

# Draft Ballina Local Area Plan 2024-2030

Natura Impact Report  
December 23

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



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo  
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## Executive Summary

This report contributes to Mayo County Council's legal obligation under the Habitats Regulations to carry out an Appropriate Assessment (AA) 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 AA 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 Ballina Local Area Plan (LAP) is currently at the early stages of planning with the current policies/objectives in draft.

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 Ballina and increase in tourism.

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

- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- River Moy SAC
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

The AA Screening Assessment screened in 39 of the LAP policies/objectives and eight of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives as these policies/objectives could have an adverse impact on all four of the European sites integrity via hydrological, recreational or air pollution pathways.

Therefore, a Natura Impact Report (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 Ballina LAP and LTP will not have any adverse impacts upon site integrity of any European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, 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
CEMP	Construction Environment Management 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
EclA	Ecological Impact Assessment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
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 Zoning
MCDP	Mayo County Development Plan
NBDC	National Biodiversity Data Centre
NIR	Natura Impact Report
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPF	National Planning Framework
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  
Zol                        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 Ballina Local Area Plan (LAP) 2022 – 2028.

The Ballina LAP sets out the land-use plan and strategy for the development of Ballina over the period of 2022-2028 and will replace the previous LAP (2014-2020) when adopted. The LAP also includes the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Ballina LTP will guide future transport investment in the area. The LTP is a short to medium-term plan that will be used to guide the towns transport strategy for the period to 2028, but also looks beyond to 2040.

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) 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, considering 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 - 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 Pleanala* (C-462/17) also clarified the importance in AA of considering 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 been used to provide guidance during 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](http://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/](https://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 Ballina Local Area Plan 2022-2028

### 2.1 Background

The Ballina LAP sets out the overall development strategy and planning policies and objectives for the town for coming years. It also seeks to provide for the medium-term planning and development benefit for Ballina 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 Mayo Country Development Plan (MCDP) sets out the growth agenda for Key Towns, like Ballina.

The LAP supports economic growth, transport services and community related development in line with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The plan's policies and objectives, and development management guidelines and standards have also been informed by best practice, national planning guidance and the MCDP, where appropriate.

### 2.2 Profile of Ballina

The town of Ballina is located approximately 45km west of Sligo town, and 28km north of Castlebar (Figure 2-1). The town is located on the convergence of the N59 and N26 national roads, with immediate access from the southern edge of the town to the Ballina-Dublin Railway Line. Ballina has been designated as a Key Town in the RSES. Cognisance is attributed to the strategic location of Ballina and the importance of cross boundary collaboration with adjoining Local Authorities and other relevant stakeholders as necessary. These include, for example, Sligo County Council.

The town also benefits from key energy and telecommunications infrastructure which are considered key for the location of industrial and technological companies, for example Coca-Cola (Ballina Beverages), Hollister, Lionbridge Technologies. Ballina is connected to An Bord Gáis gas pipeline network and to several fibre broadband network providers. The town has an important sub-regional role in delivering retail provision, employment, and community facilities.

A crucial part of the town's social events calendar is the Salmon Festival, which contributes significantly to the local economy, attracting crowds upwards of 250,000 annually. Distinct natural amenities, particularly the River Moy and Moy catchment, also have important economic benefits for the town. 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 Sligo and 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 Ballina was recorded as 10,171 persons, which represents a slight decrease on the 2011 recorded population of 11,086 (-9%).



Figure 2-1: Location of Ballina and the Plan Boundary

## 2.3 Ballina Local Transport Plan

The LTP aims to propose schemes to deliver the on-street infrastructure necessary to provide continuous and consistent Active Travel links. These links will cater for commuting, leisure, tourist, and family cycling, as well as improved accessibility for pedestrians. The proposed schemes must not only increase accessibility and permeability within the immediate study area, but also provide enhanced and safer connectivity with other areas and routes. Ultimately the routes should be delivered to improve safety, reduced vehicle speeds, reduce journey times, and contribute towards increased numbers of trips being made by bicycle and by foot in the local catchment.

The overall principles of the LTP are:

- To promote mode shift to sustainable modes whilst providing a vision for the achievement of a reduction in car dependency and shift to sustainable modes of transport;
- To develop integrated transport that can meet the planned future travel demand, in the context of the statutory plans informing the future development of the Ballina Town Area;
- Identify policy interventions and infrastructure measures required to enable modal shift including walking, cycling, scooting and public transport and a reduction in the need to travel;
- To maintain or improve the reliability of journey times on key routes;
- To create a transport system that is accessible to all population cohorts;
- To provide a transport system that supports the economy and the growing population of the town;
- Identify opportunities for the integration of transport and land use policy proposals;
- Enhance quality of life and the attractiveness of the urban environment through high quality landscape and biodiversity interventions;

- Reduce air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption;
- Provide a transport system that supports the economy by connecting to key employment areas and supports the growing population of the Ballina Town Area;
- To protect and enhance the built and natural environment; and
- Ensure economic viability, social equity, and environmental quality.

To achieve these principles, a clear set of objectives are developed following which the developed options will include solutions contributing directly and indirectly to improved, sustainable and safer pedestrian, cyclist, road, and public transport network, spread over a period of time.

## 3 European Sites, Pathways and Potential Impacts

### 3.1.1 Zone of Influence

The Zone of Influence (Zoi) 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 Zoi 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 Zoi 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.

### 3.2 European sites in Zoi

There are three European Sites located within the Plan area, and a further six SACs and SPAs within 15km of the Plan area. These European Sites include:

- River Moy SAC (within Plan area)
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (within Plan area)
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (within Plan area)
- Ox Mountains Bog SAC
- Lough Hoe Bog SAC
- Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head SAC
- Bellacorick Bog Complex SAC
- Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog SAC
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

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.



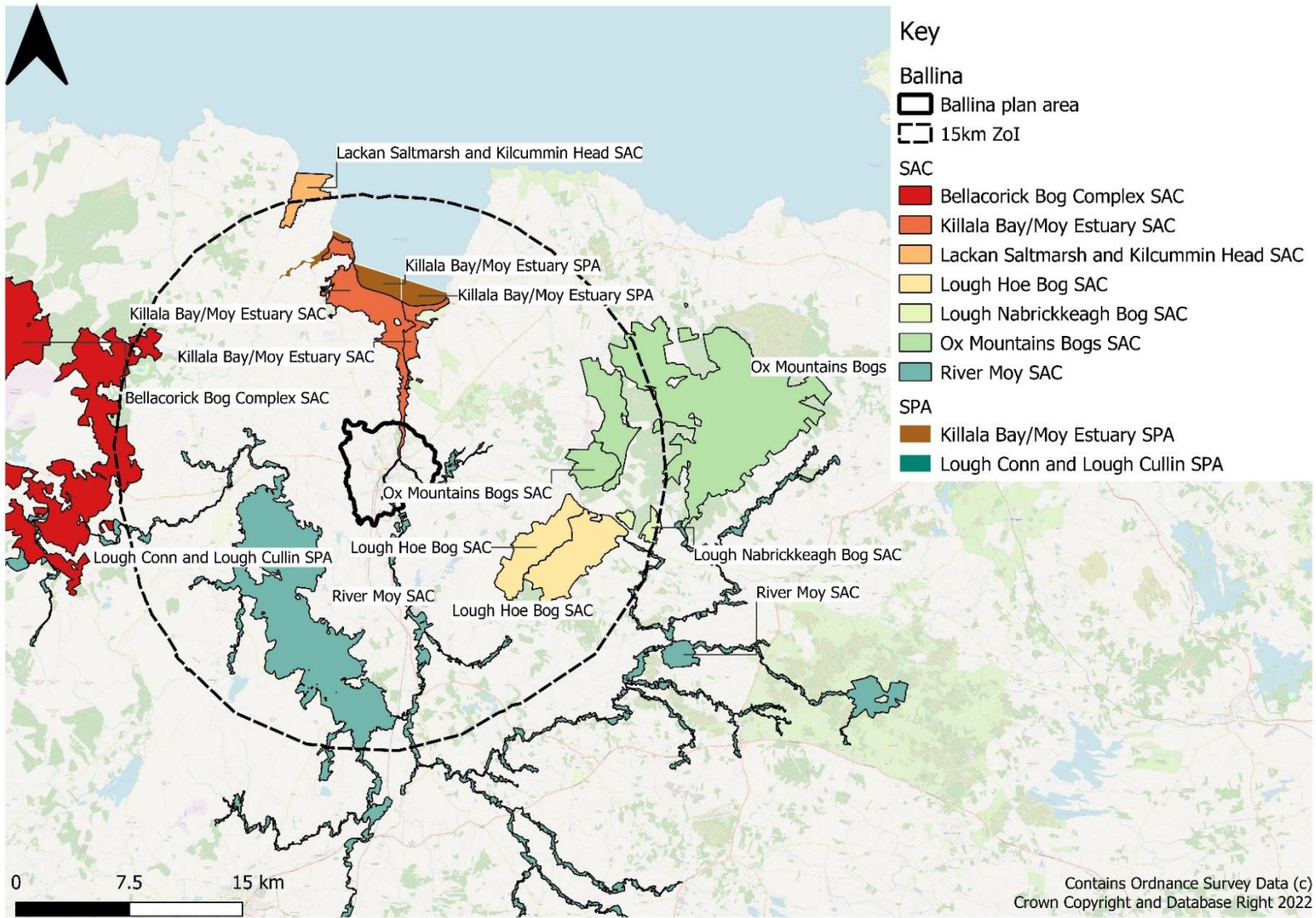


Figure 3-1: European sites located within Ballina Local Area Plan and within 15km of the Plan area

Table 3-1: European sites within 15km of Plan area

Site Code	Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Qualifying Interests	Brief description of site
004036	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA	0m (within Plan area)	<p>Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]            Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]            Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]            Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]            Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]            Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]            Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]            Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]            Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	The Killala Bay/Moy Estuary lies north of Ballina, bordering counties Mayo and Sligo. The site is very important for wintering waterfowl and provides excellent feeding grounds for the birds, as well as high-tide roosts.
000458	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC	0m (within Plan area)	<p>Estuaries [1130]            Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]            Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]            Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]            Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]            Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]            Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]            Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]            Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]            Humid dune slacks [2190]  <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014]  <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]  <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p>	Extensive sandflats and mudflats are exposed in the estuary and bay at low tide. Saltmarshes are present in sheltered parts of the site. The site is very important for wintering waterfowl, supporting eight species of national importance.
002298	River Moy SAC	0m (within Plan area)	<p>Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510]            Active raised bogs [7110]</p>	The site comprises also entirely of the freshwater element of the River Moy and its tributaries.

Site Code	Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Qualifying Interests	Brief description of site
			<p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]            Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [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> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]  <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]  <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]  <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]  <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]  <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p>	<p>Oak woodlands and alluvial woodlands are present. Alkaline fen and degraded raised bog are also present within the SAC. The SAC is one of the most important in Ireland for lowland hay meadow.</p>
002006	Ox Mountains Bog SAC	8.3km E	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]            Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]            Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]            European dry heaths [4030]            Blanket bogs (*if active bog) [7130]            Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]            Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]  <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013]  <i>Saxifraga hirculus</i> (Marsh Saxifrage) [1528]</p>	<p>The site comprises several upland blanket bogs on the border between Sligo and Mayo. The site supports several oligotrophic lakes, and wet heath is fairly extensive on the site. The site is vulnerable to fragmentation by an extension of adjacent land uses, in particular afforestation and turbarry.</p>
000633	Lough Hoe Bog SAC	6.2km SE	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]            Blanket bogs (*if active bog) [7130]  <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013]  <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]</p>	<p>An extensive area of undulating montane blanket bog and heath-covered rocky ridges on a lake-studded plateau in Ox Mountains. The site supports several oligotrophic lakes and there are three large rives within the site.</p>
000516	Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin	13.4km N	<p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]            Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]</p>	<p>A diverse array of coastal habitats including mature dunes,</p>

Site Code	Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Qualifying Interests	Brief description of site
	Head SAC		Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritimi</i> ) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]	saltmarsh, rocky sea cliffs, dune grassland and estuarine sandflats.
001922	Bellacorick Bog Complex SAC	13km W	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] Blanket bogs (*if active bog) [7130] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] Alkaline fens [7230] <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] <i>Saxifraga hirculus</i> (Marsh Saxifrage) [1528]	A large peatland site situated on a low-lying undulating plain and consisting of two large areas separated by an area of forestry. The site supports dystrophic lakes and spring-fed species-rich flushes.
000634	Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog SAC	12km E	Blanket bogs (*if active bog) [7130]	The site supports two areas of highland blanket bog which are separated by a conifer plantation. Several flushes are present across the site area. Lough Nabrickkeagh has a stony bottom and is colonised by aquatic species. The bog provides valuable habitat for Red Grouse.
004228	Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA	2.5km W	Tufted Duck ( <i>Aythya fuligula</i> ) [A061] Common Scoter ( <i>Melanitta nigra</i> ) [A065] Common Gull ( <i>Larus canus</i> ) [A182] Greenland White-fronted Goose ( <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> ) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	An important site for wintering waterfowl and the Loughs are one of only four breeding sites in Ireland for Common Scoter. The site also supports breeding gulls and terns.

### 3.3 Potential Impacts on European Sites

Development for housing, business, infrastructure, services, and recreation/tourism promoted as part of the Ballina LAP and transport improvements proposed as part of the LTP, 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 Ballina which may arise from the Ballina 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 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 and LTP
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 3-4 shows the qualifying features of the European sites within the Zol of the Ballina LAP and LTP 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 and LTP 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	
<b>Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA</b>	Ringed Plover Golden Plover Grey Plover Sanderling Dunlin Bar-tailed Godwit Curlew Redshank	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Wetland and Waterbirds	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC</b>	Estuaries Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Annual vegetation of drift lines	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	
	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓					✓	
	Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i> )	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) Humid dune slacks	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	<i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	<i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	<i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	<b>River Moy SAC</b>	Lowland hay meadows ( <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i> )	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
	Active raised bogs Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Alkaline fens	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		
Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> )	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		
<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
<i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		

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
	<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
<b>Ox Mountains Bog SAC</b>	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> ) Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	European dry heaths	P		P	P	P		P	P		P		P
	Blanket bogs (*if active bog) Transition mires and quaking bogs Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i> (Marsh Saxifrage)	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail)	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail)	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P	P	P
<b>Lough Hoe Bog SAC</b>	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains ( <i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i> )	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P	P	P
	Blanket bogs (*if active bog)	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail)	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	<i>Austroptamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P
<b>Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head SAC</b>	<i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand	P		P	P	P		P	P		P		P
	Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i> ) Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritim</i> )	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail)	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
<b>Bellacorick Bog SAC</b>	Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P	P	P
	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	P		P	P	P		P	P				P
	Blanket bogs (*if active bog) Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	Alkaline fens	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i> (Marsh Saxifrage)	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
	<i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail)	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
<b>Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog SAC</b>	Blanket bog	P		P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P
<b>Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA</b>	Tufted Duck Common Scoter Common Gull Greenland White-fronted Goose	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P	P
	Wetland and Waterbirds	P		P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P



## 3.4 Potential Impact Pathways 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. Ballina is a Tier 1 town in the core and settlement strategies of the Mayo County Development Plan. The Core Strategy allocates 15.7% of the overall housing target growth for Mayo over the Plan period to Ballina to accommodate a projected population growth rate of 24.4%. It identifies that an increase to 12,348 persons to the year of 2028 and a dwelling target of 511 additional units to the year 2028 is required.

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

- Habitat loss should developments 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 discussed in Section 3.4.3.

### 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 the River Moy SAC and Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and SPA are located within the Plan area these sites are likely to be impacted by recreational activities. Activities such as fishing, angling, horse-riding and walking are highly popular activities adjacent to or in the waterway. Overall, the River Moy is relatively accessible to the public within Ballina and the Plan area, mainly by a few small walkways and access points. The Killala Estuary is primarily inaccessible, due to the nature of an estuary, however, there are some footpaths present along the SAC/SPA boundary. Lough Conn and Lough Cullin are popular fishing sites and therefore, there could be an increase in fishing and access to the Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA.

#### 3.4.4 Transport and related infrastructure

To enhance the local economy of Ballina, 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 LAP will likely increase demand for water.

Additionally, flooding of the River Moy is an ongoing issue in Ballina; with properties on Bachelor's Walk, Arbuckle Row, and Clare St. all suffering due to extensive flooding in recent years. Neighbouring towns and environs are also exposed to flooding as a result, which can lead to increased pollution impacts through surface water pathways, as floodwaters may cause discharge from sewage networks, slurry tanks, and petroleum tanks into the surrounding environment. As of February 2020, a Flood Relief Scheme has been implemented for Ballina which comprises five stages. Stage one commenced in March 2020 (BFRS, 2021).

#### 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).

The Air Quality Index for the area is overall good. Note the nearest air quality station is TNO4468. Ballina, located in proximity to the River Moy (EPA, 2021).

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<sub>x</sub> and NO<sub>2</sub> associated with vehicle emissions, respectively, levels are greatest within the first 50-100m from the road but could also become evident at increased distances.

### 3.5 An initial screening of European sites within 15km of the plan area

Nine European sites are located within 15km of the Plan boundary. No further sites are hydrologically linked up to 20km.

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 and some sites can be further screened out based on lack of pathways from the Plan.

**Error! Reference source not found.** Table 3-4: European Sites Pre-Screening based on Zol 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?
004036	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA	0m (within Plan area)	Yes - River Moy flows through Plan area	Yes - groundwater body (GWB) Ballina (IE_WE_G0035) is within Plan area	Yes	Yes - SPA protected for Annex I species Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew and Redshank which may occur within Plan boundary	Yes
000458	Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC	0m (within Plan area)	Yes - River Moy flows through Plan area	Yes - GWB Ballina (IE_WE_G0035) is within Plan area	Yes	Yes - Sea Lamprey and Harbour Seal are present within Plan area	Yes (The Qualifying Interest 'Vegetated Sea Cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts' has been screened out based on no pathway between the Ballina LAP and this feature)
002298	River Moy SAC	0m (within Plan area)	Yes - River Moy flows through Plan area	Yes - GWB Ballina (IE_WE_G0035) is within Plan area	Yes	Yes - Sea Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, White-clawed Crayfish, Salmon and Otter are features of the River Moy which flows through the	Yes

Site Code	European Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Surface water pathway	Groundwater pathway	Air Pathway	Disturbance pathway	Pathway?
						Plan area	
002006	Ox Mountains Bog SAC	8.3km E	No - on separate upstream tributary of the Glenree River	No - within separate GWB - Collooney (IE_WE_G_0048) to Plan area and located upstream of Plan area	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Geyer's Whorl Snail is not expected to be impacted upon by noise or visual disturbance	No
000633	Lough Hoe Bog SAC	6.2km SE	No - on separate upstream tributary of the Yellow River	No - within separate GWB - Foxford (IE_WE_G_0034) to Plan area and located upstream of Plan area	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - White-clawed Crayfish are a qualifying interest feature however, there is not considered to be any direct disturbance pathway between the Plan area and this species	No
000516	Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head SAC	13.4km N	No	No - located within two separate GWB (Killala North (IE_WE_G_0046 and Killala South IE_WE_G_0047) to Plan area	Unlikely pathway due to distance	N/A (no species QI)	No
001922	Bellacorick Bog Complex SAC	13km W	No, connected to the Dunowen River which does not flow through the Plan area	No - located within separate GWB (Deel IE_WE_G0031) to Plan area	Unlikely pathway due to distance	No - Geyer's Whorl Snail is not expected to be impacted upon by disturbance due to distance.	No
000634	Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog SAC	12km E	No - on a separate upstream tributary of the River Moy	No - within separate GWB - Foxford (IE_WE_G_0034) to Plan area	Unlikely pathway due to distance	N/A (no species QI)	No

Site Code	European Sites within 15km of Plan area	Distance from Plan	Surface water pathway	Groundwater pathway	Air Pathway	Disturbance pathway	Pathway?
004228	Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA	2.5km W	No - upstream of the Plan area	Yes - Located within same GWB as Plan area (Ballina IE_WE_G0035)	Unlikely pathway due to distance	Yes - SPA protected for Annex I species Tufted Duck, Common Scoter, Common Gull and Greenland White-fronted Goose. Species likely to be present in Plan area and risk of increased recreational pressure.	Yes

### 3.6 Summary of Pre-Screening

Due to lack of pathways based on preliminary screening of Sites within the Zol of 15km (Table 3-4), the following European Sites will not be further assessed for potential impacts:

- Ox Mountains Bog SAC
- Lough Hoe Bog SAC
- Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head SAC
- Bellacorick Bog Complex SAC
- Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog SAC

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

- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- River Moy SAC
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

## 4 Cumulative and/or in-combination Impacts

As part of the screening and 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 may cause cumulative and/or in-combination effects on European sites.

