

# **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement**

For the

## **Mayo County Development Plan 2014 - 2020**



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**In accordance with Article 9 of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA Directive)**

**Mayo County Council  
June 2014**

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### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 Terms of Reference**

The Mayo County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 was adopted on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 and in accordance with Article 9 of the EU SEA Directive, and 131 (1) of S.I. no. 436 of 2004 Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (as amended), Mayo County Council is now required to prepare an SEA Statement as soon as may be following the making of the Plan.

#### **1.2 Legislative Background**

The EU Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment requires each Member State to assess and consider the effects on the environment of implementing a plan or programme, in particular, the consideration of likely significant environmental effects.

The Directive, which came into force in July 2001 was transposed into Irish legislation by the following legislation in 2004, both of which were amended in 2011:-

- European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations, 2004 S.I. No. 435 of 2004;
- Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 S.I. No. 436 of 2004;
- European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 S.I. No. 200 of 2011;
- Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2011 S.I. No. 201 of 2011; and

Essentially, the Mayo County Development Plan is a land use plan and its assessment was in accordance with the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 for the consideration of effects on the environment in Mayo and beyond as a consequence of the County Plan.

#### **1.3 Summary of SEA Process**

The SEA process was initiated before the drafting of the Plan with its Step 1 Screening stage. Essentially, this stage determined whether or not the draft Plan would have significant effects on the environment and whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was required. In the case of the Mayo County Development Plan and other county development plans, it is a mandatory requirement to undertake an SEA (as a county or city development plan).

Following the Screening step, scoping was carried out and incorporated the preparation of a Scoping Report which was made available to environmental authorities and consultation with SEA Environmental Authorities. In this case, the scoping stage was initiated in April 2012, followed by the preparation of the SEA Environmental Report, with monitoring the succeeding step, and the SEA process concluding with the SEA Statement.

#### **1.4 Purpose of SEA Statement**

The SEA Statement is described in Article 9 of the SEA Directive as a statutory requirement and should be made available with the adopted plan. In brief, the SEA Statement is a statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report prepared pursuant to Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and how the results of consultations entered into, pursuant to Article 7, have been taken

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into account in accordance with Article 8 and the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and the measures decided concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10. This statement is to be issued to the environmental authorities that were previously consulted, with a view to presenting a record of the key elements of the SEA process and illustrating the key decisions taken in the plan as a consequence of the SEA.

To summarise, the SEA Statement is required under Article 13I, SI No 436 of 2004 (as amended), to include information on:-

1. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan;
2. How the environmental report, any submission or observation to the planning authority in response to a notice under section 12(1) or (7) of the Act, and any consultations under article 13 F have been taken into account during the preparation of the plan;
3. The reasons for choosing the plan, as adopted, in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
4. The measures decided upon to monitor, in accordance with Article 13J, the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan.

### **1.5 Implications of SEA on the Mayo County Development Plan-Making Process**

As a consequence of the aforementioned legislation, the Mayo County Development Plan 2008-2014 was required to undergo SEA. The findings of SEA were presented by way of an SEA Environmental Report which was submitted to the Elected Members with the Draft Plan.

The report provided a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the future accommodation of growth and development in County Mayo, and how negative effects could be reduced / offset or avoided in all cases.

Some proposed amendments / material alterations made to the Draft Plan at stages of the Plan-making process; these were evaluated systematically for their environmental consequences and / or potential for significant environmental effects on the environment within Mayo and extending 15 km from the county boundary. The findings of these assessments were presented to the Elected Members in the form of an SEA addendum.

At each stage of the process the Elected Members were required by the legislation to take into account the Environmental Report - including any addenda - before the adoption of the plan in order to prevent or offset significant environmental effects.

## **2. Summary of how Environmental Considerations have been integrated into the Plan**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The protection and conservation of the environment has been a key consideration throughout the preparation of the Plan. Essentially, the SEA process comprises a series of steps which involved the detailing of the baseline status of a number of environmental elements, location and identification of environmental constraints and sensitivities so as to ensure that the strategy for development of the county was either diverted away from the most sensitive locations within the county or that appropriate mitigation measures were integrated into the Plan as it was prepared. As the Plan-making process developed, environmental considerations were directly considered at a number of stages in the SEA process.

### **2.2 Scoping and Statutory Consultation**

Statutory scoping of the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 was carried out in accordance with Article 5(4) of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). The principal purpose of the scoping stage was to decide upon the range of issues and level of detail to be included in the Environment Report.

The statutory SEA environmental authorities for the purposes of the Mayo County Development Plan are as follows:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- Minister for the Environmental, Community and Local Government;
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine;
- Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources;
- Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht;
- The Manager of Adjoining Planning Authorities; Galway, Sligo and Roscommon County Councils and Galway City Council; and
- Westport, Ballina and Castlebar Town Councils.

Initial scoping took place with the prescribed Environmental Authorities in April 2012. A Draft Scoping Report was sent to the Authorities and they were given a five week period to make submissions and observations. Submissions were received from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the information to be contained in the Environmental Report.

It is considered that the submissions received were taken into account when the environmental information was being collated, including baseline data and current issues, in addition to the preparation of the Environmental Report.

