlebar Road from North Mall to Corrib Oil service station; • Shop Street from The Octagon to Mill Street; • Mill Street from Bridge Street to High Street Car Park; and • Quay Road from The Octagon to The Quay. 	
IESP3	Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in Westport in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 and future cycles of this Plan.	Overall positive, but individual project would require assessment if in-channel work is required i.e. fixing incorrect foul connections into stormwater system
IESP7	Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan - 2022-2027 and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan.	Overall positive, but individual project would require assessment if instream work is required i.e. fixing incorrect foul connections into stormwater system

6.3 Potential Significant Effects of the LTP on Clew Bay Complex SAC

The Westport LTP contains a comprehensive suite of measures to provide for a more sustainable travel network in Westport, in line with targeting a reduction in air emissions as per climate change objectives.

Many of the proposed measures are likely to have impacts only associated within the footprint of the works e.g. footpath upgrades, cycleway upgrades, new crossings etc. In general, these works are small scale and unlikely to have significant effects on the SAC, however even minor works which require movement of services or drains have the potential for impact through works with the stormwater system, which can lead to contaminated run-off via the storm water network, which often discharges to local rivers - in this case potentially with a hydrological link to the Clew Bay Complex SAC.

Additional small-scale works include improved crossings, improved public transport service for bus and train and improved traffic management and signalling. These have low potential for impacts.

Mobility hubs are also proposed, on already developed land, as well as improved bus infrastructure facilities and electric vehicle charging stations. These have the potential for impact via excavation and construction. These construction projects are small-scale and so likely significant effects are not anticipated, but the individual characteristics of the projects would need to be assessed.

In general, the cycleways and footpaths stick to already established routes within the built-up area of the town, however there are proposals for new/improved paths alongside the Carrowbeg River and new bridges, including a longer term measure to deliver a Southern Bypass road which would cross the River. Construction works to deliver these measures could result in impacts to water quality and quantity. There is the potential for disturbance and discharge of silt laden runoff and pollutants such as hydrocarbons into the Carrowbeg River upstream of the Clew Bay Complex SAC. Any deterioration in water quality could potentially result in adverse impacts, either directly or indirectly, to QI habitats such as Atlantic salt meadows and Coastal lagoons and species sensitive to water quality (i.e. Otter). Construction works could also result in disturbance to Otter and this species may also be impacted during operation due to recreational disturbance and lighting which could impact upon the resting and/or breeding places and foraging areas of this species.

Mitigation measures are detailed in Section 7 to ensure that potential impacts due to the implementation of the proposed Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC.

7 Avoidance/Mitigation Measures

7.1 Policies and Objectives

The Westport LAP (and LTP) 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 NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites.

Projects/development that arise as a result of the Plan may have adverse effects.

As mentioned above, the Plan includes policies and objectives to protect European sites:

- **Policy NEP1:**
In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to:
 - Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Westport, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network.
 - Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and
 - Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces. Where appropriate proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, is maintained.
- **Policy NEP2:**
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.
- **Objective NEO1:**
Ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the Clew Bay SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, geological, water and landscape value of the SAC/pNHA and, where possible, to integrate these important attributes into all such development schemes.
- **Objective NEO2:**
To promote and protect native riparian vegetation along all watercourses and ensure that a minimum 10m vegetated riparian buffer from the top of the riverbank is maintained/reinstated along all watercourses within any development site.

Additionally, policies and objectives provide for protection and enhancement of ecological corridors which may provide a supporting role to the Natura 2000 network,

- Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green Infrastructure network in Westport and strengthen links to the wider regional network.
- 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 rivers and lakes corridors.

Some policies and objectives of the Plan will increase the levels of environmental protection afforded to European sites and their conservation objectives and reduce the potential for adverse impacts from development. These policies include, but are not limited to:

- **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** Ensure that all proposals within the plan area for residential and mixed use developments at design stage will consider/incorporate pedestrian and cycling provisions and

associated facilities that will integrate into the existing and proposed active travel network in the town.

- **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
- **IESP3** Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in Westport in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 and future cycles of this Plan.
- **IESP7** Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan - 2022-2027 and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan.