### 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 Ballina 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 Ballina 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 (CAAS 2021a). 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 8.

### 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 projects 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.

#### 4.5 Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032

A strategy providing the roadmap for regional development to ensure effective regional planning. This document provides a 12 year strategy for a high-level development framework for the Northern and Western region that supports the National Planning Framework. A Natura Impact Report (NIR) has been produced for this strategy which concluded that this strategy would not adversely affect the integrity of a European Site subject to application of all of the mitigation measures detailed in the NIR.

## 5 Screening Assessment

This section considers the policies and objectives of the Ballina 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 3.4 identified that the following European Sites have pathway-receptors for potential likely significant effects arising from the implementation of the Plan:

- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- River Moy SAC
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

### 5.1 Introduction

Assessment of the potential impacts of Ballina LAP objectives 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 objectives 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 objectives and policies of Ballina 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 5.4.

#### 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 DTA Publications Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook (DTA, 2021). Each policy or objective is allocated one or more screening category, shown in Table 5-1 below. The results of the initial screening are shown in Table 5-2. Where a number of categories to screen out a policy or objective are applicable, the most relevant categories are listed in the table. The screening outcome includes any relevant in-combination assessment outcomes. Land Use Zoning (LUZ) is expanded on in Section 5.3.1.

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 Ballina LAP Policies and Objectives

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
<b>Chapter 2 - Development Strategy</b>			
DSP 1	Support and facilitate the sustainable growth of social, economic and residential development in Ballina in accordance with the National Planning Framework, the Northern & 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
DSP 2	Support the compact growth of Ballina 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
DSP 3	Promote measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within the 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 Ballina and to ensure Ballina 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 K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
DSP 6	Ensure that all new development within the Ballina LAP area accord 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 Ballina, 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

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
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	<b>Deliver at least 30% of all new homes in Ballina within the existing built-up footprint of the town.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	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 through appropriate infill, brownfield development, supported by the necessary physical and community infrastructure.	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 3	Monitor the scale, type, tenure and location of constructed and permitted developments in Ballina 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

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
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 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
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 Ballina in accordance the Town Centre First policy approach seeking to bring people and appropriate business/services back into the heart of Ballina 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	To seek to support the implementation of the recommendations of the Ballina/North Mayo Growth Cluster Study to advance the economic development of Ballina as an economic driver of North Mayo.	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
<b>Chapter 3 - Climate Action</b>			
CAP 1	<p>Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations.</li> <li>b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies.</li> <li>c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies.</li> <li>d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car.</li> <li>e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures and those located within Architectural Conservation Areas, providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.</li> <li>f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat</li> </ul>	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>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– 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            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</p>	Out
CAP 3	<p>Promote low carbon development within the County which will seeks 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            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</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            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</p>	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
CAP 5	Support the designated and any future Decarbonising Zone (DZ) in Ballina 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 Ballina, including the Ballina Green Towns Initiative, 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 polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAP 10	Encourage innovation and facilitate the development of pilot schemes in Ballina 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
CAP 11	Support Energy Master Plan(s) prepared by Sustainable Energy Communities in Ballina, where appropriate, to support the recommendations of the Ballina Energy Master Plan.	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
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	<b>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.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	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 retrofitting 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 K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
CAO 5	Have regard to Goal 3 of the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024: Increase the Resilience of Natural and Cultural Capital: 1. Build awareness of Nature Based Adaptation Solutions and Green Infrastructure. 2. Support biodiversity 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. 5. Encourage adaptation in Agriculture and Local Food Supply	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 6	To examine the potential of district heating, including district heating derived from waste heat, where available, technically feasible and cost effective, and carry out a feasibility exercise in support of district heating in Ballina, to assist in meeting renewable heat targets and reduce Ireland's GHG emissions.	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
<b>Chapter 4 - Town Centre and Regeneration</b>			
TCP 1	Ensure that new development in the town centre and in particular the Opportunity Site Areas comprise of the highest of qualitative and design standards, complimenting the existing historical built fabric, or natural heritage, sustaining Ballina as a town in which to live, work, invest in and do business.	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 2	<b>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.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	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.	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 4	Actively encourage, support and facilitate environmental and public realm improvements in Ballina to address environmental quality, urban design, safety, identity and traffic impact.	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 5	Support the development of the further public realm projects in Ballina 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 Ballina	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
TCO 1	<b>Continue to encourage and facilitate the reuse and regeneration of derelict, vacant, backlands and underutilised lands and buildings in the town centre through active land management for retail, residential and other mixed uses and where necessary through appropriate legislative mechanisms/instruments and / or by supporting the progression and delivery of projects funded by the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and other appropriate funds to achieve this aim.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
TCO 2	Support and facilitate the implementation of the Draft Public Realm Plan for Ballina, including proposals for improving the pedestrian environment for residents and visitors.	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	<b>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.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
TCO 4	<b>Encourage and facilitate the development of Opportunity Sites in Ballina 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.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
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.	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 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
TCO 7	Undertake a building heights and residential density study for Ballina town, within a year of adoption of this Local Area Plan, in order to identify suitable locations within the town where development potential for greater height and density rates can be suitably accommodated.	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
TCO 8	<p>a) Promote high quality place-making and public realm in accordance with the Mayo Development Plan 2022 – 2028, including the Development Management Standards, any replacement thereof and any relevant Section 28 Guidance. All development shall demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.</p> <p>b) Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied in the town centre, and the opportunity areas identified in this Proposed Plan. The success of the public realm is high quality, easily maintained street furniture, soft landscaping. Drainage solutions should be designed on the principles of SuDS.</p> <p>c) Ensure development proposals have considered the urban design criteria of site context, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking and detailed design.</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 9	Facilitate and support the re-use/repurposing and regeneration of vacant/derelict land and buildings within the town centre with due cognisance of the character, built heritage and design requirements for Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs).	<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 10	Mayo County Council will prepare, or coordinate, as appropriate, urban design frameworks/masterplans for the Opportunity Sites in Ballina Town to inform future development proposals.	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
TCO 11	Maintain and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre by addressing and controlling leakage of social, economic and service activities to areas outside the Town Centre.	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
TCO 12	Prevent the use of film or screening that obscures the glazed areas of a shopfront window where it negatively impacts upon the streetscape.	<p>A - General statement policy/general aspiration</p> <p>K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	Out
<b>Chapter 5 - Economic Development</b>			
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.	<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
EDP 2	Support the development and expansion of enterprise and employment within Ballina, and to co-operate with all stakeholders, landowners, and relevant agencies to attract investment, while at the same time ensuring there is no resultant negative impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.	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 3	Support and promote the development of economic and enterprise development and activity in a manner which contributes to the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable Ballina.	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
EDO 1	Engage with IDA Ireland and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in seeking to attract indigenous and Foreign Direct Investment into Ballina of a type consistent with the Enterprise and Employment land use zoning objectives of this plan.	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 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	Support, promote and facilitate the provision of shared co-working spaces/hubs in town centre and other appropriate locations in Ballina to provide multi-purpose flexible workspace options.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDP 4	Support the retail function of Ballina 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 K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
EDP 5	<b>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.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
EDP 6	Support and facilitate the development of retail-led tourism associated with the natural and built heritage assets of Ballina.	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
EDO 4	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 Ballina 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 5	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 Ballina's town centre.	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 6	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 7	To support, promote and facilitate measures, such as town centre regeneration, implementation of the local transport plan to improve accessibility and public realm improvements and other town centre first initiatives over the plan period, to reduce retail and commercial vacancy in Ballina 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 7	<b>Promote and support and facilitate the development of the tourism infrastructure in Ballina with emphasis on utilising and harnessing, in an appropriate and sustainable manner, the potential of the town's natural and built heritage.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	In
EDP 8	<b>Encourage the development of tourism activities such as water based activities, cultural and food tourism including festivals and food markets in Ballina.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	In
EDP 9	<b>Support the development of new tourist facilities or the upgrading / extension of existing tourist facilities.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	In
EDP 10	<b>Promote festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	In
EDP 11	Support and encourage the provision of ground floor live work units and/or co-working spaces, as part of mixed-use and residential developments, in appropriate town centre locations, as a means of enlivening streets and to provide flexible accommodation for small businesses and remote working opportunities.	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	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
		either alone or in combination	
<b>EDO 8</b>	<b>Support and facilitate the development of an integrated network of greenways and heritage trails, including The Monasteries of the Moy from Belleek to Killala.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
EDO 9	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.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
<b>EDO 10</b>	<b>Explore the development potential of Ballina Harbour/Quay area in terms of marine related tourism and extensive marine resources.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>Chapter 6 - Housing and Sustainable Communities</b>			
<b>HSCP1</b>	<b>Encourage the compact growth of Ballina and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
HSCP2	Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Ballina, 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
HSCP3	Encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in Ballina 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

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
HSCO 1	<b>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.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
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
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 Ballina, including the provision of special needs housing, which includes housing for older people, people with disabilities, social housing, affordable housing and accommodation for the travelling community.	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, to meet the needs of the population of Ballina, 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 combination	Out
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
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



Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
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 Ballina.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCP 8	Promote and support a broad range of community, health, cultural and educational facilities to serve the future needs of the residents of the Plan area and its wider catchment.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 9	Facilitate and secure the provision of social infrastructure to support existing and new communities within the Plan area, in a manner which provides flexibility to respond to varied and changing community needs.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 10	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 K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 11	Support, promote and facilitate the development of cultural, arts and performance spaces in Ballina.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
<b>HSCO 12</b>	<b>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 Ballina.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
HSCO 13	Support and facilitate the provision for the development of a skate park in Ballina	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
HSCO 14	Support the endeavours of sports and community groups in the acquisition and/or use of lands for sports and recreation purposes.	A - General statement policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
<b>HSCO 15</b>	<b>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.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>HSCO 16</b>	<b>Seek the development of additional municipal facilities that are available for all users within the town of Ballina and its surrounding areas.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have</b>	<b>In</b>

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
		<b>significant effect in-combination</b>	
<b>Chapter 7 – Transport and Movement</b>			
MTP 1	Improve accessibility and movement within Ballina, 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
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 Ballina.	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	Improve accessibility and movement within Ballina, 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
MTP 5	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 Ballina 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 6	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 work 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	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
	cycling as more viable forms of transport within the town.		
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).	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
<b>MTO 3</b>	<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 proposed active travel network in the town.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
MTO 4	Identify appropriate locations on public lands in partnership with ESB for the provision of battery charging infrastructure for electric vehicles in Ballina	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 5	To monitor and review the progress of the Ballina 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.	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 7	Ensure new development proposals comply with Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Local Authorities (DTTS, 2013) and safeguard the integrity, capacity and safety of national roads.	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
<b>MTO 6</b>	<b>Seek to progress the Road projects, listed in Table 7.3 (of the LAP) subject to environmental assessments.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>MTO 7</b>	<b>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.</b> <b>a) N59 extension route</b> <b>b) N26 extension route</b> <b>*these routes are indicative only and will be subject to change</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
MTP 8	Support the delivery of the active travel and demand measures identified in the Local Transport Plan (Appendix 2) and require proposals for new development to compliment and demonstrate how they will integrate with the provisions of the Local Transport Plan.	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 8	Support, encourage and promote modal shift in Ballina to meet mode share ambitions set out in Table 7.2 (Ballina LTP Mode Share and Modal Shift Ambitions to 2029) by measures such as but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in dependency on the private car</li> <li>• Discouragement of vehicular through traffic</li> <li>• Enhancement the public realm through traffic management and transport interventions</li> <li>• Development of public transport services.</li> <li>• Provision of transport demand management measure</li> </ul>	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 9	<b>Support and facilitate the implementation of the following proposed *LTP measures (but not limited to):</b> <b>Walking</b> <b>New footpaths:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>N26 – Southwest</b></li> <li>• <b>Section between Moy Valley Business Park and N26</b></li> <li>• <b>Morrison Terrace</b></li> </ul> <b>New Permeability Links</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Between Hollister and Proposed Greenway</b></li> <li>• <b>Between Abbey Street and The Spires</b></li> <li>• <b>Between Ballina train station and Lord Edward Street (Safe routes to School Programme)</b></li> <li>• <b>Between Church Road and St Michaels NS (Safe routes to School Programme)</b></li> <li>• <b>Between Mercy Road to Roches Terrace (Safe routes to School Programme)</b></li> <li>• <b>St Patricks Estate (Safe routes to School Programme)</b></li> <li>• <b>Creggs Road/Quay Lane (Safe routes to School Programme)</b></li> </ul> <b>Proposed Active Travel Bridge</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Active Travel Bridge at Lower Bridge</b></li> </ul>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	In

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
	<p><b>Proposed Park and Stride</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cathedral Road Car Park</li> <li>• St Patricks Church Car Park</li> </ul> <p><b>Cycling:</b></p> <p><b>Two Way Cyclist Facilities (fully segregated cycle tracks)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N26 South</li> <li>• N26 Kevin Barry Street</li> <li>• Water Lane</li> <li>• L-1127</li> <li>• R-310</li> </ul> <p><b>One Way Cyclist Facilities (fully segregated cycle tracks)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morrison Terrace</li> <li>• Barrett, James Connolly, Hill and Tone Streets</li> </ul> <p><b>Greenway / off road paths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River Moy (southwest extend behind Hollister)</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide Shared Street:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ferran Terrace</li> <li>• Mercy Road</li> </ul> <p><b>* Measures listed are exhaustive, full range of measures are listed in Ballina Local Transport Plan</b></p>		
MTO 10	Actively seek funding for investment in active travel and public transport in the town in line with the provisions of the LTP as outlined in <a href="#">Appendix 2</a> (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
MTO 11	Achieve the modal shift target as set out in the LPT ( <a href="#">Appendix 2</a> ) through collaboration with the community and transport sectors over the life time of this 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

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
MTO 12	Explore and provide 'Park and Stride' facilities and Mobility Hubs at appropriate locations in the town, in accordance with the recommendations of the Ballina LTP (once adopted) 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 13	<b>Facilitate the provision of:</b> <b>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> <b>b) Investigate the possibility of providing coach parking within the Plan Area.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	In
<b>Chapter 8 - Built Environment</b>			
BEP 1	Maintain, conserve and protect the architectural quality, character and scale of Ballina.	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
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 policies 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 Ballina.	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.	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

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
BEO 1	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
BEP 6	Maintain, conserve and protect the architectural quality and character of the Pearse Street Architectural Conservation 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
BEP 7	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.	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 2	Identify places of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, and to define them as Architectural Conservation Areas over the lifetime of the Plan and to undertake an assessment to inform the potential ACA designation for Crocketstown/Quay area or any other special character areas considered by the Planning Authority worthy of such protection in County Mayo.	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 2	Preserve the protected structures and their settings in Ballina on the Record of Protected Structures 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, and to review the Record of Protected Structures from time to time as the need arises.	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 3	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 impact the character of the protected structure.	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	Ensure that any alterations or interventions to protected structures shall be executed to a high conservation standard in order to protect their significant 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 5	To ensure that any new development or alteration to a building within or adjoining the Pearse Street/Walsh Street Architectural Conservation Area positively enhances the character of the area and is appropriate in terms of the proposed materials, scale, density, layout, proportions, plot ratio and building lines.	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
BEP 8	Support and promote the protection, appropriate management and sympathetic enhancement of the archaeological heritage within the Plan area, in particular by implementing the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended).	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 ( <a href="http://www.archaeology.ie">www.archaeology.ie</a> ) 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
BEO 7	Ensure proposals contribute to the protection and preservation of the archaeological value of the sites including underwater sites associated with the River Moy.	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 9	Promote the regeneration of Ballina town centre by making better use of underutilised land and buildings, particularly within the existing built-up areas to achieve compact growth.	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 10	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.	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
<b>Chapter 9 - Natural Environment and Climate Action</b>			
NEP 1	In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to: - Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Ballina, including the protection of 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.	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 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
NEP 2	Seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not result in significant climatic impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development.	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 E - Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as	Out



Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
		to protect European sites from adverse effects K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
NEO 1	Ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the River Moy cSAC and Killala Bay and Moy Estuary cSAC/NHA is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, geological, water and landscape value of the cSAC/NHA and, where possible, to integrate these important attributes into all such development schemes.	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
NEP 3	Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green Infrastructure network in Ballina and to strengthen links to the wider regional network. This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.	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
NEP 4	Support the implementation of the Biodiversity Plan for Ballina and any subsequent Biodiversity Plan for the Plan area over the lifetime of the 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
NEO 2	Protect identified key green infrastructure (Map 9.1), enhance where possible and integrate existing and new green infrastructure as an essential component of new developments and prohibit development that would fragment the green infrastructure network. Site specific ecology surveys should be carried out to inform proposed development and assess and mitigate potential impacts.	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 3	<b>Protect and enhance the built, natural and recreational potential of the River Moy and to encourage and promote sustainable access to and enjoyment of the River Moy.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	In
NEO 4	Maintain a suitable buffer zone along the River Moy and other watercourses protecting them from inappropriate development.	B - Policy listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals D - General plan-wide environmental protection/ site	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
		safeguarding/ threshold polices K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	
NEO 5	Development will not be permitted to infringe upon or undermine existing areas of public open space. Any development, which is proposed adjacent to public open space, must allow for public access to these facilities.	A - General statement of 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
NEO 6	Protect and enhance existing public open spaces as an amenity and recreational resource for the town and environs.	A - General statement of 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
NEO 7	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.	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
NEP 5	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.	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
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.	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
NEO 8	Increase tree planting and pollinator friendly planting, in accordance with the recommendations of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan throughout Ballina and in open spaces in new developments in order to enhance local biodiversity, visual amenity and surface water management in partnership with relevant stakeholders.	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 9	Ensure that where the presence of invasive species is identified at the site of any proposed development or where the proposed activity has an elevated risk of resulting in the presence of these species, details of how these species will be appropriately managed and controlled will be required.	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 10	Enhance and promote biodiversity and amenity and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats, including where flood risk management measures are planned.	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
<b>Chapter 10 - Infrastructure and Environmental Services</b>			
IESP 1	Maintain and enhance the existing surface water drainage systems in Ballina 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

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
IESP 3	<b>Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in Ballina in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 and future cycles of this Plan.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/site safeguarding/threshold polices</b> <b>E- Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects.</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
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.	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 2	Work with Uisce Éireann 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.	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
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 Guidelines 2009.	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 5	Manage flood risk in Ballina 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
IESO 3	(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.  (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.	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
	<p>(c) Minimise flood risk arising from pluvial (surface water) flooding in Ballina 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>		
IESP 6	<p>(A) Support the implementation of the Uisce Éireann Investment Plans.</p> <p>(B) Liaise with Uisce Éireann, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate existing and future growth.</p>	<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
IESP 7	<p><b>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.</b></p>	<p><b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b></p> <p><b>D - General plan-wide environmental protection/site safeguarding/threshold polices</b></p> <p><b>E- Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects.</b></p> <p><b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b></p>	In
IESP 8	<p>Discourage the over-concentration/proliferation of individual septic tanks and treatment plants to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution.</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
IESO 4	<p>Developments shall connect to the public sewer and public water mains, subject to a connection agreement with Uisce Éireann, 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 Ballina.</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
IESO 5	<p>Support and facilitate the delivery of free outdoor drinking water refilling stations throughout the plan area.</p>	<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 6	<p>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 2009), as may be amended</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</p>	Out

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
		either alone or in combination	
IESP 9	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 K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
IESP 10	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 heat and power) and other renewable energy technologies, which do 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 11	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 Ballina.	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 12	Protect environmental quality in Ballina 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 13	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 14	Support local schools, town and community groups such as Ballina Green Towns Initiative, Ballina Tidy Towns through education and awareness programmes and where available, through the provision of grant aid.	A - General statement of 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
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; (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.	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 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 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
IESP 15	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

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
IESP 16	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"> <li>• 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);</li> <li>• Short to medium term impacts on the landscape where, for example, hedgerows are encountered;</li> <li>• Impacts on underground archaeology;</li> <li>• Impacts on soil structure and drainage; and</li> <li>• Impacts on surface waters as a result of sedimentation</li> </ul>	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 17	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.	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
<b>Chapter 11 – Land Use Zoning - refer to Section 5.4 for further details on the LUZ screening assessment</b>			
LUZ 1	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 11.2.	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
<b>LUZ 2 – Town Centre Inner (TCI) &amp; Outer (TCO)</b>	<b>To maintain and enhance the vitality, viability and environment of the town centre and provide for appropriate town centre uses.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>LUZ 3 – Enterprise &amp; Employment</b>	<b>To provide land for light industrial and appropriate commercial development.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>



Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
<p><b>LUZ 4 - Enterprise and Employment - Strategic</b></p>	<p>To provide land for industrial, enterprise and employment uses considered to be of national or regional strategic importance.</p> <p>To promote the development of high value business and technology uses to reinforce Ballina’s role as a Key Town for large, innovative, companies in sectors including, science and technology-based industry in life sciences, bio-pharma, IT, internationally traded services and Research and Development. Developments within this zoning must demonstrate that they are of national or regional strategic importance which contribute significantly to meeting any of the objectives of the National Planning Framework, or, contribute significantly to meeting any regional spatial and economic strategy for an area, or, have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.</p> <p>This zoning shall also provide for office park developments, storage facilities and logistics that are ancillary to the primary uses outlined above.</p>	<p><b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b>  <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b></p>	<p><b>In</b></p>
<p><b>LUZ 5 - Educational</b></p>	<p>To provide for the protection of lands for schools and educational uses.</p>	<p><b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b>  <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b></p>	<p><b>In</b></p>
<p>LUZ 6 – Existing Residential</p>	<p>To protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas.</p>	<p>A - General statement of policy/general aspiration  K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination</p>	<p><b>Out</b></p>
<p><b>LUZ 7 – New Residential</b></p>	<p>To provide for high quality new residential development and other services incidental to residential development.</p>	<p><b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b>  <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b></p>	<p><b>In</b></p>
<p><b>LUZ 8 – Strategic Residential Reserve</b></p>	<p>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. However, 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).</p> <p>Where it is apparent that ‘New Residential’ lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development may be considered within Strategic Residential Reserve Tier I.</p> <p>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 the plan boundary; and a demonstrable economic or social need has been established (Objective RHO 1</p>	<p><b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b>  <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b></p>	<p><b>In</b></p>

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
	<b>of the Mayo County Development Plan)</b>		
<b>LUZ 9 – Community Services / Facilities</b>	<b>To provide land for social, health, public administration and educational services and facilities.</b>	<b>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</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>LUZ 10 – Recreation &amp; Amenity</b>	<b>To protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.</b>	<b>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</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>LUZ 11 - Agriculture</b>	<b>To reserve land for agricultural and rural uses and to preserve the amenity of the town setting.</b>	<b>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</b>	<b>In</b>
LUZ 12 – Open Spaces	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
<b>LUZ 13 – Infrastructure &amp; Utilities</b>	<b>To provide land for public infrastructure and public utilities.</b>	<b>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</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>LUZ 14 - Quay Development Zone/Marine Related Tourism</b>	<b>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 club, restaurants, marina, pontoons, moorings, boat yards, bathing facilities, public utilities, parking, information boards and sporting and leisure facilities.</b>	<b>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</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>LUZ 15 - Tourism and Related (Leisure)</b>	<b>To provide, maintain and enhance tourist related facilities.</b>	<b>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</b>	<b>In</b>
LUZ 16 – 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
<b>LUZ 17 –</b>	<b>To generally support reasonable extensions and improvements to premises</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely</b>	<b>In</b>

Policy/Objective No.	Policy	Screening category	Screening Outcome
<b>Established Use/Non-Confirming Uses</b>	<b>that accommodate established/non-conforming uses, where it is considered by the Planning Authority that they 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.</b>	<b>significant effect on a site alone L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	
<b>Chapter 11 – Implementation and Monitoring</b>			
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

### 5.3.1 Land Use Zoning

Land use zonings have been reviewed as part of this LAP. Existing residential and open space are not presented here, as they are confined to existing zonings or are lower impact by their nature (e.g. open space). Those with the potential for likely significant effects were reviewed in more detail and are presented here.

#### 5.3.1.1 LUZ 2 - Town Centre Inner (TCI) & Outer (TCO)

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 River Moy SAC and Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, and one immediately adjacent to the Killala Bay / Moy Estuary SPA. Developments could lead to additional discharges of surface water/foul into these European sites, as well as construction-related impacts through pollution incidents. None of the zone sites are likely to act as functionally linked land to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA or Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA due to the land being within an urban area.

The town centre inner and outer zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

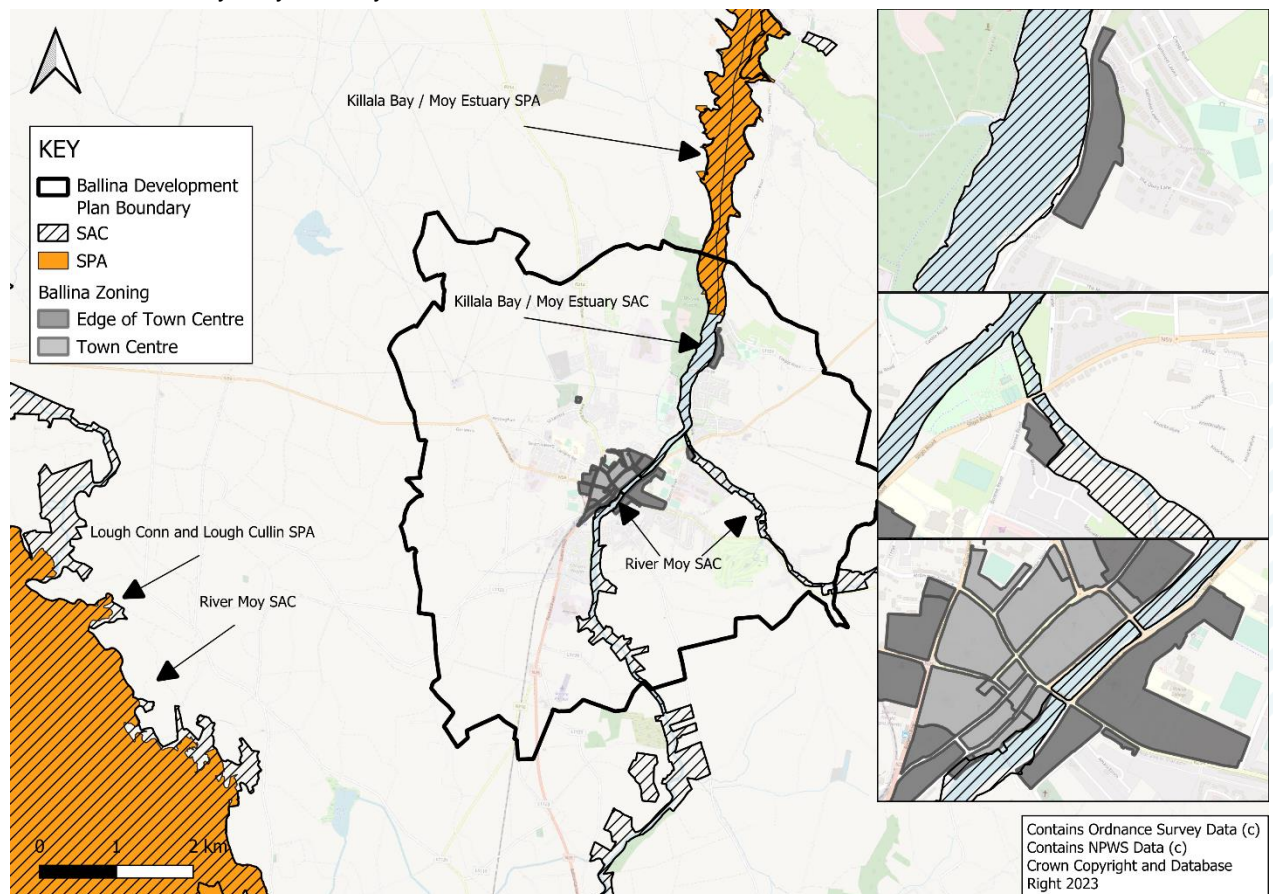


Figure 5-1: Town Centre Inner and Outer Zoning

5.3.1.2 LUZ 3 – Enterprise and Employment

Figure 5-2 shows the proposed enterprise and employment zoning

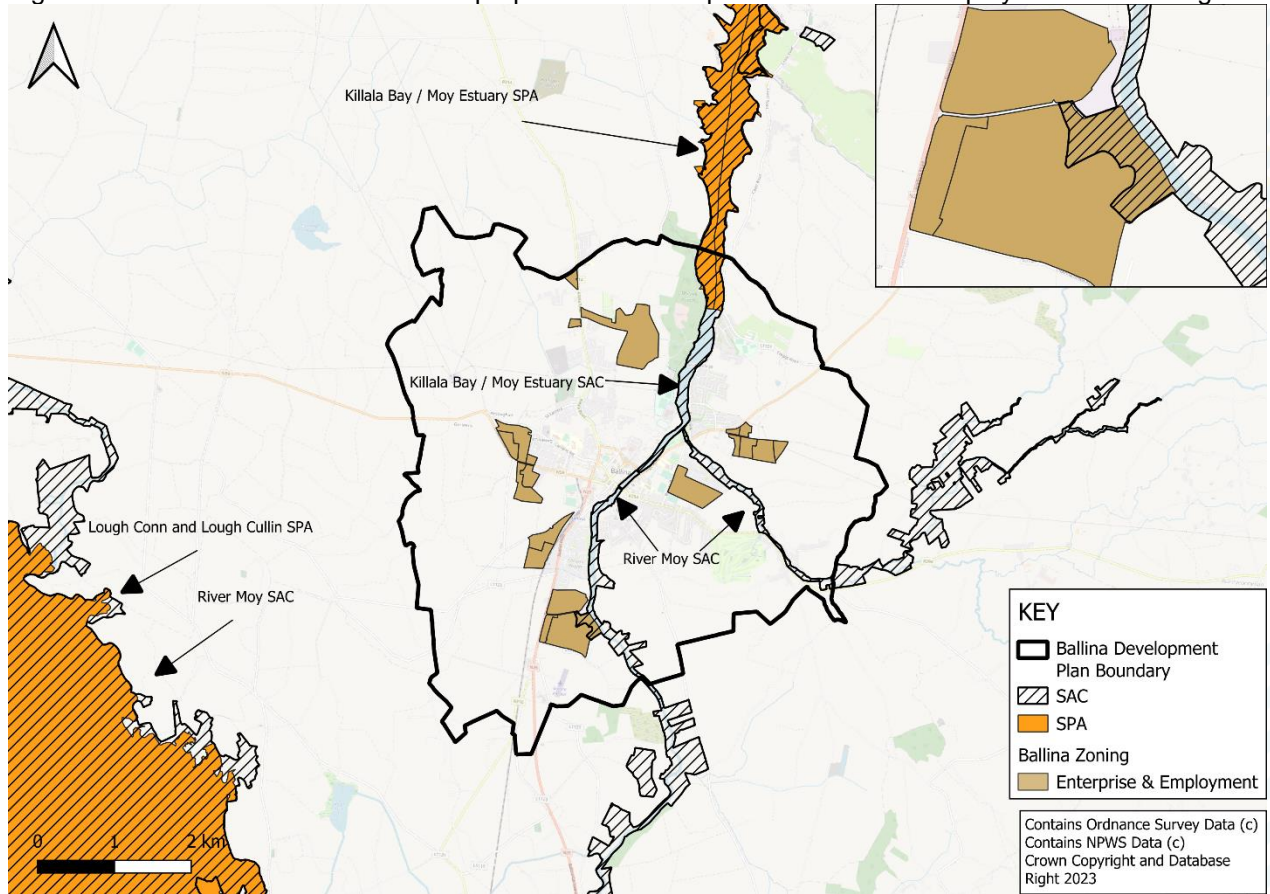


Figure 5-2. The majority of sites have been identified as having the potential to result in likely significant effects upon River Moy SAC, Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA. Impacts identified are primarily the potential for construction related pollution, although there is also the potential for additional discharges through foul and surface waters impacting the river catchment. None of the zone sites are likely to act as functionally linked land to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA or Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA because of their urban nature and/or lack of wetland habitat. One of the sites is also within the boundary of the River Moy SAC and therefore works could directly impact upon its designated habitats.

The Enterprise and Employment zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

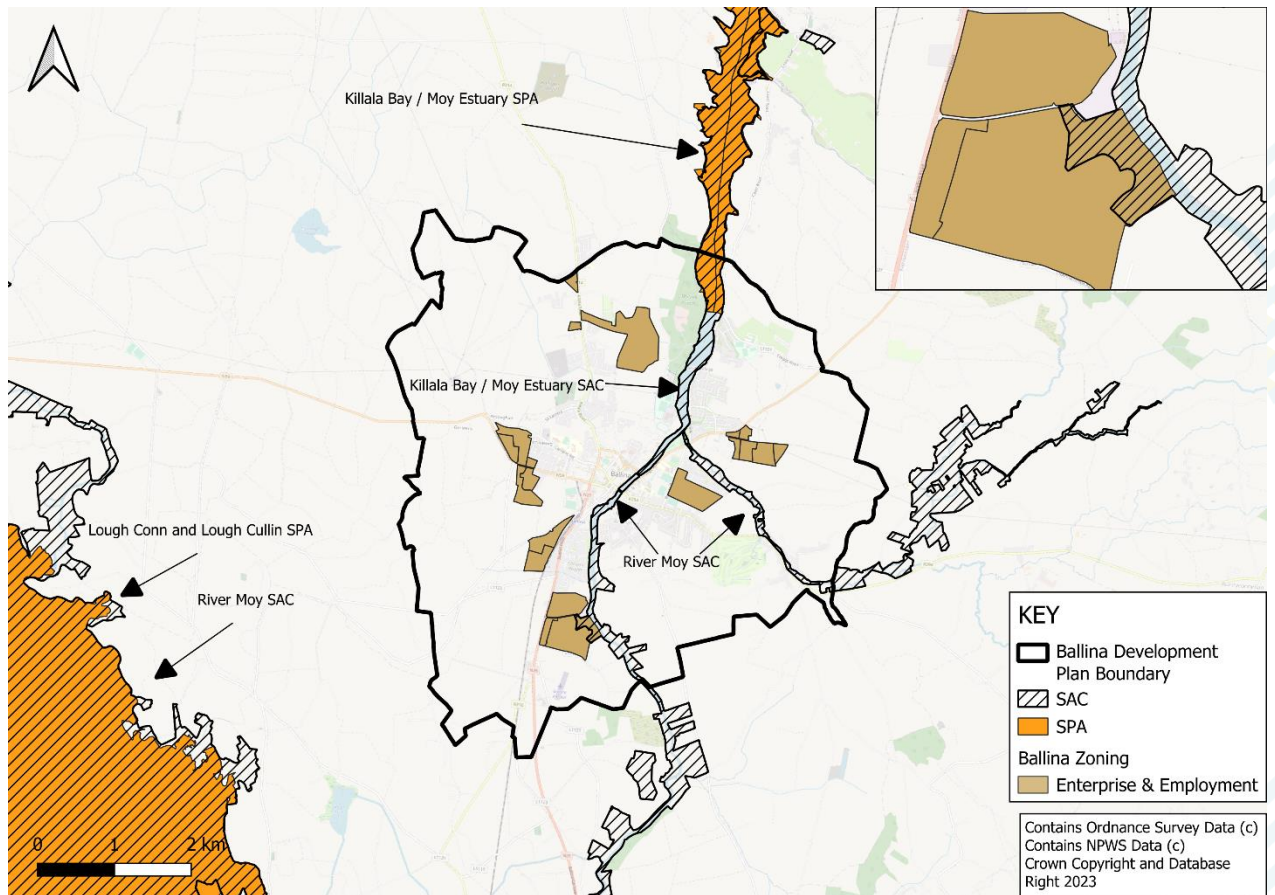


Figure 5-2: Enterprise and Employment Zoning

5.3.1.3 LUZ 4 - Enterprise and Employment - Strategic

Figure 5-3 shows the proposed strategic enterprise and employment zoning

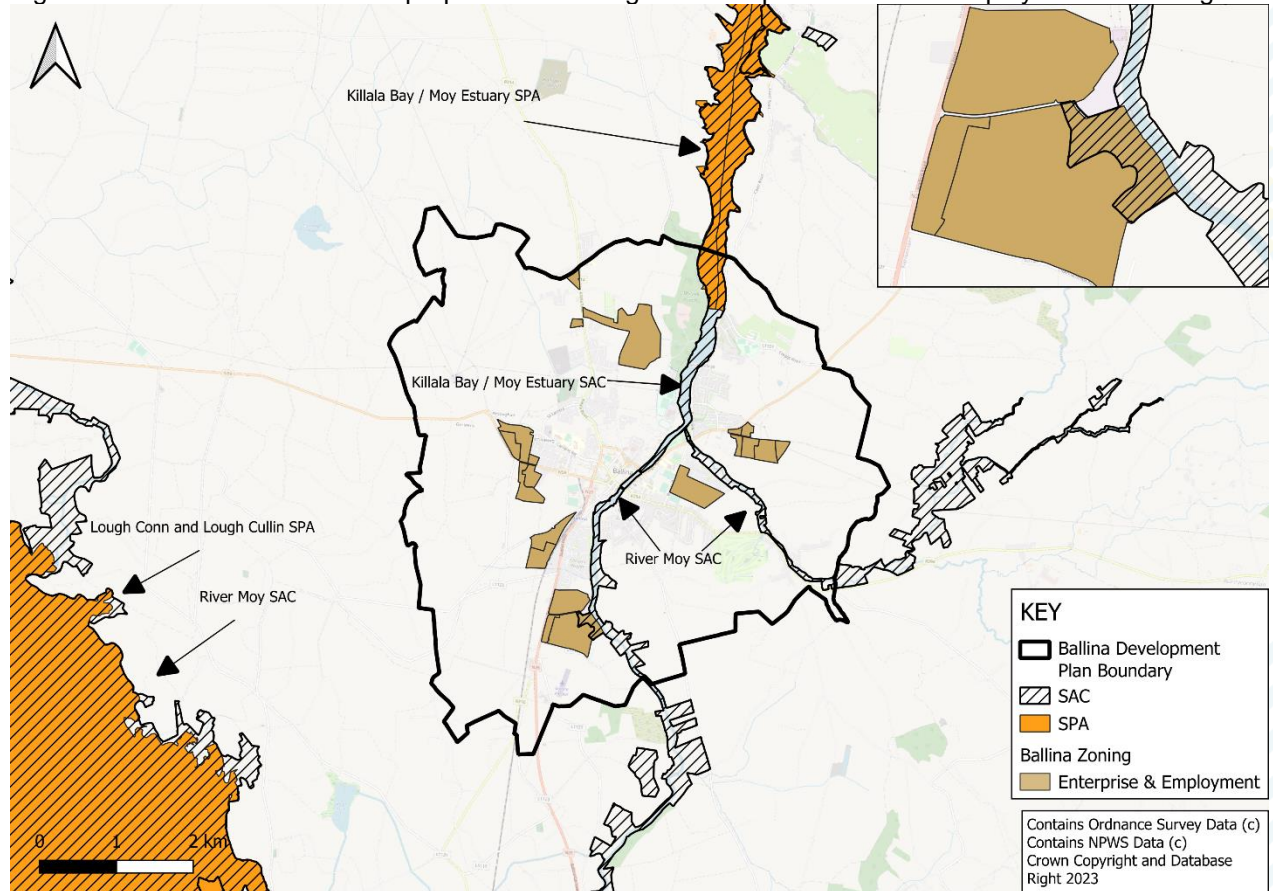


Figure 5-2. Although located at some distance from the European Sites there is potential for likely significant effect upon River Moy SAC, Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SAC and SPA and Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA. Impacts identified are primarily the potential for construction related pollution, although there is also the potential for additional discharges through foul and surface waters impacting the river catchment and also operational impacts depending on the type of development. The site is unlikely to act as functionally linked land to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA or Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA because of its urban nature and lack of wetland habitat.