7.2 Implementation Routes for Physical Works

Measures or projects arising from the objectives, aims, strategies or policies of the LAP and LTP 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.

7.3 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.

7.4 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 surveys¹
- 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 EclA can help competent authorities understand ecological issues when determining applications for consent. Unlike EIA, EclA on its own is not a statutory requirement but can be a valuable evaluation process where habitats, species and ecosystems may be impacted from a development/project.

1 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.

7.5 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.

7.6 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.

² 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.

8 Assessment of Impacts upon Site integrity

An assessment of whether the identified potential impacts of the Westport LAP and LTP will result in adverse effects on the integrity of the screened in European sites as defined by the conservation objectives and status of the sites is detailed in Table 8-1.

Table 8-1: Assessment of Impacts upon Site Integrity

Qualifying Interest	Potential source of Impact	Impact on attribute and Target Prior to Mitigation / Avoidance	Avoidance / Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Clew Bay Complex SAC				
<p>Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats [1140]</p> <p>Large Shallow Inlets and Bays [1160]</p>	<p>Habitat loss</p> <p>Changes in physical regime</p> <p>Physical damage</p> <p>Habitat/ community simplification</p> <p>Competition from invasive non-native species</p> <p>Changes in water levels or table</p> <p>Changes in water quality</p> <p>Changes to surface water flooding</p> <p>Turbidity and siltation</p> <p>Pollution</p>	<p>These habitats are located adjacent to the Westport plan boundary and therefore could be directly impacted upon via habitat loss and physical damage (i.e., increased recreational disturbance). Although, due to the nature of estuaries, access to these QIs is likely to be minimal.</p> <p>In addition, any development carried out within the Plan boundary that is near or within the SAC boundary has the potential to lead to significant impacts, including through the increase in tourism and recreational activities that would likely be associated with it.</p> <p>Development and construction works adjacent to these habitats or upstream of the SAC, on, adjacent or with pathways to the Carrowbeg River, could cause adverse impacts to the target conservation objectives of these habitats, through indirect impacts via changes to surface water pathways such as changes to surface water flooding, drainage, siltation and pollution. The target conservation objective for these QIs are detailed in Appendix A.</p>	<p>Built-in to the Plan is fixed mitigation to protect European Sites (NEP1 and NEP2). The Council will seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not result in significant impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development. This policy will ensure that any development proposal within or adjacent to Clew Bay Complex SAC, is located and designed to negate the impacts on this site. In addition, objective NEO1 will ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the Clew Bay SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, geological, water and landscape value of the SAC.</p> <p>In addition to the above, in relation to development promoted by the Plan, further mitigation measures are outlined in Section Error! Reference source not found.</p>	<p>No adverse impact on QI and site integrity</p>
<p>Atlantic Salt Meadows [1330]</p> <p>Annual Vegetation of Drift Lines [1210]</p> <p>Perennial Vegetation of Stony Banks [1220]</p> <p>Embryonic Shifting</p>	<p>Habitat loss</p> <p>Changes in physical regime</p> <p>Physical damage</p> <p>Habitat/ community simplification</p> <p>Competition from invasive non-native species</p> <p>Changes in water levels or table</p> <p>Changes in water quality</p>	<p>These habitats are located outside of the Plan area and therefore, there will be no direct impact upon them.</p> <p>Development and construction works adjacent to these habitats or upstream of the SAC, on, adjacent or with pathways to the Carrowbeg River, could cause adverse impacts to the target conservation objectives of these habitats, through indirect impacts via changes to surface water pathways such as changes to surface water flooding, drainage, siltation and pollution. The target conservation objective for these QIs are detailed in Appendix A.</p>	<p>Built-in to the Plan is fixed mitigation to protect European Sites (NEP1 and NEP2). The Council will seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not result in significant impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development. This policy will ensure that any development proposal within or adjacent to Clew Bay Complex SAC, is located and designed to negate the impacts on this site. In addition, objective NEO1 will ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the Clew Bay SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity,</p>	<p>No adverse impact on QI and site integrity</p>

Qualifying Interest	Potential source of Impact	Impact on attribute and Target Prior to Mitigation / Avoidance	Avoidance / Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Dunes [2110] Marram Dunes (White Dunes) [2120] Coastal Lagoons* [1150]	Changes to surface water flooding Pollution		geological, water and landscape value of the SAC. In addition to the above, in relation to development promoted by the Plan, further mitigation measures are outlined in Section Error! Reference source not found.	
Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0]	Habitat loss Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community simplification Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water levels or table Changes in water quality Changes to surface water flooding Pollution	The QI is located outside of the plan boundary, therefore there will be no direct impact (i.e., habitat loss, physical damage) upon this habitat. This habitat is located >15km from the Plan boundary and due to the distance, it is considered this QI will not be adversely impacted upon by the Plan.	N/A	N/A
Old Oak Woodlands [91A0]	Habitat loss Physical damage simplification Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water levels or table Pollution	This QI is not within the Plan area and is located upstream of Westport, therefore, it is considered this QI will not be adversely impacted upon by the Plan.	N/A	N/A
Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]	Habitat loss Habitat fragmentation	The known location of Otter within the Clew Bay Complex SAC is adjacent to the plan area and connects with the Carrowbeg River. Therefore,	Built-in to the Plan is fixed mitigation to protect European Sites (NEP1 and NEP2). The Council will seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not	No adverse impact on QI and site integrity

Qualifying Interest	Potential source of Impact	Impact on attribute and Target Prior to Mitigation / Avoidance	Avoidance / Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	<p>Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community simplification Disturbance Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water levels or table Changes in water quality Changes to surface water flooding Turbidity and siltation Pollution</p>	<p>Otter presence along the Carrowbeg River within, and downstream, of the Plan area cannot be ruled out at this high-level stage. The target conservation objectives for Otter are detailed in Appendix A.</p> <p>The screened in policies and objectives of the LAP and the measures proposed within the LTP, which involve the provision of new and upgraded footpaths and cycleways alongside the Carrowbeg River and bridge crossings over the River, could cause adverse impacts to target conservation objectives for Otter via disturbance, increased recreational pressures as well as surface water pathways (i.e., pollution).</p>	<p>result in significant impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development. This policy will ensure that any development proposal within or adjacent to Clew Bay Complex SAC, is located and designed to negate the impacts on this site. In addition, objective NEO1 will ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the Clew Bay SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, geological, water and landscape value of the SAC.</p> <p>In addition to the above, in relation to development promoted by the Plan, further mitigation measures are outlined in Section Error! Reference source not found.</p>	
<p>Common (Harbour) Seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>) [1365]</p>	<p>Habitat loss Habitat fragmentation Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community simplification Disturbance Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water levels or table Changes in water quality Changes to surface water flooding Turbidity and siltation Pollution</p>	<p>Harbour Seal are unlikely to enter the plan area, however they are present within Clew Bay downstream of the plan boundary, with breeding, moulting and resting sites present. Therefore, there is the potential that screened in policies, objectives and measures of the Plan could cause adverse impacts to target conservation objectives via disturbance caused by increased recreational pressures and via surface water pathways, which could lead to changes in water quality, siltation and pollution.</p>	<p>Built-in to the Plan is fixed mitigation to protect European Sites (NEP1 and NEP2). The Council will seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not result in significant impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development. This policy will ensure that any development proposal within or adjacent to Clew Bay Complex SAC, is located and designed to negate the impacts on this site. In addition, objective NEO1 will ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the Clew Bay SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, geological, water and landscape value of the SAC.</p> <p>In addition to the above, in relation to development promoted by the Plan, further mitigation measures are outlined in Section Error! Reference source not found.</p>	<p>No adverse impact on QI and site integrity</p>

Qualifying Interest	Potential source of Impact	Impact on attribute and Target Prior to Mitigation / Avoidance	Avoidance / Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Brackloon Woods SAC				
Old Oak Woodlands [91A0]	Habitat loss Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community simplification Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water levels or table Pollution	This QI is not within the Plan area and is located upstream of Westport therefore, it is considered this QI will not be adversely impacted upon by the Plan. The habitat is located >2km from the plan and no impacts upon the habitat as a result of alterations in air pollution are expected as a result of the plan.	N/A	N/A