The Strategic Enterprise and Employment zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

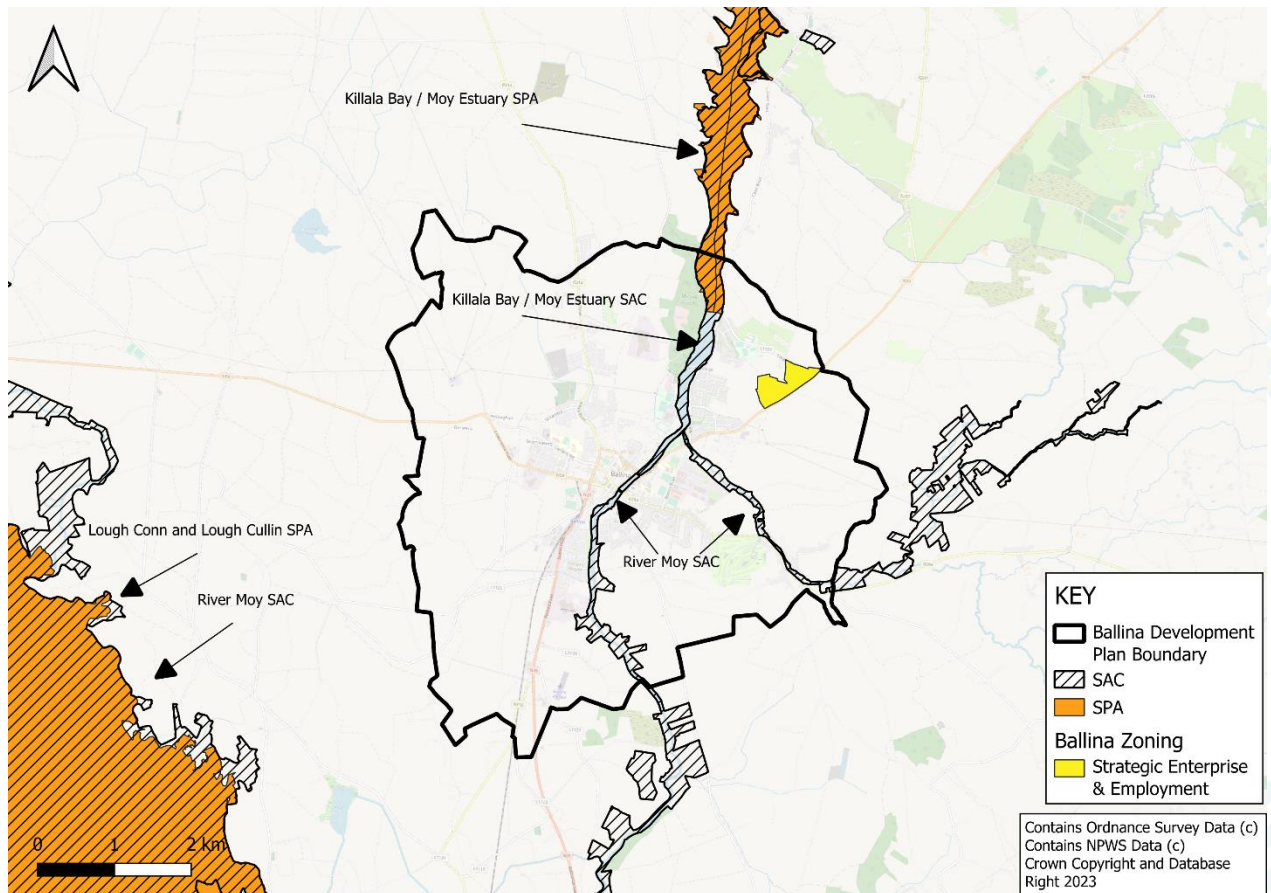


Figure 5-3: Strategic Enterprise and Employment Zoning

#### 5.3.1.4 LUZ 5 - Educational

There are a small number of Educational zoning sites which fall in proximity to the River Moy SAC and Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (Figure 5-4). Construction related impacts through pollution could impact these SACs, as well as the downstream Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA. There is also potential for impacts through increased foul and surface water discharge into the river catchment. None of the zone sites are likely to act as functionally linked land to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA or Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA because of their urban nature and/or lack of wetland habitat.

The Educational zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA



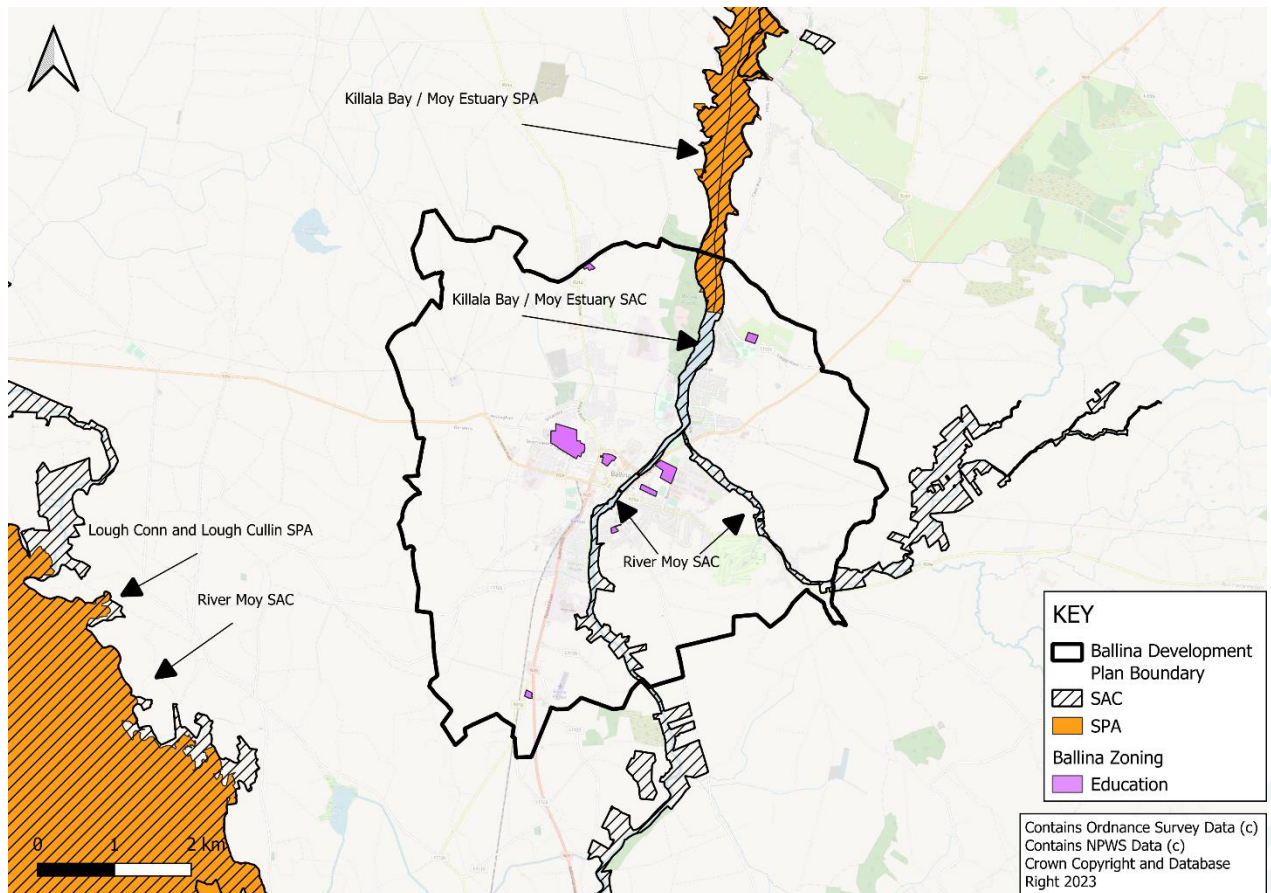


Figure 5-4: Education zoning

#### 5.3.1.5 LUZ 7 - New Residential

Figure 5-5 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 River Moy SAC, Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA, Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA and Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC. The impact pathways identified include potential pollution impacts during construction, potential for increases in recreational disturbance and increases in visitor numbers to the designated sites. None of the zone sites are likely to act as functionally linked land to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA or Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA because of their urban nature and/or lack of wetland habitat.

The New Residential zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

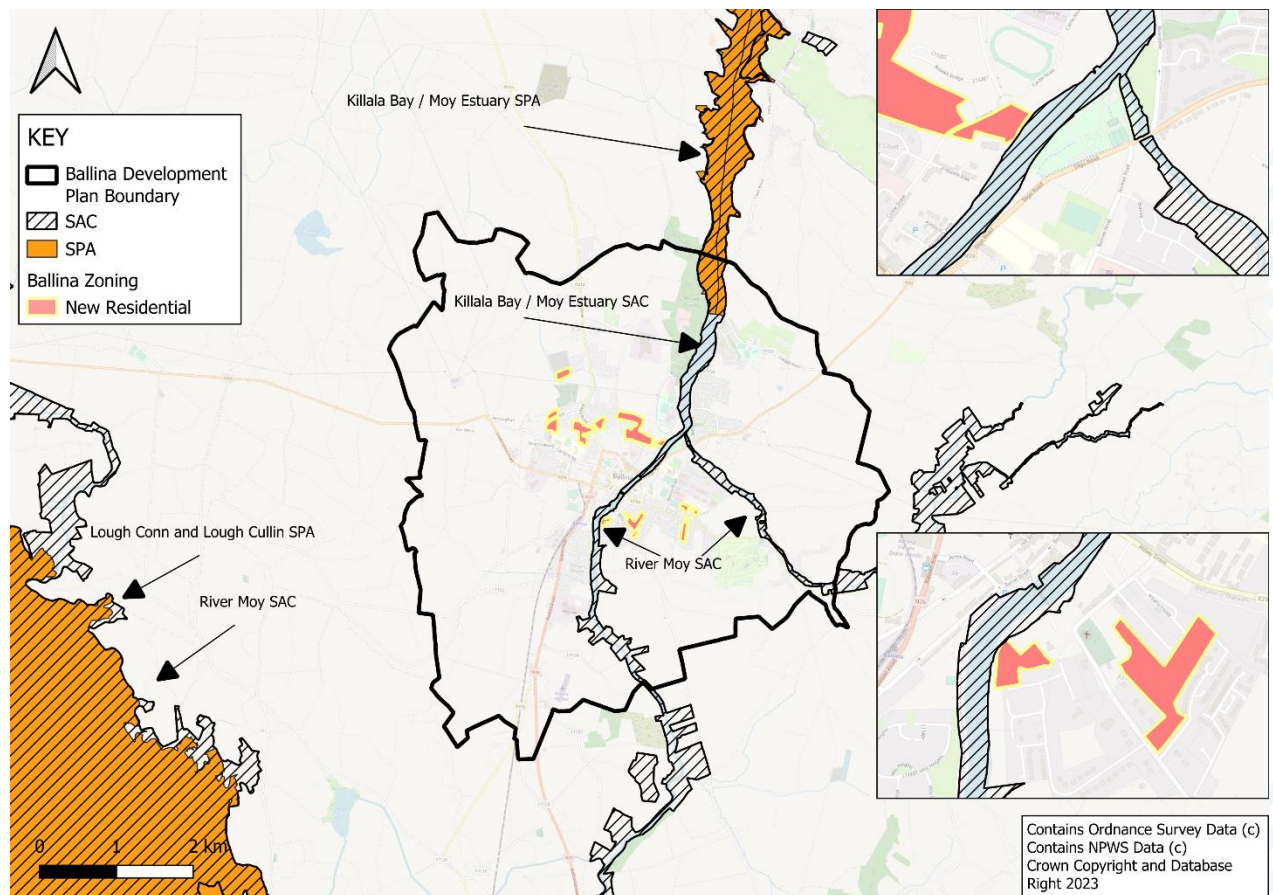


Figure 5-5: New Residential Zoning

#### 5.3.1.6 LUZ 8 – Strategic Residential Reserve

Figure 5-6 shows the proposed Strategic Residential zoning. All of these zones have been screened in as having the potential to cause likely significant effect upon River Moy SAC, Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SAC and SPA and Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA. The impact pathways identified potential for pollution impacts during construction, potential for increases in recreational disturbance and increases in visitor numbers to the designated sites. None of the zone sites are likely to act as functionally linked land to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA or Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA because of their urban nature and/or lack of wetland habitat.

The Strategic Residential Reserve zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

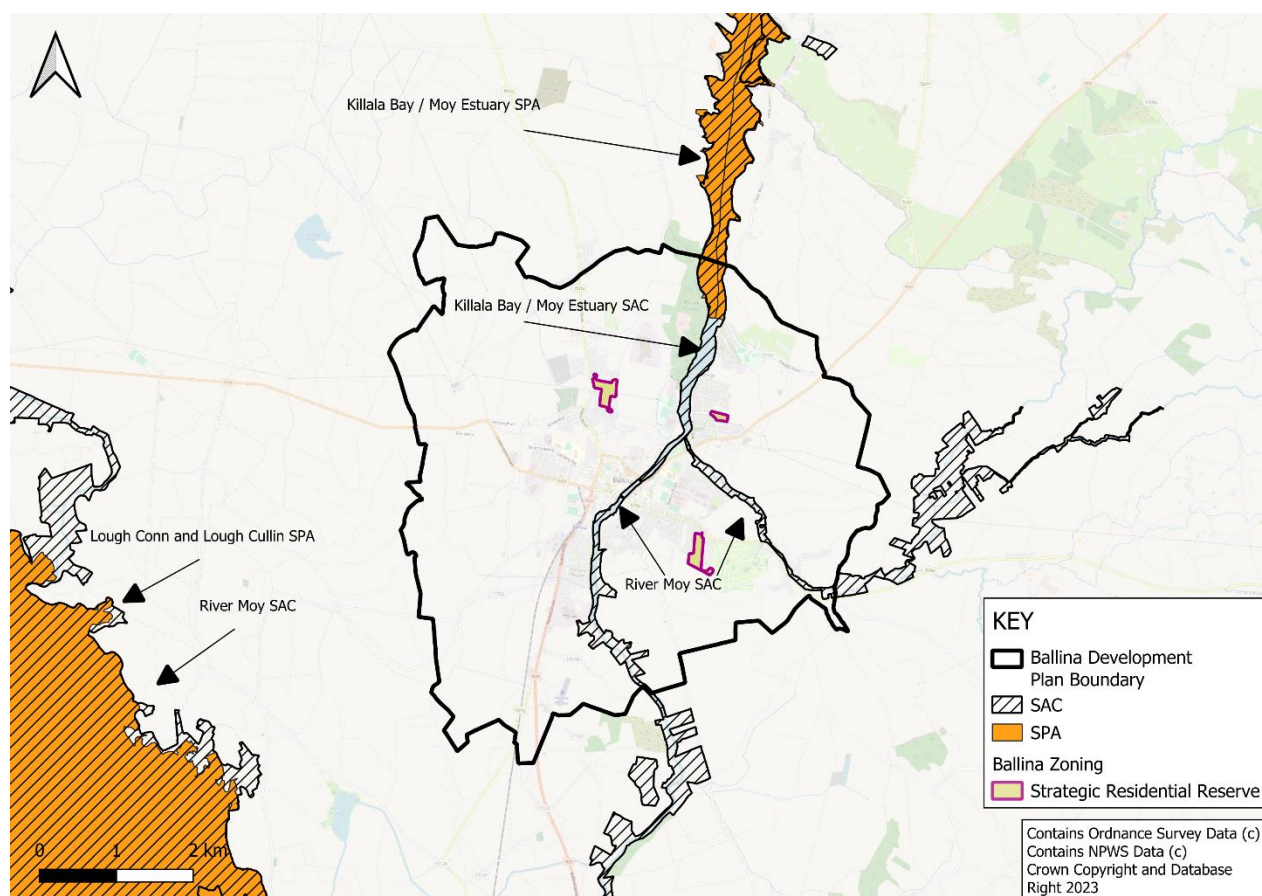


Figure 5-6: Strategic Residential Reserve Zoning

### 5.3.1.7 LUZ 9 – Community Services / Facilities

Figure 5-7 shows the proposed Community Services / Facilities zoning. Three of these fall within close proximity to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and River Moy SAC and upstream of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA so have been identified as having the potential to cause likely significant effects upon Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and River Moy SAC. Impacts identified were the potential for construction related pollution and the additional discharges of surface/foul water.

The Community Services / Facilities zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

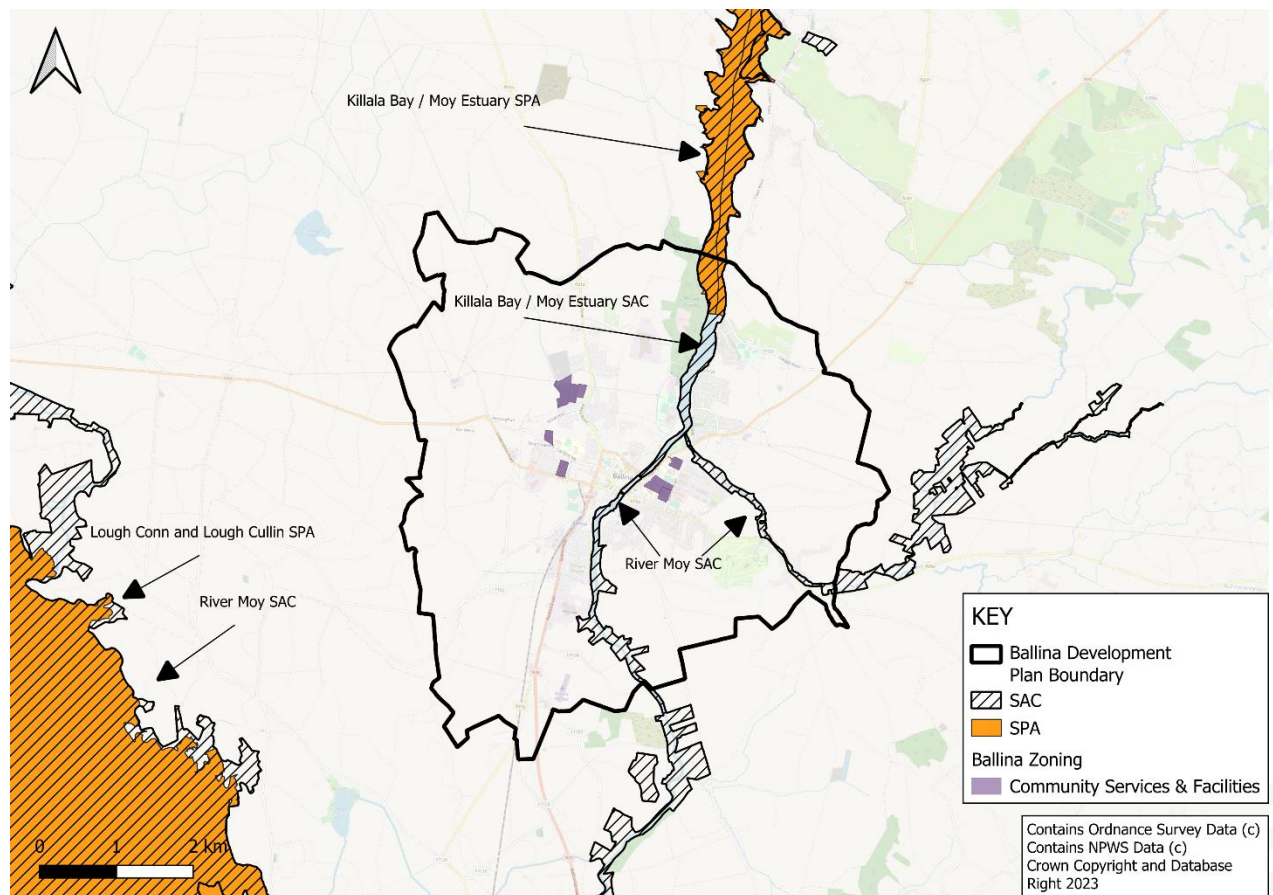


Figure 5-7: Community Services and Facilities Zoning

#### 5.3.1.8 LUZ 10 – Recreation and Amenity

Figure 5-8 shows the proposed Recreation and Amenity zoning. There are a number of sites which are located immediately adjacent to the River Moy. The majority of these have the potential to cause significant effects upon River Moy SAC, Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA and SAC. The impact pathways identified potential for pollution impacts during construction, potential for increases in recreational disturbance and increases in visitor numbers to the designated sites. None of the zone sites are likely to act as functionally linked land to the Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA because of their urban nature and/or lack of wetland habitat.

The Recreation and Amenity zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

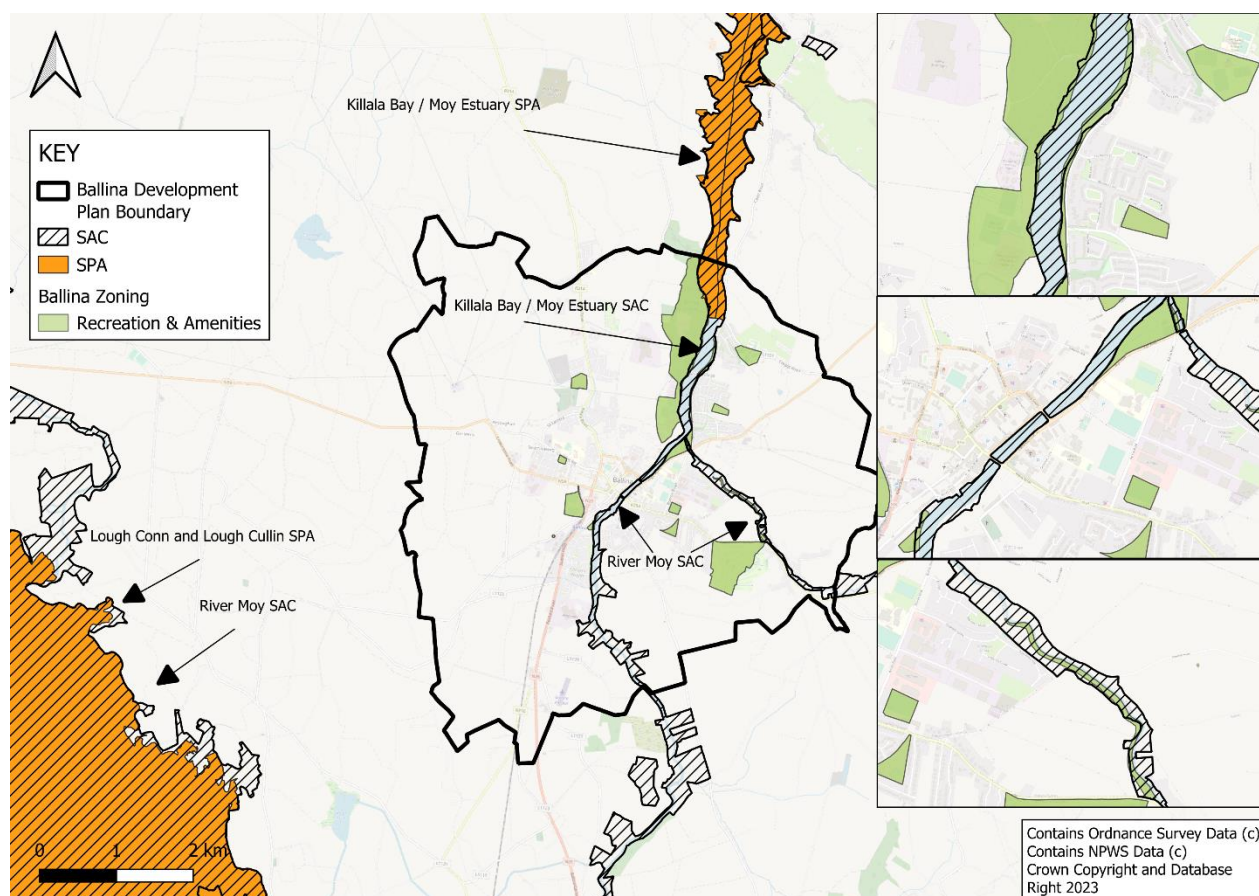


Figure 5-8: Recreation and Amenities Zoning

### 5.3.1.9 LUZ 11 - Agriculture

This is the main zoning type within the plan boundary. No significant change in zoning for agriculture is presented in this Plan. However, the agriculture zones are within the catchments of River Moy SAC and Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SAC, or in some cases immediately within the boundaries of the River Moy SAC (Figure 5-9). 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 these SACs in the future unless efforts are made to control these activities effectively and could also lead to direct impacts to habitats within the River Moy SAC, and the downstream Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and SPA.

The Agriculture zoning therefore give rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

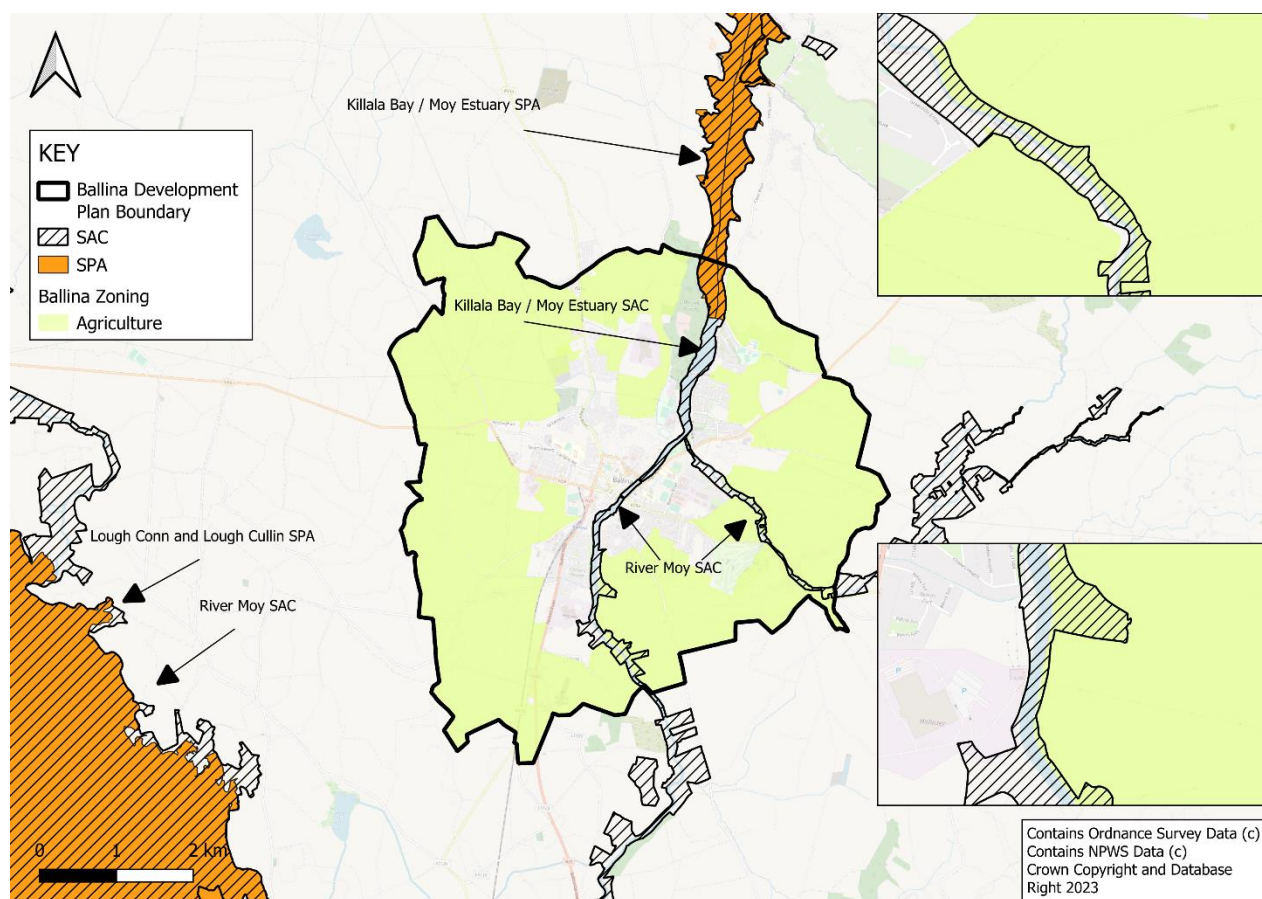


Figure 5-9: Agriculture Zoning

#### 5.3.1.10 LUZ 13 – Infrastructure and Utilities

Figure 5-10 shows the proposed Infrastructure and Utilities zoning. Two sites have been identified as having the potential to cause likely significant effect upon River Moy SAC and Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and SPA, through potential construction related pollution impacts, due to their proximity to the River Moy. None of the zone sites are likely to act as functionally linked land to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA or Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA because of their urban nature and/or lack of wetland habitat.

The Infrastructure and Utilities zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

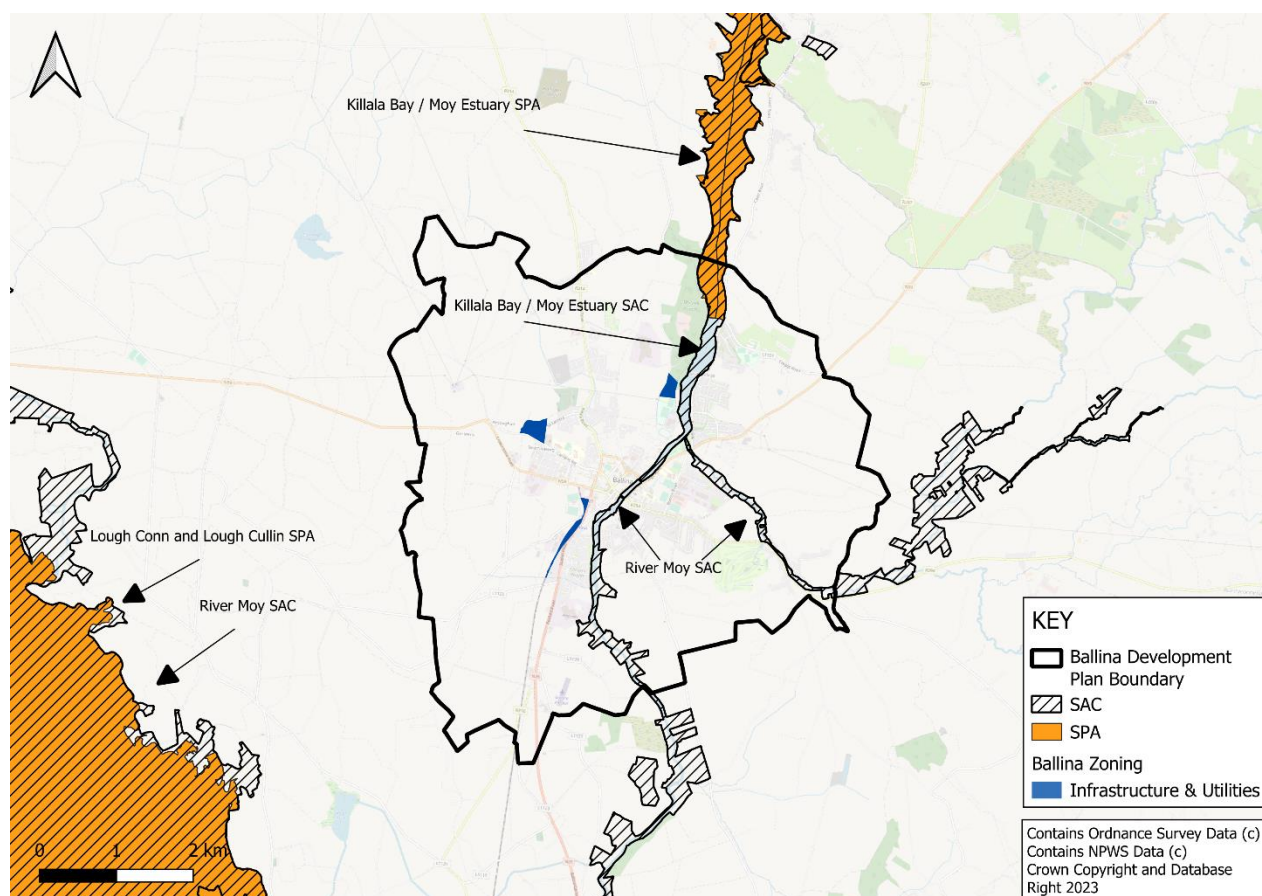


Figure 5-10: Infrastructure and Utilities Zoning

#### 5.3.1.11 LUZ 14 - Quay Development Zone/Marine Related Tourism

The objective of the Marine Related Tourism zoning 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 club, restaurants, marina, pontoons, moorings, boat yards, bathing facilities, public utilities, parking, information boards and sporting and leisure facilities.

The zone is located immediately adjacent to and slightly within the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and SPA (Figure 5-11). The impact pathways identified potential for pollution impacts during construction, potential for increases in recreational disturbance and increases in visitor numbers to the SAC and SPA.

The Quay Development Zone/Marine Related Tourism zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

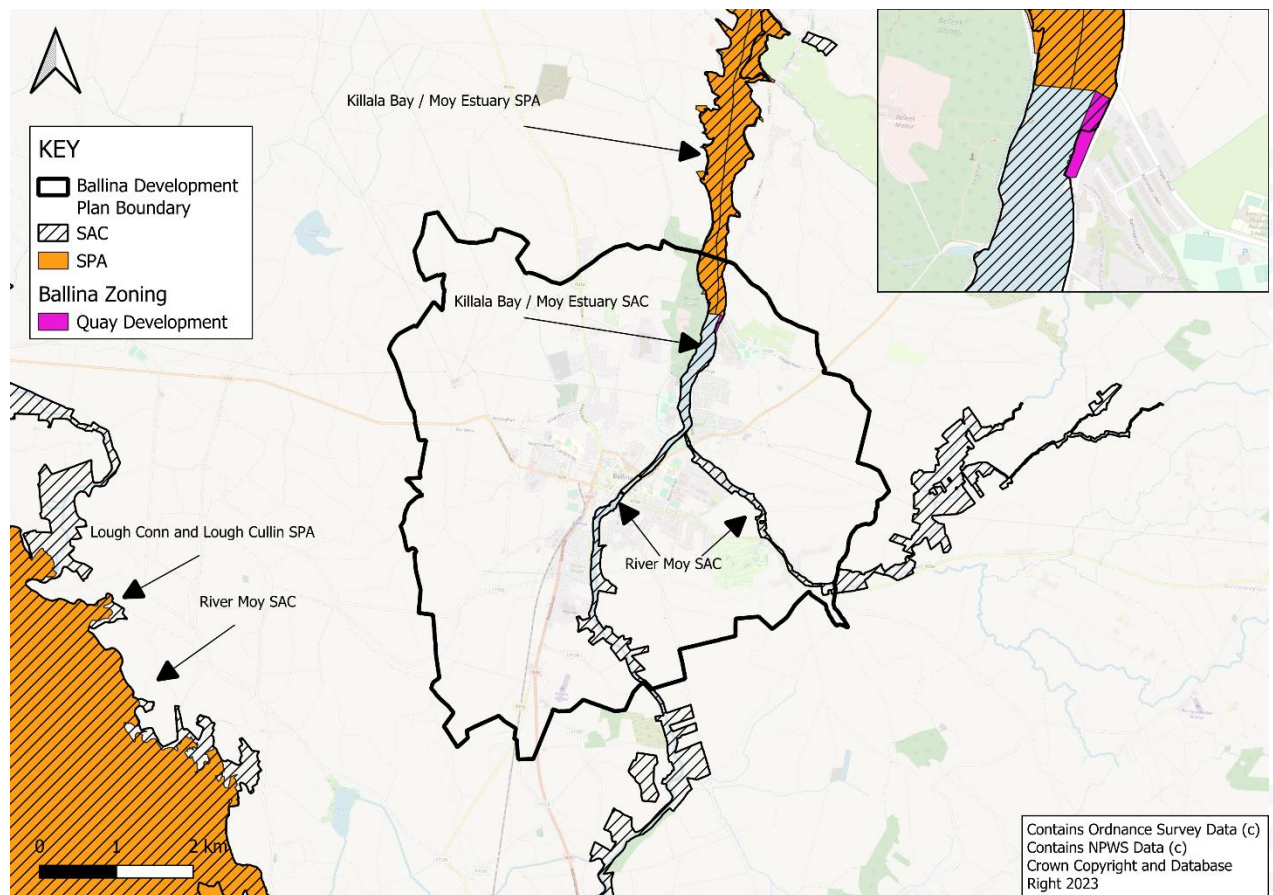


Figure 5-11: Quay Development Zoning

### 5.3.1.12 LUZ 15 - Tourism and Related (Leisure)

Figure 5-12 shows the proposed Tourism and Related zoning. There are sites which are located immediately adjacent to the River Moy and therefore have the potential to cause significant effects upon River Moy SAC, Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA and SAC. The impact pathways identified potential for pollution impacts during construction, potential for increases in recreational disturbance and increases in visitor numbers to the designated sites. None of the zone sites are likely to act as functionally linked land to the Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA because of their urban nature and/or lack of wetland habitat.