9 Summary and Conclusion

Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations') states that if a land-use plan is "(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects); and (b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site" then the plan-making authority must "...make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives" before the plan is given effect. The process by which Regulation 105 is met is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

It is accepted best-practice for the HRA of strategic planning documents to be run as an iterative process alongside the plan development, with the emerging policies/objectives continually assessed for their possible effects on European sites and modified or abandoned (as necessary) to ensure that the subsequently adopted plan is not likely to result in significant effects on any European sites, either alone or 'in combination' with other plans or projects. The Westport LAP and LTP is currently at the early stages of planning with the current policies/objectives all in a draft state.

The most likely effects of the LAP on European sites are related to pressures from new development including changes to surface and groundwater levels/quality (surface run-off, pollution events), air pollution and increased recreational pressures arising from increased population in Westport and an increase in tourism, especially around the harbour area.

The most likely effects of the LTP on European sites are related to impacts from the provision of new and upgraded footpaths and cycleways and the proposed Southern Bypass, which would cross the Carrowbeg River. Such impacts are likely to include indirect impacts via changes to surface water pathways such as changes to surface water flooding, drainage and pollution and disturbance impacts.

The Pre-Screening Assessment identified that two European sites have pathway-receptors for potential likely significant effects arising from the implementation of the Plan, these are:

- Clew Bay Complex SAC
- Brackloon Woods SAC (LAP only)

The AA Screening Assessment screened in 30 of the LAP policies/objectives, including nine of the land use zones, as these could have an adverse impact on the integrity of the SACs via hydrological, recreational or air pollution pathways. In relation to the LTP, the AA Screening Assessment screened in one objective (related to the provision of a long term measure to develop a Southern Bypass) and a number of short term measures that propose new, or improvements to existing, footpaths and cycleways, as having potential to have a likely significant effect on the Clew Bay Complex SAC, due to potential indirect surface/ground water pathways and disturbance pathways.

Therefore, an NIR was required to determine whether the proposed Plan would result in significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the screened in European sites with respect to the site's structure, function, and/or conservation objectives.

The NIR determined that the Westport LAP and LTP is not likely to have significant effects, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, on the screened in European sites due to Policies NEP1 and NEP2 safeguarding the integrity of European sites. Additional mitigation measures in the plan also provide for enhancement and indirection protection of the European Sites through the Water Framework Directive, and protection of ecological corridors which play a supporting role in protecting the Natura 2000 Network.

Appendix

A Conservation Objectives

A.1 Clew Bay Complex SAC

The conservation objectives for Crew Bay Complex are to maintain or restore favourable conservation condition of the Qualifying Interest features of the site (NPWS, 2011).

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

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

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

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

Table A-1: Conservation Objectives for the Qualifying Interests of Crew Bay Complex SAC (NPWS, 2011)

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
Geyer's whorl snail <i>Vertigo geyeri</i>	Not in Conservation Objectives document		
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	Habitat area	Hectares	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes.
	Community distribution	Hectares	The following sediment communities should be maintained in a natural condition: Intertidal sandy mud with <i>Tubificoides benedii</i> and <i>Pygospio elegans</i> community complex; Sandy mud with polychaetes and bivalves community complex; and Fine sand dominated by <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i> community.
Coastal lagoons	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes.
	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable, subject to slight natural variation. Favourable reference area of surveyed lagoons is 163.3ha. Furnace Lough- 162.1ha; Claggan Lagoon- 1.2ha.
	Salinity regime	Practical salinity units (psu)	Maintain current spatial and temporal variation in salinity regime
	Hydrological regime	Metres	Maintain current annual water level fluctuations
	Hydrological regime	Discharge (m ³ /second)	Maintain/restore freshwater discharge regime
	Barrier	Weir function	Maintain current weir structure at Furnace Lough to ensure maintenance of the current salinity regime
	Water quality: chlorophyll a	µg/L	Maintain annual median chlorophyll in Furnace Lough at less than 2.5µg/L
Water quality:	mg/L	Maintain annual median MRP in Furnace Lough	