The Tourism and Related (Leisure) zoning therefore gives rise to the potential for likely significant effects upon:

- River Moy SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA



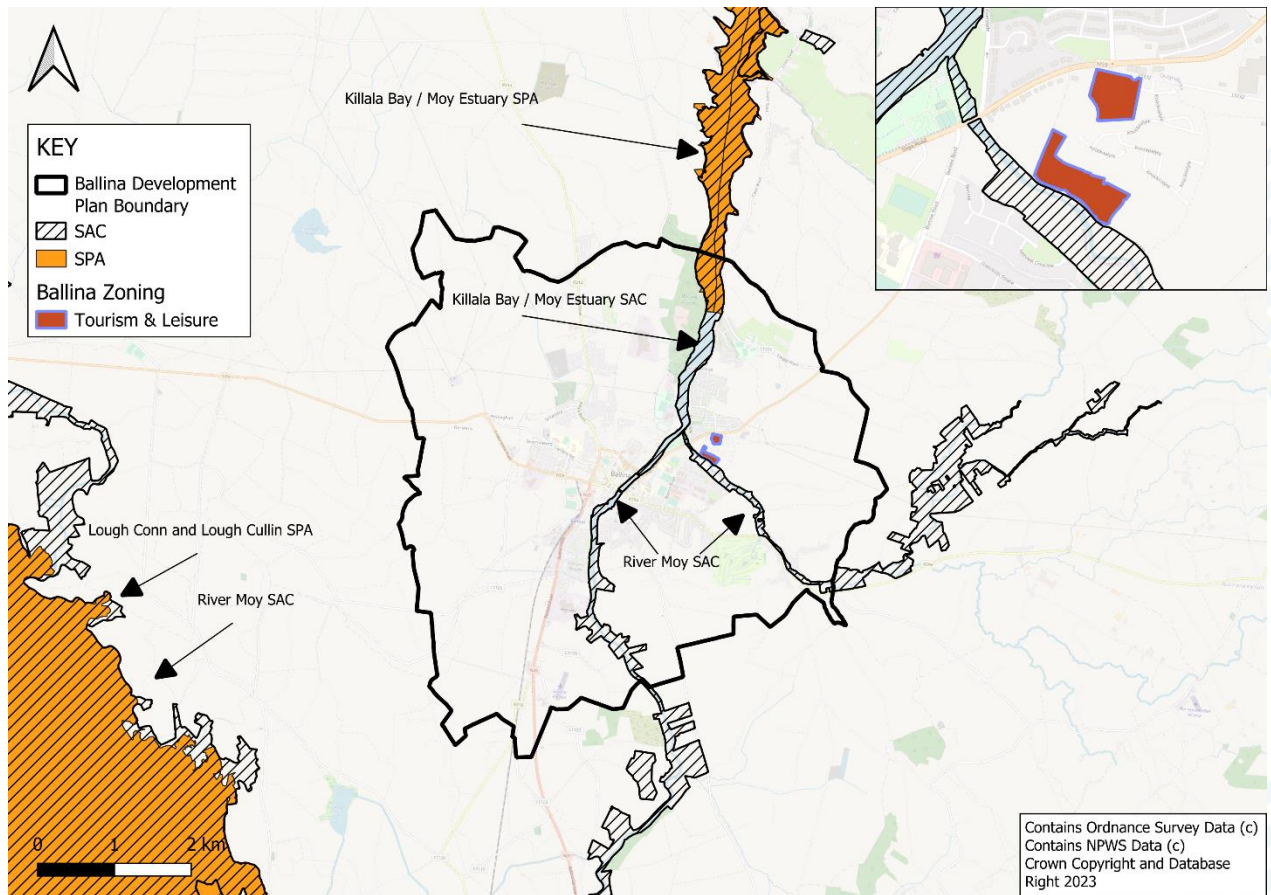


Figure 5-12: Tourism and Leisure Zoning

### 5.3.2 Local Transport Plan Objectives

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

Table 5-3: Screening table of Ballina LTP objectives

Objective No.	Objective	Screening category	Screening Outcome
<b>Pedestrian Network</b>			
P1	To enhance the existing facilities within town centre streets to create a people-first environment that encourages increased footfall in 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
P2	To improve crossing points within the town at major junctions and along N59, N26, Abbey Street, Church Road, Killala Road, Castle Road, Bohernasup and McDermott Street.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
P3	To provide continuous pedestrian facilities along the N26 to connect Rehins NS, Hollister, Grand National Hotel and Rehins Housing Estate to the town centre.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
<b>P4</b>	<b>To improve pedestrian facilities across the River Moy, at the Upper and Lower Bridges through a new active travel link and dedicated pedestrian facilities at the junctions.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
P5	Improve the pedestrian connection between Ballina Train Station and Ballina Bus Station to the town centre.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
P6	To enhance the current pedestrian facilities on McDermott Street so that it can adequately cater for the demand at school times and to tie in with SRTS.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
P7	Improved filtered permeability through the use of laneways and the opening up of cul-de-sacs for pedestrians to increase directness and connectivity.to enhance access to homes, jobs, schools, shops, public transport and services.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
P8	To remove traffic from town centre streets to allow for potential pedestrianisation (ie; Market Square and Pearse Street)	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
<b>P9</b>	<b>To create new active travel links to reduce severance caused by the River Moy, particularly to improve connectivity to the north-east (The Quays/Quignalecka) of the town.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>Cycle Network</b>			
<b>C1</b>	<b>To develop a continuous and linked cycling network within the town of Ballina comprised of greenway, primary, secondary and feeder routes to connect the residential, education,</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b>	<b>In</b>

Objective No.	Objective	Screening category	Screening Outcome
	<b>employment, retail, commercial, healthcare and community centres.</b>	<b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	
<b>C2</b>	<b>Create a network that can cater for predicted current and future demand for commuter, delivery, leisure and tourist cyclists that is accessible to all population cohorts.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
C3	Make streets more conducive to cycling through reallocating space to provide the cross section to NCM standard.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
C4	Provision of dedicated cycle facilities at major junctions (Upper Bridge, Lower Bridge, Circular Road Roundabout, Market Square, Pearse Street, The Font, and Sligo Road Roundabout)	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
C5	Provide dedicated cycle facilities along the N26 to connect Rehins NS, Hollister, Grand National Hotel and Rehins Housing Estate to the town centre.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
C6	Improve the cycle connection between Ballina Train Station and Ballina Bus Station to the town centre.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
C7	To provide two-way cycle facilities on McDermott Street so that it can adequately cater for the demand at school times and to tie in with SRTS.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
C8	To remove traffic from town centre streets to allow for the provision of adequate cycle facilities in key areas of high-demand levels (i.e.; Lord Edward Street and Market Square)	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
C9	To reduce traffic volumes within the town to make the road network more conducive to cycling. Particularly on routes where the available width is too narrow to provide dedicated cycle facilities for low-medium demand levels (i.e.; Sligo road, Abbey Street, Killalla Road, Church Road and Castle Road)	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
C10	Provide cycle infrastructure throughout the town centre to include covered cycle parking, parking for adapted bikes and e-bike charging points.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
<b>C11</b>	<b>Create permeability links to provide direction cycle routes and alternative cycle routes to main roads.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>

Objective No.	Objective	Screening category	Screening Outcome
<b>Public Transport Network</b>			
PT1	Improve the active travel connection between Ballina Train Station and Ballina Bus Station to the town centre.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
PT2	Enhance the existing rail and bus services through co-ordinated timetabling to facilitate quick interchange between local and regional services.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
PT3	Improve the routing and frequency of existing bus services, including the possible expansion of the 'Local Link' bus network to include short distance trips within the Ballina Town Area that are accessible to the wider population.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
PT4	Improve the routing and frequency of existing rail services.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
PT5	Development of a potential local high-frequency bus service for the town.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
<b>PT6</b>	<b>Development of 'Park and Ride' infrastructure</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
PT7	Development of a central bus stop at Humbert Street with covered and secure waiting area and welfare facilities to allow for the pedestrianisation of Market Square.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
<b>Road Network</b>			
<b>R1</b>	<b>Introduce traffic management measures to more effectively route vehicles to the N59 and N26 rather than the town centre streets (traffic management measures to allow 2-way traffic on Lower Bridge to keep traffic on the N59).</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
R2	Retain the capacity of the road network to cater for the through-traffic trips that are utilising the N26 and N59.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out
R3	Formalising the through link from Tesco to Pearse Street, through the Penneys Car Park, to allow for the pedestrianisation of Market Square and Pearse Street.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

Objective No.	Objective	Screening category	Screening Outcome
R4	<b>Provision of alternative routes for bypassing traffic to allow for enhanced active travel, public realm and public transport facilities in key areas of high-demand levels by means of the N26 Ballina Bypass Phase 1 and consideration of the long-term indicative proposal to provide an eastern bypass.</b>	<b>I - Policy or proposal which may have a likely significant effect on a site alone</b> <b>L - Policy or proposal which might be likely to have significant effect in-combination</b>	<b>In</b>
R5	Development of town Parking Strategy.	A - General statement of policy/general aspiration K - Policy or proposal not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination	Out

### 5.3.3 Local Transport Plan Proposals

To achieve the objectives of the LTP, a number of proposals, to be implemented in different phases, have been identified. These include proposals for segregated cycle tracks, continuous and standardized pedestrian paths, traffic management strategies, mobility hubs, park and stride/bike facilities, filtered permeability links, controlled crossings and junction upgrades. The proposals also include the N26 Ballina Bypass Phase 1 which is to be delivered in medium term as well as additional links which are long-term (potential) indicative proposals. The proposals are subject to change based on feasibility studies, public realm proposals and potential generated from other infrastructure projects.

All these proposals together will improve the accessibility of Ballina by active travel modes. These proposals will also serve as safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists to access key destinations such as education, retail, and employment areas. The routes covered along each of these proposals will have improved public lighting, safety, and signage.

An overview of the proposed Local Transport Network (LTP) is shown in Figure 5-13 in the context of the LAP land use zones.

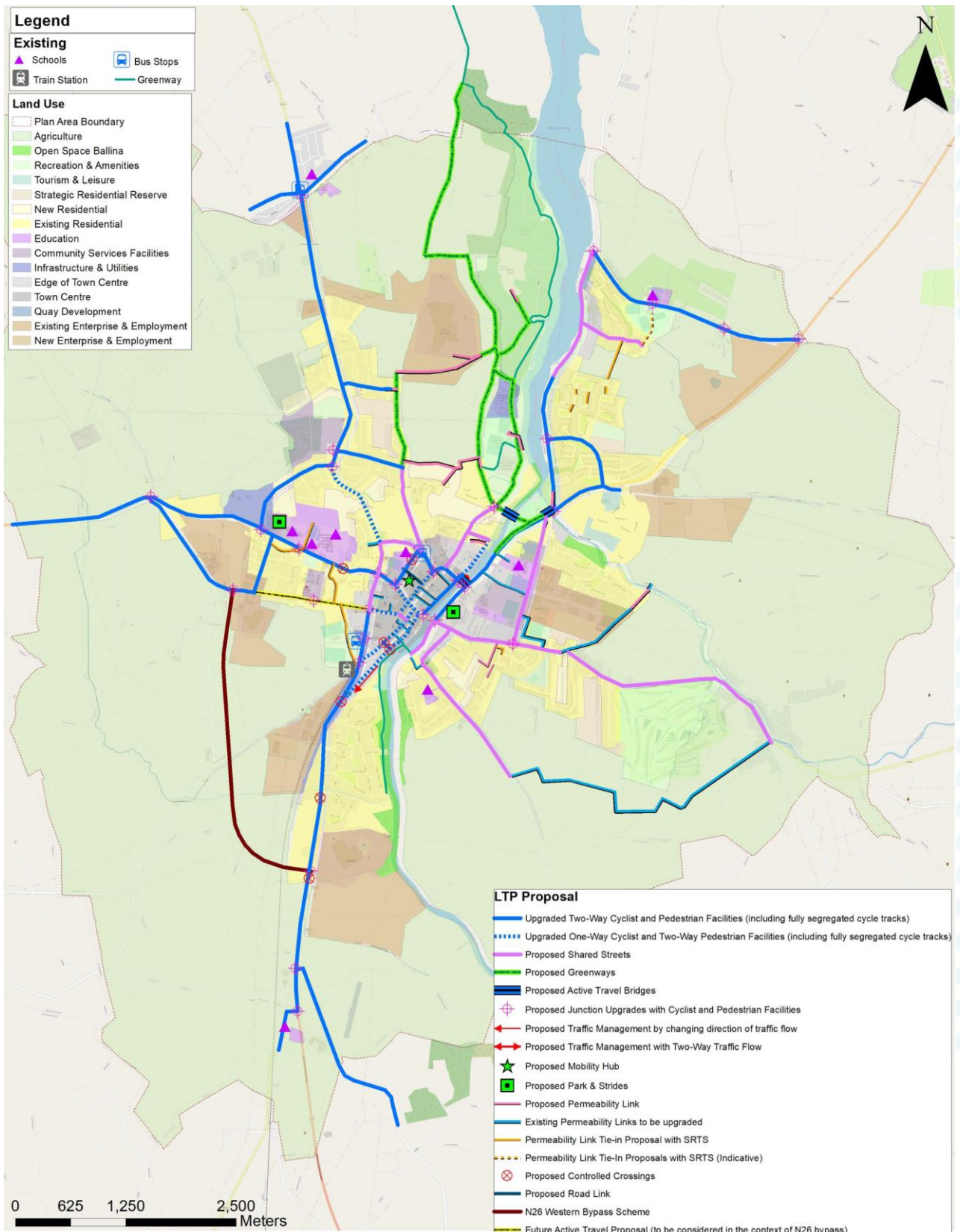


Figure 5-13 Plan Development Concepts: LTP Development In The Context Of LAP Land Use Zones

The provision of new and improved transport routes and facilities could have direct and/or indirect impacts on the European Sites through fragmentation or loss of habitats, disturbance or fragmentation of species, or changes in key indicators of conservation value, such as changes in water quality and quantity, and air quality.

## 5.4 Screening Statement and Conclusions

### 5.4.1 Pre-screening Conclusion

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

- Ox Mountains Bog SAC
- Lough Hoe Bog SAC
- Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head SAC
- Bellacorick Bog Complex SAC
- Lough Nabrickkeagh Bog SAC

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

- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- River Moy SAC
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

### 5.4.2 LAP Policies and Objectives

A number of LAP policies and objectives have been screened out alone and in-combination with other plans or projects. A total of 39 policies and objectives have been identified as having potential to have an impact upon European sites.

The policies and objectives screened in are:

- DSO 1
- CAO 2
- TCP 2 and TCO 1, 3, 4
- EDP 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and EDO 8, 10
- HSCP 1 and HSCO 1 12, 15, 16
- MTO 3, 6, 7, 9, 13
- NEO 3
- IESP 3, 7
- LUZ 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17

### 5.4.3 LAP Zoning

All of the LAP zones, with the exception of Existing Residential, Open Spaces and Ancillary Uses, have been screened in and will require further assessment.

### 5.4.4 Local Transport Plan

A number of LTP objectives have been screened out alone and in-combination with other plans or projects. The following eight objectives have been identified as having potential to have an impact upon European sites and have been screened in:

- P4, 9
- C1, 2, 11
- PT6
- R1, 4

### 5.4.5 Conclusion

The screened in policies and objectives could impact upon all four of the European designated sites identified at the pre-screening stage (Section 3.6) and therefore, those sites are taken forward to AA (Natura Impact Report).



## 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 Ballina LAP (and LTP) could potentially have significant effects on the following sites:

- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- River Moy SAC
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

This section details the AA of the potential effects of the Ballina LAP (and LTP) on the integrity of the screened in European sites.

### 6.1 Description of Screened-in Sites

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

#### 6.1.1 Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC

North of Ballina town, the River Moy flows to the sea via a long, narrow estuarine channel. After approximately 8 km, the estuary widens to form a north-facing triangular bay, with the towns of Inishcrone (Co. Sligo) and Killala (Co. Mayo) situated on the eastern and western shores, respectively. The estuary itself forms the County boundary along its northern part. A long sandy island (Bartragh Island) separates the south-western side of the bay from the open water. Much of the inner part of the bay is intertidal. The northern part shelves to approximately -10 m.

##### 6.1.1.1 Qualifying Interests

The site is a SAC selected for the following habitats and species listed on Annex I / II of the EU Habitats Directive (\* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

- Estuaries [1130]
- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]
- Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]
- Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]
- Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]
- Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330]
- Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]
- Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120]
- Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (white dunes) [2130]
- Humid dune slacks [2190]
- *Vertigo angustior* (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014]
- *Petromyzon marinus* (Sea Lamprey) [1095]
- *Phoca vitulina* (Harbour Seal) [1365]

##### 6.1.1.2 Conservation Objectives

The conservation objectives for Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC are to maintain or restore favourable conservation condition of the Qualifying Interest features of the site (NPWS, 2012).

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 6-1: Conservation Objectives for the Qualifying Interests of Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SAC (NPWS, 2012)

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail <i>Vertigo angustior</i>	Distribution: occupied sites	Number	No decline. There is one known site for this species in this SAC.
	Presence on transect	Occurrence	Adult or sub-adult snails are present in at least 3 places on the transect where optimal or sub-optimal habitat occurs (minimum 5 samples)
	Abundance	Number per sample	At least 2 samples on the transect have more than 10 <i>V. angustior</i> individuals (minimum 5 samples)
	Transect habitat quality	Metres	More than 50m of habitat along the transect is classed as optimal or sub-optimal
	Transect optimal wetness	Metres	Soils, at time of sampling, are damp (optimal wetness) and covered with a layer of humid thatch for more than 50m along the transect
	Habitat area	Hectares	1.465ha of potential habitat (optimal and sub-optimal); Optimal habitat is defined as marsh with transition of ecotone between red fescue ( <i>Festuca rubra</i> ) and silverweed ( <i>Potentilla anserina</i> ) wet grassland and waterlogged marsh dominated by yellow iris ( <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> ) and low growing herbs. Vegetation height 20-40cm. Habitat growing on wet to saturated soil covered with a deep layer of mosses and humid, open structured thatch. Sub-optimal habitat is defined as for optimal habitat, but either vegetation height is less than 20cm, or between 40 and 50cm; or the soil is dry, or covered with standing water
Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i>	Distribution: extent of anadromy	% of estuary accessible	No barriers for migratory life stages of lamprey moving from freshwater to marine habitats and vice versa
	Population structure of juveniles	Number of age/size groups	At least three age/size groups present

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Juvenile density in fine sediment	Juveniles/m <sup>2</sup>	Juvenile density at least 1/m <sup>2</sup>
Estuaries	Habitat area	Hectares	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes
	Community extent	Hectares	Maintain the extent of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes.
	Community structure: <i>Zostera</i> density	Shoots per m <sup>2</sup>	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes
	Community distribution	Hectares	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Muddy sand to fine sand dominated by <i>Hydrobia ulvae</i> , <i>Pygospio elegans</i> and <i>Tubificoides benedii</i> community complex; Estuarine muddy sand dominated by <i>Hediste diversicolor</i> and <i>Heterochaeta costata</i> community complex; and Fine sand dominated by <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i> community complex.
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 extent	Hectares	Maintain the extent of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes.
	Community structure: <i>Zostera</i> density	Shoots per m <sup>2</sup>	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes
	Community distribution	Hectares	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Muddy sand to fine sand dominated by <i>Hydrobia ulvae</i> , <i>Pygospio elegans</i> and <i>Tubificoides benedii</i> community complex; Estuarine muddy sand dominated by <i>Hediste diversicolor</i> and <i>Heterochaeta costata</i> community complex and Fine sand dominated by <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i> community complex
Annual vegetation of drift lines	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession. For sub-site mapped: Bartragh Island- 0.58ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, or change in habitat distribution, 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: typical species and sub-communities	Percentage cover at a representative sample of monitoring stops	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities with typical species: sea rocket ( <i>Cakile maritima</i> ), sea sandwort ( <i>Honckenya peploides</i> ), prickly saltwort ( <i>Salsola kali</i> ) and Orache ( <i>Atriplex</i> spp.)
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession. For sub-sites mapped: Bartragh Island- 0.26ha, Ross- 0.29ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, or change in habitat distribution, subject to natural processes.
	Physical structure: sediment supply	Presence/absence of physical barriers	Maintain 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	Centimeters	Maintain structural variation within sward
	Vegetation structure: vegetation cover	Percentage cover at a representative sample of monitoring stops	Maintain more than 90% of the area outside of the creeks vegetated
	Vegetation composition: typical species & sub-communities	Percentage cover	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities with typical species listed in the Saltmarsh Monitoring Project (McCorry and Ryle, 2009)
	Vegetation structure: negative indicator species- <i>Spartina anglica</i>	Hectares	No significant expansion of common cordgrass ( <i>Spartina anglica</i> ), with an annual spread of less than 1%

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
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: Bartragh Island- 29.22ha, Ross- 14.95ha, Rusheens- 1.24ha, Castleconor - 1.61ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, or change in habitat distribution, subject to natural processes.
	Physical structure: sediment supply	Presence/ absence of physical barriers	Maintain natural circulation of sediments and organic matter, without any physical obstruction
	Physical structure: creeks and pans	Occurrence	Maintain creek and pan structure/ allow to develop, 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% of the area outside of the 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 and Ryle, 2009)
	Vegetation structure: negative indicator species- <i>Spartina anglica</i>	Hectares	No significant expansion of common cordgrass ( <i>Spartina anglica</i> ), with an annual spread of less than 1%
Harbour 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	Conserve the breeding sites in a natural condition
	Moulting behaviour	Moult haul-out sites	Conserve the moult haul-out sites in a natural condition

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Resting behaviour	Resting haul-out sites	Conserve the resting haul-out sites 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 increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession. For sub-site mapped: Ross- 0.81ha, Bartragh Island - 0.75ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, or change in habitat distribution, 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 sand couch ( <i>Elytrigia juncea</i> ) and/or lyme- grass ( <i>Leymus arenarius</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 sample of monitoring stops	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities with typical species: sand couch ( <i>Elytrigia juncea</i> ) and/or lyme-grass ( <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 increasing, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession. For sub-sites mapped: Ross- 1.58; Bartragh Island- 7.52ha ; Inishcrone- 3.65ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, or change in habitat distribution, 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

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Vegetation composition: plant health of dune grasses	Percentage cover	More than 95% of marram ( <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ) and/or lyme-grass ( <i>Leymus arenarius</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 sample of monitoring stops	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities dominated by marram ( <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ) and/or lyme-grass ( <i>Leymus arenarius</i> )
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover
Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes')	Habitat area	Hectares	Area increasing, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession. For sub-site mapped: Ross - 100.79ha; Bartragh Island - 120.13ha; Inishcrone - 38.53ha
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline, or change in habitat distribution, 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 structure: bare ground	Percentage cover	Bare ground should not exceed 10% of fixed dune habitat, subject to natural processes.
	Vegetation composition: sward height	Centimetres	Maintain structural variation within sward
	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 Ryle et al. (2009)
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species (including <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> )	Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover
	Vegetation composition: scrub/trees	Percentage cover	No more than 5% cover or under control

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
Humid dune slacks	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession. For sub-sites mapped: Ross: 3.87ha; Bartragh Island: 1.22ha.
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline or change in habitat distribution, subject to natural processes.
	Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply	Presence/absence of physical barriers	Maintain natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions
	Physical structure: hydrological and flooding regime	Presence/absence of water abstraction or drainage works	Maintain natural hydrological regime
	Vegetation structure: zonation	Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession
	Vegetation structure: bare ground	Percentage cover	Bare ground should not exceed 5% of dune slack habitat, with the exception of pioneer slacks which can have up to 20% bare ground.
	Vegetation structure: vegetation height	Centimetres	Maintain structural variation within sward
	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 Ryle et al. (2009)
	Vegetation composition: cover of <i>S. repens</i>	% cover; centimetres	Maintain more than 40% cover of creeping willow ( <i>Salix repens</i> )
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover
	Vegetation composition: scrub/trees	Percentage cover	No more than 5% cover or under control

### 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 Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SAC are listed in Table 6-2 below.



Table 6-2: Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (NPWS, 2020)

Code	Threats and pressures	Rank	Source
G02.02	Skiing complex	H	b
E01	Urbanised areas, human habitation	H	b
M01.03	Flooding and rising precipitations	M	i
H01.08	Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to household sewage	H	b
G02.08	Camping and caravans	H	b
F02.03	Leisure fishing	L	i
G01.02	Walking, horse riding and non-motorised vehicles	H	i

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

### 6.1.2 Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA [004036]

The Killala Bay/Moy Estuary flows from the North Atlantic Ocean through to the town of Ballina and distributes into the Moy catchment. The site is very important for wintering waterfowl and provides excellent feeding grounds for the birds, as well as high-tide roosts.

#### 6.1.2.1 Qualifying Interests

The site is a SPA selected for the following species listed on Annex I / II of the EU Habitats Directive (numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 code):

- Ringed Plover [A137]
- Golden Plover [A140]
- Grey Plover [A141]
- Sanderling [A144]
- Dunlin [A149]
- Bar-tailed Godwit [A157]
- Curlew [A160]
- Redshank [A162]
- Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

#### 6.1.2.2 Conservation Objectives

The conservation objective of all the bird species at the SPA is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA (NPWS, 2013)

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 6-3: Conservation objectives for Qualifying Interests of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (NPWS, 2013)

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
Ringed Plover [A137] Golden Plover [A140] Grey Plover [A141] Sanderling [A144] Dunlin [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit [A157] Curlew [A160] Redshank [A162]	Population trend  Distribution	Percentage change  Number, range, timing and intensity of areas used by waterbirds	Long term population trend stable or increasing  No significant decrease in the range, timing or intensity of use of areas by species of special interest, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation
Wetlands [A999]	Habitat area	Hectares	The permanent area occupied by the wetland habitat should be stable and not significantly less than the area of 3204 hectares, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation

### 6.1.2.3 Site Vulnerabilities

As part of the Standard Data Form for European sites, the negative impacts and activities with high effect on the SPA 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 Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA are listed in Table 6-4 below.

Table 6-4: Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (NPWS, 2020a)

Code	Threats and pressures	Rank	Source
E01	Urbanised areas, human habitation	M	o
A08	Fertilisation	M	o
G01.02	Walking, horse riding and non-motorised vehicles	M	i
F02.03	Leisure fishing	M	i

Key: M = Medium; o = outside; I = inside

### 6.1.3 River Moy SAC

The River Moy SAC is a diverse site consisting of bog, fen, oak woodlands, alluvial forests and lowland hay meadows. The River Moy supports White-clawed Crayfish, Sea and Brook Lamprey, Salmon and Otter.

#### 6.1.3.1 Qualifying Interests

The site is a SAC selected for the following habitats and species listed on Annex I / II of the EU Habitats Directive (\* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

- Lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*) [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 *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]
- *Austropotamobius pallipes* (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]
- *Petromyzon marinus* (Sea Lamprey) [1095]
- *Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey) [1096]
- *Salmo salar* (Salmon) [1106]
- *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]

### 6.1.3.2 Conservation Objectives

The conservation objectives for River Moy SAC are to maintain or restore favourable conservation condition of the Qualifying Interest features of the site (NPWS, 2016).

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 6-5: Conservation Objectives for the Qualifying Interests for the River Moy SAC (NPWS, 2016)

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
Lowland hay meadows ( <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i> ) [6510]	Not in Conservation Objectives document		
Active raised bogs [7110]	Habitat area	Hectares	Restore area of active raised bog to 132.4ha, subject to natural processes
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	Restore the distribution and variability of active raised bog across the SAC.
	High bog area	Hectares	No decline in extent of high bog necessary to support the development and maintenance of active raised bog.
	Hydrological regime: water levels	Centimetres	Restore appropriate water levels throughout the site.
	Transitional areas between high bog and adjacent mineral soils (including cutover areas)	Hectares; distribution	Restore adequate transitional areas to support/protect active raised bog and the services it provides
	Vegetation quality: central ecotope, active flush, soaks, bog woodland	Hectares	Restore 66.2ha of central ecotope/active flush/soaks/bog woodland as appropriate
	Vegetation quality: microtopographical features	Hectares	Restore adequate cover of high quality microtopographical features
	Vegetation quality: bog moss ( <i>Sphagnum</i> ) species	Percentage cover	Restore adequate cover of bog moss ( <i>Sphagnum</i> ) species to ensue peat-forming capacity

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Typical ARB species: flora	Occurrence	Restore, where appropriate, typical active raised bog flora
	Typical ARB species: fauna	Occurrence	Restore, where appropriate, typical active bog fauna
	Elements of local distinctiveness	Occurrence	Maintain features of local distinctiveness, subject to natural processes
	Negative physical indicators	Percentage cover	Negative physical features absent or insignificant
	Vegetation composition: native negative indicator species	Percentage cover	Native negative indicator species at insignificant levels
	Vegetation composition: non-native invasive species	Percentage cover	Non-native invasive species at insignificant levels and not more than 1% cover
	Air quality: nitrogen deposition	Kg N/ha/year	Air quality surrounding bog close to natural reference conditions. The total N deposition should not exceed 5kg N/ha/yr
	Water quality	Hydrochemical measures	Water quality on the high bog and in transitional areas close to natural reference conditions
Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]	The long-term aim for Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration is that its peat-forming capability is re-established; therefore, the conservation objective for this habitat is inherently linked to that of Active raised bogs and a separate conservation objective has not been set in River Moy SAC.		
Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]	Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> is an integral part of good quality Active raised bogs and thus a separate conservation objective has not been set in River Moy SAC.		
Alkaline fens [7230]	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes
	Distribution	Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes.
	Hydrological regime	Metres	Appropriate natural hydrological regimes necessary to support the natural structure and functioning of the habitat
	Peat formation	Appropriate peat formation, where appropriate	Active peat formation, where appropriate
	Water quality: nutrients	Water chemistry measures	Appropriate water quality to support the natural structure and functioning of the habitat
	Vegetation structure: typical species	Percentage	Maintain vegetation cover of typical species including brown mosses and vascular plants

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Vegetation composition: trees and shrubs	Percentage	Cover of scattered native trees and shrubs less than 10%
	Physical structure: disturbed bare ground	Percentage	Cover of disturbed bare ground less than 10%. Where tufa is present, disturbed bare ground less than 1%
	Physical structure: drainage	Percentage	Areas showing signs of drainage as a result of drainage ditches or heavy trampling less than 10%
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]	Habitat area	Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes
	Habitat distribution	Occurrence	No decline.
	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 and metres	Diverse structure with a relatively closed canopy containing mature trees; subcanopy layer with semi-mature trees and shrubs; and well-developed layer
	Woodland structure: community diversity and extent	Hectares	Maintain diversity and extent of community types
	Woodland structure: natural regeneration	Hectares	Seedlings, saplings and pole age-classes occur in adequate proportions to ensure survival of woodland canopy
	Woodland structure: dead wood	m <sup>3</sup> per hectare; number per hectare	At least 30m <sup>3</sup> /ha of fallen timber greater than 10cm diameter; 30 snags/ha; both categories should include stems greater than 40cm diameter
	Woodland structure: veteran trees	Number per hectare	No decline
	Woodland structure: indicators of local distinctiveness	Occurrence	No decline
	Vegetation composition: native tree cover	Percentage	No decline. Native tree cover not less than 95%
	Vegetation composition: typical species	Occurrence	A variety of typical native species present, depending on woodland type, including oak ( <i>Quercus petraea</i> ) and birch ( <i>Betula pubescens</i> )
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Occurrence	Negative indicator species, particularly non-native invasive species, absent or under control

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> ) [91E0]	Woodland structure: cover and height	Percentage and metres	Diverse structure with a relatively closed canopy containing mature trees; subcanopy layer with semi- mature trees and shrubs; and well-developed herb layer
	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 occur in adequate proportions to ensure survival of woodland canopy
	Hydrological regime: flooding depth/height of water table	Metres	Appropriate hydrological regime necessary for maintenance of alluvial vegetation
	Woodland structure: dead wood	m <sup>3</sup> per hectare; number per hectare	At least 30m <sup>3</sup> /ha of fallen timber greater than 10cm diameter; 30 snags/ha; both categories should include stems greater than 40cm diameter (greater than 20cm diameter in the case of alder)
	Woodland structure: veteran trees	Number per hectare	No decline
	Woodland structure: indicators of local distinctiveness	Occurrence	No decline
	Vegetation composition: native tree cover	Percentage	No decline. Native tree cover not less than 95%
	Vegetation composition: typical species	Occurrence	A variety of typical native species present, depending on woodland type, including Alder ( <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> ), willows ( <i>Salix spp</i> ) and, locally, Oak ( <i>Quercus robur</i> ) and Ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ) and Birch ( <i>Betula pubescens</i> )
	Vegetation composition: negative indicator species	Occurrence	Negative indicator species, particularly non-native invasive species, absent or under control
White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>	Distribution	Occurrence	No reduction from baseline.
	Population structure: recruitment	Occurrence of juveniles and females with eggs	Juveniles and/or females with eggs in all occupied tributaries
	Negative indicator species	Occurrence	No alien crayfish species
	Disease	Occurrence	No instances of disease

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Water quality	EPA Q value	At least Q3-4 at all sites sampled by EPA
	Habitat quality: heterogeneity	Occurrence of positive habitat features	No decline in heterogeneity or habitat quality
<i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]	Distribution: extent of anadromy	Percentage of river accessible	Greater than 75% of main stem length of rivers accessible from estuary
	Population structure of juveniles	Number of age/size groups	At least three age/size groups present
	Juvenile density in fine sediment	Juveniles/m <sup>2</sup>	Mean catchment juvenile density at least 1/m <sup>2</sup>
	Extent and distribution of spawning habitat	m <sup>2</sup> and occurrence	No decline in extent and distribution of spawning beds
	Availability of juvenile habitat	Number of positive sites in 3rd order channels (and greater), downstream of spawning areas	More than 50% of sample sites positive
<i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]	Distribution	Percentage of river accessible	Access to all watercourses down to first order streams
	Population structure of juveniles	Number of age/size groups	At least three age/size groups of brook/river lamprey present
	Juvenile density in fine sediment	Juveniles/m <sup>2</sup>	Mean catchment juvenile density of brook/river lamprey at least 2/m <sup>2</sup>
	Extent and distribution of spawning habitat	m <sup>2</sup> and occurrence	No decline in extent and distribution of spawning beds
	Availability of juvenile habitat	Number of positive sites in 2nd order channels (and greater), downstream of spawning areas	More than 50% of sample sites positive
<i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]	Distribution: extent of anadromy	Percentage of river accessible	100% of river channels down to second order accessible from estuary
	Adult spawning fish	Number	Conservation Limit (CL) for each system consistently exceeded

Qualifying Interest	Attributes	Measure	Target
	Salmon fry abundance	Number of fry/5 minutes electrofishing	Maintain or exceed 0+ fry mean catchment-wide abundance threshold value. Currently set at 17 salmon fry/5 minutes sampling
	Out-migrating smolt abundance	Number	No significant decline
	Number and distribution of redds	Number and occurrence	No decline in number and distribution of spawning redds due to anthropogenic causes
	Water quality	EPA Q value	At least Q4 at all sites sampled by EPA
<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	Distribution	Percentage positive survey sites	No significant decline
	Extent of terrestrial habitat	Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 1068.8ha
	Extent of freshwater (river) habitat	Kilometres	No significant decline. Length mapped and calculated as 479.4km
	Extent of freshwater (lake) habitat	Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 1248.2ha
	Couching sites and holts	Number	No significant decline
	Fish biomass available	Kilograms	No significant decline
	Barriers to connectivity	Number	No significant increase

### 6.1.3.3 Site Vulnerabilities

The River Moy SAC is vulnerable to several potential impacts, including agriculture, invasive non-native species and forestry activities. The negative impacts and activities with high effect on the SAC are listed in Table 6-6 below.

Table 6-6: Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the River Moy SAC (NPWS, 2020b)

Code	Threats and pressures	Rank	Source
H01.05	Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to agricultural and forestry activities	H	b
D04.02	Aerodrome, heliport	M	b
B01	Forest planting on open ground	H	b
C01.03	Peat extraction	M	b
I01	Invasive non-native species	H	b
B05	Use of fertilisers (forestry)	H	b
A02.01	Agricultural intensification	H	b

Key: H = high; M = Medium; b = both



#### 6.1.4 Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA [004228]

The River Deel, Addergoole and Castlehill are the main rivers flowing into Lough Conn with the River Moy outflowing of Lough Cullin. These loughs form part of an important salmonid fishery and an important site for wintering wildfowl. Both loughs are one of only four breeding sites in Ireland for Common Scoter.

##### 6.1.4.1 Qualifying Interests

The site is a SPA selected for the following species listed on Annex I / II of the EU Habitats Directive (numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 code):

- Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) [A061]
- Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) [A065]
- Common Gull (*Larus canus*) [A182]
- Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) [A395]
- Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

##### 6.1.4.2 Conservation Objectives

The conservation objective of all the bird species at the SPA is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA (NPWS, 2022).

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

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

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

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

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

- Tufted Duck
- Common Scoter
- Common Gull
- Greenland White-fronted Goose

To acknowledge the importance of Ireland's wetlands to wintering waterbirds, "Wetland and Waterbirds" may be included as a Special Conservation Interest for some SPAs that have been designated for wintering waterbirds and that contain a wetland site of significant importance to one of more of the species of Special Conservation Interest. Thus, a second objective is included as follows:

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat at Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA as a resource for the regularly occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.

##### 6.1.4.3 Site Vulnerabilities

As part of the Standard Data Form for European sites, the negative impacts and activities with high effect on the SPA 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 Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA are listed in Table 6-7 below.

Table 6-7: Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA (NPWS, 2020c)

Code	Threats and pressures	Rank	Source
I01	Invasive non-native species	L	i
A08	Fertilisation	M	o
F02.03	Leisure fishing	H	i
B	Sylviculture, forestry	M	o

Key: L = Low; M = Medium; o = outside; I = inside

## 6.2 Potential significant effects on Screened-in European Sites

As outlined in Section 3.4, the potential impacts that could occur through the implementation of the Ballina LAP (and LTP) 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 Ballina 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 peatland and wetland habitats, i.e., the River Moy SAC supports raised bog habitats. Therefore, implementation of SuDs and diversion of water flows that may occur due to new housing or retail development could have an adverse impact upon the bog interest features of the River Moy 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.

Avoidance/mitigation measures are detailed in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** 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 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 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 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 policies and/or objectives. As an example, disturbance to wintering waterbirds of the Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA, including Ringed Plover, Dunlin, Curlew and Redshank, may be caused by an increase in development and recreation on or near to the SPA, as well as disturbance to other qualifying species including Otter, a QI of the River Moy SAC.

Avoidance/ mitigation measures are detailed in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** 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 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 roosting habitats for the birds of the Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA, potentially impacting the success and population numbers of these species, resulting in a decrease in species density in the European site in the long term.

Avoidance/ mitigation measures are detailed in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** 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 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 to the River Moy SAC which contain species sensitive to water quality (i.e., lamprey, White-clawed Crayfish).