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Molybdate Reactive Phosphorus (MRP)		at less than 0.01mg/L
	Water quality: Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen (DIN)	mg/L	Maintain annual median DIN (Dissolved inorganic nitrogen) in Furnace Lough at less than 0.15mg/L
	Water quality: Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD)	mg/L	Maintain annual median BOD (Biological Oxygen Demand) in Furnace Lough at less than 2.0mg/L
	Depth of submergent Macrophyte colonisation	Metres	Maintain/increase the depth of submergent macrophyte colonisation of the lagoon
	Typical plant species	Number and m ²	Maintain number and extent of listed lagoonal specialists, subject to natural variation
	Typical animal species	Number	Maintain listed lagoon specialists, subject to natural variation
	Negative indicator species	Number and % cover	Negative indicator species absent or under control
Large shallow inlets and bays	Habitat area	Hectares	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes.
	Community extent	Hectares	Maintain the natural extent of the <i>Zostera</i> dominated and maërl dominated communities.
	Shoot density	Shoots per m ²	Maintain the high quality of <i>Zostera</i> dominated community
	Community structure	Biological composition	Maintain the high quality of maërl dominated communities
	Community distribution	Hectares	The following communities should be maintained in a natural condition: Sandy mud with polychaetes and bivalves community complex; Fine sand dominated by <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i> community; Intertidal sandy mud with <i>Tubificoides benedii</i> and <i>Pygospio elegans</i> community complex; Shingle; and Reef.
Annual vegetation of drift lines	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession. For sub-sites mapped: Bartraw - 0.04ha and Rosmurrevagh - 0.08ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes
	Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply	Presence/absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions
	Vegetation structure: zonation	Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession
	Vegetation composition: typical species and sub-communities	Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities with typical species: <i>Cakile maritima</i> , <i>Honckenya peploides</i> , <i>Salsola kali</i> and <i>Atriplex spp.</i>
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover
Perennial vegetation of stony banks	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes
	Physical structure: Functionality and sediment supply	Presence/absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions
	Vegetation structure: zonation	Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession
	Vegetation composition: typical species and sub-communities	Percentage cover at a representative sample of monitoring stops	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities with typical species: <i>Honckenya peploides</i> , <i>Beta vulgaris ssp. maritima</i> , <i>Crithmum maritimum</i> , <i>Tripleurospermum maritimum</i> , <i>Glaucium flavum</i> and <i>Silene uniflora</i>
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover
Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession. For sub-sites mapped: Mallaranny - 19.76ha, Tooreen - 1.06ha, Rosmurrevagh - 6.40ha, Tierna - 0.39ha, Rockfleet Castle - 0.37ha, Rosharnagh East - 0.03ha, Caraholly - 0.36ha, Kiladangan - 0.96ha, Annagh Island - 5.23ha, Bartraw - 0.38ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes.
	Physical structure: sediment supply	Presence/absence of physical barriers	Maintain/restore natural circulation of sediments and organic matter, without any physical obstructions
	Physical structure: creeks and pans	Occurrence	Maintain creek and pan structure, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession
	Physical structure: flooding regime	Hectares flooded; frequency	Maintain natural tidal regime
	Vegetation structure: zonation	Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession
	Vegetation structure: vegetation height	Centimetres	Maintain structural variation within sward
	Vegetation structure: vegetation cover	Percentage cover at a representative sample of monitoring stops	Maintain more than 90% area outside creeks vegetated.
	Vegetation composition: typical species and sub-communities	Percentage cover at a representative sample of monitoring stops	Maintain range of sub-communities with typical species listed in Saltmarsh Monitoring Project (McCorry & Ryle, 2009)
	Vegetation structure: negative indicator species - <i>Spartina anglica</i>	Hectares	No significant expansion of <i>Spartina</i> . No new sites for this species and an annual spread of less than 1% where it is already known to occur
Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	Distribution	Percentage positive survey sites	No significant decline
	Extent of terrestrial	Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	habitat		calculated as 233.1ha above high water mark (HWM); 47.3ha along river banks/ around ponds
	Extent of marine habitat	Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 2426.7ha
	Extent of freshwater (river) habitat	Kilometres	No significant decline. Length mapped and calculated as 10.2km
	Extent of freshwater (lake/lagoon) habitat	Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 141.3ha
	Couching sites and holts	Number	No significant decline
	Fish biomass available	Kilograms	No significant decline
	Barriers to connectivity	Number	No significant increase.
Common seal <i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Access to suitable habitat	Number of artificial barriers	Species range within the site should not be restricted by artificial barriers to site use
	Breeding behaviour	Breeding sites	The breeding sites should be maintained in a natural condition.
	Moulting behaviour	Moult haul-out sites	The moult haul-out sites should be maintained in a natural condition.
	Resting behaviour	Resting haul-out sites	The resting haul-out sites should be maintained in a natural condition.
	Disturbance	Level of impact	Human activities should occur at levels that do not adversely affect the harbour seal population at the site.
Embryonic shifting dunes	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession. For sub-sites mapped: Bartraw - 0.02ha and Rosmurrevagh - 1.38ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes.
	Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply	Presence/absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions
	Vegetation structure: zonation	Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession
	Vegetation composition: plant health of foredune grasses	Percentage cover	More than 95% of <i>Elytrigia</i> and/or <i>Leymus</i> should be healthy (i.e. green plant parts above ground and flowering heads present)
	Vegetation composition: typical species and sub-communities	Percentage cover	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities with typical species: <i>Elytrigia juncea</i> and/or <i>Leymus arenarius</i>
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover
Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ("white dunes")	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession. For sub-sites mapped: Bartraw - 0.18ha and Rosmurrevagh - 0.36ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes.
	Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply	Presence/absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Vegetation structure: zonation	Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession
	Vegetation composition: plant health of dune grasses	Percentage cover	More than 95% of <i>Ammophila</i> and/or <i>Leymus</i> should be healthy (i.e. green plant parts above ground and flowering heads present)
	Vegetation composition: typical species and sub-communities	Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities dominated by <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> and/or <i>Leymus arenarius</i>
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover

A.2 Brackloon Woods SAC

The conservation objectives for Brackloon Woods SAC are to maintain or restore favourable conservation condition of the Qualifying Interest features of the site (NPWS, 2021a).

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

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

Table A-2: Conservation Objectives for the Qualifying Interests of Brackloon Woods SAC (NPWS, 2021a)

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes.
	Woodland size	Hectares	Area stable or increasing. Where topographically possible, "large" woods at least 25ha in size and "small" woods at least 3ha in size
	Woodland structure: cover and height	Percentage; metres; centimetres	Total canopy cover at least 30%; median canopy height at least 11m; native shrub layer cover 10-75%; native herb/dwarf shrub layer cover at least 20% and height at least 20 cm; bryophyte cover at least 4%
	Woodland structure: community diversity and extent	Hectares	Maintain diversity and extent of community types
	Woodland structure: natural regeneration	Seedling: sapling: pole ratio	Seedlings, saplings and pole age-classes of target species for 91A0 woodlands and other native tree species occur in adequate proportions to ensure survival of woodland canopy
	Woodland structure: dead wood	Number per hectare	At least 19 stems/ha of dead wood of at least 20cm diameter
	Woodland structure: veteran trees	Number per hectare	No decline

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Woodland structure: indicators of local distinctiveness	Occurrence; population size	No decline in distribution and, in the case of red listed and other rare or localised species, population size
	Woodland structure: indicators of overgrazing	Occurrence	All four indicators of overgrazing absent
	Vegetation composition: native tree cover	Percentage	No decline. Native tree cover at least 90% of canopy; target species cover at least 50% of canopy
	Vegetation composition: typical species	Occurrence	At least 1 target species for 91A0 woodlands present; at least 6 positive indicator species for 91A0 woodlands present
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Occurrence	Negative indicator species cover not greater than 10%; regeneration of negative indicator species absent

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