Avoidance/ mitigation measures are detailed in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** 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 Alluvial Forests for the River Moy SAC, or Wetlands used by waterbirds' of the Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA and species such as wintering birds of the Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA or Otter, Salmon, Lamprey and White-clawed Crayfish of the River Moy 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 River Moy. 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 projects that arise as a result of the objectives and policies of the Plan must be appropriately assessed for their suitability at a given location.

Avoidance/ mitigation measures are detailed in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** 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. Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SAC and the River Moy SAC both contain habitats that are sensitive to air pollution such as the dune habitats of Killala Bay/Moy Estuary and the bog habitats of the River Moy SAC.

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 Ballina will likely reduce air quality in the Plan area. However, the bog habitats are not within close proximity to Ballina; Cloongoonagh Bog (closest bog habitat) is located approx. 20km downstream of Ballina and the bog habitat is located more than 100m from a major road (N83) and vehicle emission levels are known to be greatest within 50-100m from the road (Smithers *et al.* 2016). The dune habitats, based on NPWS (2012), are located at the northern extent of the SAC along the bay/estuary and are therefore not within close proximity to major roads reducing the likely impact of air pollution on these habitats.

Mitigation measures are detailed in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** 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 6-8 describes the potential impacts of the screened in policies and objectives of the Ballina LAP on European sites.

Table 6-8: Screened In Policies and Objectives and Potential Impacts

Screened in ID	Screened in Policy / Objective	Potential Impact
<b>DSO 1</b>	Deliver at least 30% of all new homes in Ballina within the existing built-up footprint of the town.	Possible construction and operational based impacts
<b>CAO 2</b>	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
<b>TCP 2</b>	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
<b>TCO 1</b>	Continue to encourage and facilitate the reuse and regeneration of derelict, vacant, backlands and underutilised lands and buildings in the town centre through active land management for retail, residential and other mixed uses and where necessary through appropriate legislative mechanisms/instruments and / or by supporting the progression and delivery of projects funded by the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and other appropriate funds to achieve this aim.	May result in increased development, water based discharges
<b>TCO3</b>	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
<b>TCO 4</b>	Encourage and facilitate the development of Opportunity Sites in Ballina 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.	
<b>EDP 5</b>	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.	Possible construction and operational based impacts
<b>EDP 7</b>	Promote and support and facilitate the development of the tourism infrastructure in Ballina with emphasis on utilising and harnessing, in an appropriate and sustainable manner, the potential of the town's natural and built heritage.	May result in construction/development based impacts. Possible recreational disturbance impacts. Tourism impacts can extend outside the town to the hinterland including the Natura 2000 Network.
<b>EDP 8</b>	Encourage the development of tourism activities such as water based activities, cultural and food tourism including festivals and food markets in Ballina.	May result in construction/development based impacts. Possible recreational disturbance impacts. Tourism impacts can extend outside the town to the hinterland including the Natura 2000 Network.

Screened in ID	Screened in Policy / Objective	Potential Impact
<b>EDP 9</b>	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.
<b>EDP 10</b>	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.
<b>EDO 8</b>	Support and facilitate the development of an integrated network of greenways and heritage trails, including The Monasteries of the Moy from Belleek to Killala.	Possible recreational disturbance impacts.
<b>EDO10</b>	Explore the development potential of Ballina Harbour/Quay area in terms of marine related tourism and extensive marine resources.	May result in construction/development based impacts. Possible recreational disturbance impacts in relation to Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and SPA. Tourism impacts can extend outside the town to the hinterland including the Natura 2000 Network.
<b>HSCP1</b>	Encourage the compact growth of Ballina 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
<b>HSCO1</b>	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
<b>HSCO 12</b>	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 Ballina.	May result in construction, increased development, water based discharges
<b>HSO 15</b>	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.	May result in construction, increased development, water based discharges. Possible recreational disturbance impacts.
<b>HSO 16</b>	Seek the development of additional municipal facilities that are available for all users within the town of Ballina and its surrounding areas.	May result in construction, increased development, water based discharges
<b>MTO 3</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 proposed active travel network in the town.	May result in construction.
<b>MTO 6</b>	Seek to progress the Road projects, listed in Table 7.3 (of the LAP) subject to environmental assessments.	Infrastructure projects, construction and development, possible operation disturbance

Screened in ID	Screened in Policy / Objective	Potential Impact
<b>MTO 7</b>	<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) N59 extension route b) N26 extension route</p> <p>*these routes are indicative only and will be subject to change</p>	<p>Infrastructure projects, construction and development, possible operation and recreational disturbance</p>
<b>MTO 9</b>	<p>Support and facilitate 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"> <li>• N26 – Southwest</li> <li>• Section between Moy Valley Business Park and N26</li> <li>• Morrison Terrace</li> </ul> <p>New Permeability Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between Hollister and Proposed Greenway</li> <li>• Between Abbey Street and The Spires</li> <li>• Between Ballina train station and Lord Edward Street (Safe routes to School Programme)</li> <li>• Between Church Road and St Michaels NS (Safe routes to School Programme)</li> <li>• Between Mercy Road to Roches Terrace (Safe routes to School Programme)</li> <li>• St Patricks Estate (Safe routes to School Programme)</li> <li>• Creggs Road/Quay Lane (Safe routes to School Programme)</li> </ul> <p>Proposed Active Travel Bridge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active Travel Bridge at Lower Bridge</li> </ul> <p>Proposed Park and Stride</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cathedral Road Car Park</li> <li>• St Patricks Church Car Park</li> </ul> <p>Cycling:</p> <p>Two Way Cyclist Facilities (fully segregated cycle tracks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N26 South</li> <li>• N26 Kevin Barry Street</li> </ul>	<p>Infrastructure projects, construction and development, possible operation and recreational disturbance</p>

Screened in ID	Screened in Policy / Objective	Potential Impact
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water Lane</li> <li>• L-1127</li> <li>• R-310</li> </ul> <p>One Way Cyclist Facilities (fully segregated cycle tracks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morrison Terrace</li> <li>• Barrett, James Connolly, Hill and Tone Streets</li> </ul> <p>Greenway / off road paths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River Moy (southwest extend behind Hollister)</li> </ul> <p>Provide Shared Street:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ferran Terrace</li> <li>• Mercy Road</li> </ul> <p>* Measures listed are exhaustive, full range of measures are listed in Ballina Local Transport Plan</p>	
<b>MTO 13</b>	<p>Facilitate the provision of:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>b) Investigate the possibility of providing coach parking within the Plan Area.</p>	<p>Infrastructure projects, construction and development, possible operation and recreational disturbance</p>
<b>NEO 3</b>	<p>Protect and enhance the built, natural and recreational potential of the River Moy and to encourage and promote sustainable access to and enjoyment of the River Moy.</p>	<p>Possible recreational disturbance impacts.</p>
<b>IESP3</b>	<p>Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in Ballina in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 and future cycles of this Plan.</p>	<p>Overall positive, but individual project would require assessment if in-channel work is required i.e. fixing incorrect foul connections into stormwater system</p>
<b>IESP7</b>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Overall positive, but individual project would require assessment if instream work is required i.e. fixing incorrect foul connections into stormwater system</p>



### 6.3 Potential Significant Effects of the LTP

The Ballina LTP contains a comprehensive suite of measures to provide for a more sustainable travel network in Ballina, 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 European sites, 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 impacts upon the River Moy 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, however there are proposals for new/improved paths alongside the River Moy. 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. Any deterioration in water quality could potentially result in adverse impacts, either directly or indirectly, to QI habitats and species sensitive to water quality (i.e. lamprey, 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 Ballina 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 NEP 1 and NEP 2 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 **NEP 1:**

- 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 **NEP 2:**

- Seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not result in significant climatic impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development.

#### Objective **NEO 1:**

- Ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the River Moy cSAC and Killala Bay and Moy Estuary cSAC/NHA is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, geological, water and landscape value of the cSAC/NHA and, where possible, to integrate these important attributes into all such development schemes.

#### Objective **NEO 4:**

- Maintain a suitable buffer zone along the River Moy and other watercourses protecting them from inappropriate development.

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 Ballina 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:

- **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.

- **MTP 4** Improve accessibility and movement within Ballina, 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.
- **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).
- **BEP 7** 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.
- **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.
- **IESP 7** 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 surveys<sup>1</sup>
- 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.

## 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

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of ecological mitigation, the habitat and species surveys are conducted as required to assess the various aspects for the project, such as ecological surveys for:

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

include other environmental requirements such as invasive no-native species management measures, if applicable.<sup>2</sup>

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

## 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.

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<sup>2</sup> There are a range standard type mitigation measures consisting of good construction practices and good planning of works, that are used within construction projects such as for example: Refuelling of plant and vehicles away from watercourses, Installation of wheel-wash and plant washing facilities, working in-channel or on specific works only within environmental windows e.g. in-stream works in Salmonid channels from May to September.

## 8 Assessment of Impacts upon Site Integrity

An assessment of whether the identified potential impacts of the Ballina 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
<b>Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA</b>				
<p>Ringed Plover [A137] Golden Plover [A140] Grey Plover [A141] Sanderling [A144] Dunlin [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit [A157] Curlew [A160] Redshank [A162] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>Habitat loss Habitat fragmentation Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/community simplification Disturbance (noise, visual) Changes in water levels or tables Changes in water quality Changes to surface water flooding Turbidity and siltation Pollution</p>	<p>All QI bird species could be present within the Plan area, particularly in the Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary and its floodplain and riparian margins. The target conservation objectives for these QIs are detailed in Table 6-3, and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Long term population trend stable or increasing</li> <li>- No significant decrease in the range, timing or intensity of use of areas</li> <li>- The permanent area occupied by the wetland habitat should be stable and not significantly less.</li> </ul> <p>The screened in Policies and Objectives of this Plan could cause a decrease in the range and intensity of use of these birds and their associated habitat in Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA.</p> <p>These birds could be adversely impacted through loss or reduction of habitat area, disturbance (including recreational), fragmentation, reduction in species density, and through changes in key indicators of conservation value.</p> <p>For example, EDP 8, EDP 9, EDO 8 and EDO 10 aim to encourage development of tourism activities such as water-based activities and new paths/greenways, this could lead to an impact upon bird species of the Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SPA through increased disturbance.</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 Killala Bay / Moy Estuary SPA, is located and designed to negate the impacts on this site.</p> <p>In addition to the above, in relation to development promoted by the Plan, further mitigation measures are outlined in Section <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b></p>	<p>No adverse impact on QI and site integrity</p>
<b>Killala Bay/ Moy Estuary SAC</b>				
<p>Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p>	<p>Habitat loss Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community simplification Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water levels or table</p>	<p>These habitats fall within the Ballina Plan area 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. In addition, any development carried out within the Plan boundary that is near or within the SAC boundary, could lead to changes in water levels, quality, siltation and pollution which could have an adverse indirect impact upon these QIs. The target conservation objectives for these QIs are detailed in Section</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 Killala Bay / Moy Estuary SAC, is located and designed to negate the impacts on this site. In addition, objective NEO1 will ensure that any proposal for</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
	Changes in water quality Changes to surface water flooding Turbidity and siltation Pollution	6.1.1.2. The screened in policies and objectives of the Plan could cause adverse impacts to target conservation objectives, through indirect impacts via surface water pathways, which could lead to changes in physical regime, water quality, siltation and pollution.	development within or adjacent to the SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, 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 <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b>	
Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]	Habitat loss Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community simplification Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water levels or table Changes to surface water flooding Pollution	This QI is located outside of the Plan area and therefore, there will be no direct impact (i.e., habitat loss, physical damage) upon this habitat. The target conservation objectives for this QI are detailed in Table 6-1, but to summarise include: - Area stable or increasing and no decline, or change, in habitat distribution - Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter - Maintain the range of coastal habitats - Maintain the presence of species-poor communities with typical species - Negative indicator species to represent less than 5% cover.  The screened in policies and objectives of the Plan could cause adverse impacts to target conservation objectives, through indirect impacts via surface water pathways, which could lead to changes in physical regime, water levels and pollution.	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 Killala Bay / Moy Estuary 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 SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, 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 <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b>	No adverse impact on QI and site integrity
Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima) [1330] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation	Habitat loss Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community simplification Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water levels or table	No direct impact (i.e., habitat loss, physical damage) upon these features are anticipated as they are located outside of the Plan area. The target conservation objectives for these QIs are detailed in Table 6-1.  The screened in policies and objectives of the Plan could cause adverse impacts to target conservation objectives, through indirect impacts via surface water pathways, which could lead to changes in changes in physical regime, water quality and pollution. Furthermore, some of these QIs are sensitive to air pollution (i.e., humid dune	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 Killala Bay / Moy Estuary SAC, is located and designed to negate the impacts on this site. In addition, objective NEO1 will ensure that any proposal for	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
(white dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190]	Changes in water quality Changes to surface water flooding Pollution	slacks) and any increased vehicle use near to these QIs could have detrimental impacts. However, there are no major roads located in close proximity to the dunes with just minor roads providing access to beaches.	development within or adjacent to the SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, 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 <b>Error! Reference source not found..</b>	
<i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014]	Habitat loss Habitat fragmentation 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	This QI has only been recorded in one area of the SAC, which is located outside of the Plan area, therefore, direct impact via habitat loss and physical damage is not anticipated. However, indirect impacts via surface water pathways could adversely impact this species. The target conservation objectives for this QI are detailed Table 6-1 and include: - No decline - Adult or sub-adult snails are present in at least 3 places on the transect - At least 2 samples on the transect have more than 10 individuals - More than 50m of habitat along the transect is optimal or sub-optimal - Soils are damp and are covered with a layer of humid thatch for more than 50m along the transect - 1.465ha of potential habitat The screened in policies and objectives of the Plan could cause adverse impacts to target conservation objectives, via surface water pathways, which could lead to changes in water levels, water quality and pollution.	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 Killala Bay / Moy Estuary 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 SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, 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 <b>Error! Reference source not found..</b>	No adverse impact on QI and site integrity
<i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]	Habitat loss Habitat fragmentation Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community	Sea Lamprey could be present within the Plan area, whilst Harbour Seal are unlikely to enter the Plan area. The target conservation objectives for the QIs include (see Table 6-1): Sea lamprey: - No barriers for migratory life stages of lamprey - At least three age/size groups present	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	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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simplification</li> <li>Disturbance</li> <li>Competition from invasive non-native species</li> <li>Changes in water levels or table</li> <li>Changes in water quality</li> <li>Turbidity and siltation</li> <li>Pollution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Juvenile density at least 1/m<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> <p>Harbour seal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Species range within the site should not be restricted by artificial barriers</li> <li>- Conserve the breeding site in a natural condition</li> <li>- Conserve the moult haul-out sites and resting haul-out sites in a natural condition</li> <li>- Human activities should occur at levels that do not adversely affect the Harbour seal population.</li> </ul> <p>The screened in policies and objectives 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>development proposal within or adjacent to Killala Bay / Moy Estuary 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 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 <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b></p>	
<b>River Moy SAC</b>				
<p>Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitat loss</li> <li>Changes in physical regime</li> <li>Physical damage</li> <li>Habitat/ community simplification</li> <li>Competition from invasive non-native species</li> <li>Changes in water levels or table</li> <li>Changes to surface water flooding</li> <li>Pollution</li> </ul>	<p>This QI is known to be 5km north and south of Foxford (NWPS, 2020b), which is located upstream of Ballina, and therefore is not expected to be directly or indirectly impacted upon by the Plan.</p>	N/A	N/A
<p>Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Alkaline fens [7230] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitat loss</li> <li>Changes in physical regime</li> <li>Physical damage</li> <li>Habitat/ community simplification</li> <li>Competition from invasive non-native species</li> </ul>	<p>The bog, fen and alluvial forests are not considered present in the Plan area, based on NPWS (2016), therefore, direct impact upon these habitats is not anticipated. These habitats are located upstream of the Plan area and therefore there is no surface water pathways. However, there could be an increase in recreational pressures at the SAC which could have an impact upon habitats, although bogs are most likely inaccessible.</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 the River Moy SAC, is located and designed to negate</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
excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]	Changes in water levels or table Changes in water quality Changes to surface water flooding Pollution	Active raised bogs are an air quality sensitive habitat and increased traffic could lead to a detrimental impact upon this QI. The target conservation objectives for these QIs are detailed in Table 6-5. The screened in policies and objectives of the Plan could cause adverse impacts to target conservation objectives via surface water pathways and air quality leading to adverse impacts upon these habitats.	the impacts on this site. In addition, objective NEO1 will ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, 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 <b>Error! Reference source not found..</b>	
Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [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 Ballina, therefore, it is considered this QI will not be adversely impacted upon by the Plan.	N/A	N/A
<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]	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 Turbidity and siltation	White-clawed Crayfish are known to be present throughout the River Moy system, with Lamprey species and Salmon present in the River Moy within and downstream of the plan area. The target conservation objectives for these QIs are detailed in Table 6-5. These QIs could be directly and indirectly impacted upon due to policies and objectives within the Plan. The Plan could lead to adverse impacts upon these species via surface water pathways and increased recreational disturbance (i.e., water activities, fishing).	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 the River Moy 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 SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, 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 <b>Error! Reference source</b>	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
	Pollution		<b>not found..</b>	
<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	Habitat loss Habitat fragmentation Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/ community simplification Disturbance Competition from invasive non-native species Changes in water quality Turbidity and siltation Pollution	<p>Otter are known to be widespread throughout the Moy system. The target conservation objectives for Otter are detailed in Table 6-5.</p> <p>The screened in policies and objectives of the Plan could cause adverse impacts to target conservation objectives for Otter via disturbance, increased recreational pressures along the Moy as well as surface water pathways (i.e., 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 the River Moy 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 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 <b>Error! Reference source not found..</b></p>	No adverse impact on QI and site integrity
<b>Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA</b>				
<p>Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	Habitat loss Habitat fragmentation Changes in physical regime Physical damage Habitat/community simplification Disturbance (noise, visual) Changes in water levels or tables Changes in water quality Changes to surface water flooding Turbidity and	<p>Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA is located 2.5km west and upstream of the Plan area and therefore, will not be directly impacted upon by the Plan. However, the QI species may use suitable wetland habitats within the Plan area, such as the River Moy or Killala Bay, and bird surveys will likely be necessary for developments proposed by the Plan. The conservation objectives for these QIs are detailed in Section 6.1.4.2.</p> <p>The screened in Policies and Objectives of this Plan could cause a decrease in the range and intensity of use of these birds and the functionally linked habitat in the Plan area.</p> <p>These birds could be adversely impacted through loss or reduction of habitat area, disturbance, fragmentation, reduction in species density, and through changes in key indicators of conservation value.</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 with the potential to impact upon Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA, is located and designed to negate the impacts on this site.</p> <p>In addition to the above, in relation to development promoted by the Plan, further mitigation measures are outlined in Section <b>Error! Reference source not found..</b></p>	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
	siltation Pollution	For example, the policies EDP 8 and EDP 9 aim to encourage development of tourism activities such as water-based activities, this could lead to an impact upon Killala Bay, via increased recreational disturbance, which the QI features of Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA could use as functionally linked habitat.		

## 9 Summary and Conclusion

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.

It is accepted best-practice for the AA 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 Ballina LAP 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 Ballina and increase in tourism.

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

- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC
- River Moy SAC
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA

The AA Screening Assessment screened in 39 of the LAP policies/objectives and eight of the LTP objectives as these policies/objectives could have an adverse impact on all four of the European sites integrity via hydrological, recreational or air pollution pathways.

Therefore, a 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 Ballina LAP and LTP will not have any adverse impacts upon site integrity of any European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, 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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