The EPA proffered ongoing advice on the sources of environmental information and data in and adjacent to Mayo, in addition to advice on the use of GIS and the convening of SEA workshops and meetings, public consultation, important legislation and guidance. Further information on water, biodiversity, air, noise and climatic factors, energy conservation / renewable energy, landscape character assessment, geology / geomorphology, human health / quality of life, transportation, tourism, infrastructure /planning, urban waste water discharge licensing, waste management, Environmental Impact Assessment, SEA, obligations with respect to national plans and policies and EU environmental legislation and the EPA report Ireland's Environment 2008 were discussed.

The Development Applications Unit of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, (NPWS) included advice that the SEA Environmental Report should be undertaken in conjunction with the Natura Impact Report to ensure integration with biodiversity issues and concerns. The SEA ER should contain environmental information sourced from NPWS, EPA, Teagasc, BirdWatch Ireland and Mayo County Council survey data. Environmental sensitivities should be investigated prior to zoning or targeting areas for development and the precautionary principle should apply.

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Environmental Protection objectives should be contained in the ER for all environmental elements and should integrate with objectives and obligations of all appropriate directives, transposed regulations and other Irish legislation, in addition to the Heritage Plan and Biodiversity Plan of Mayo County Council and the National Biodiversity Plan.

**2.3 Evaluation of Draft Plan policies and objectives**

The SEA process was undertaken using a methodical iterative approach in conjunction with a number of experts in different sectors of the environment and this process was guided strictly by legislation. The Environmental Report, prepared to document the SEA process was guided by Article 5 of the SEA Directive and by Schedule 2B of S.I. No. 436 of 2004.

The strategic environmental assessment was essentially undertaken to take account of the baseline environmental status, in addition to the evaluation of how the Draft Plan (and a number of alternatives) would affect the environment by its adoption.

Each aspect of the Draft Plan was tested for its ‘suitability’ going forward on the state of each environmental element (biodiversity, flora and fauna, population, human health, soil, water, air, climate factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape) as a consequence of the adoption of the Draft Plan. This was undertaken by the setting of objectives, targets and indicators for the protection (conservation and restoration, in some case) of all aspects of the environment. Against these objectives or Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) each policy and objective of the Draft Plan was evaluated using the following matrix.

Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of EPOs	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of EPOs	<b>Neutral</b> Interaction with status of EPOs	<b>Uncertain</b> interaction with status of EPOs	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of EPOs- likely to be mitigated by measures	<b>Probable</b> <b>Conflict</b> with status of EPOs- unlikely to be mitigated by measures
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Figure 2.1 Draft Plan Evaluation Matrix

Where any Draft Plan policy or objective was deemed to result in potential conflict with the status of EPOs (relating to one or a number of environmental elements), mitigation measures were proposed during the SEA process to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment. Alternatively, should any policy or objective of the Draft Plan be deemed likely to cause probable conflict unlikely to be mitigated by measures, these aspects of the Draft Plan were removed or amended as a consequence of the SEA process, to ensure that this conflict would be prevented.

Therefore, the first draft of the Plan was evaluated and all amendments, deletions and insertions recommended during the SEA process were taken into account in the preparation of the Draft Plan to prevent significant effects on the environment in Mayo and beyond.

**2.4 Evaluation of Proposed Amendments to the Draft Plan**

Having considered the Manager’s Report and the Draft Plan at Special Meetings of Mayo County Council on October 7<sup>th</sup>, October 21<sup>st</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the members of Mayo County Council resolved to amend the Draft Plan in accordance with Section 12 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2013.

Therefore, since amendments were proposed to the Draft Plan, a further SEA, pursuant to Section 12(7)(aa) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2013, and in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations

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2004 (as amended) was required to be carried out as respects of one or more than one proposed material alteration of the Draft Plan.

Essentially, the evaluation followed the same format as the SEA of the entire Draft Plan, with all SEA team members representing different environmental elements evaluating the proposed amendments (or material alterations).

As a consequence of this exercise, a total of 29 amendments to the Draft Plan were predicted to produce probable significant effects **not** deemed to be mitigable. Essentially then, since significant effects were predicted as a consequence of some proposed amendments to the Draft Plan and since it was envisaged that a number of these effects cannot be prevented, reduced or as fully as possible offset by measures, it was recommended that these proposed amendments **not** be made to the Draft Plan, in order to prevent significant adverse effects on the environment within Mayo and beyond the county boundary.

These 29 proposed amendments to the Draft Plan (Appendix I) were identified and detailed in a County Managers Report to Mayo County Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014, outlining the 29 proposed amendments arising from the second phase of public consultation. The Elected Members adopted the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 with 27 proposed amendments, contrary to the recommendations of the County Manager's Report.

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**3. Summary of how the Environmental Report, Submissions and Observations have been taken into account during the Preparation of the Plan**

**3.1 Introduction**

This section deals with how submissions and observations from environmental authorities and members of the public, in addition to the findings of the SEA, as presented in the Environmental report were taken into account during the preparation of the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020.

**3.2 Submissions and Observations on Draft Plan, Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report**

Following the preparation of the Draft Plan, on 14th March 2013 the Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report, Natura Impact Report (NIR) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) were placed on public display for a period of ten weeks until 24th May 2013.

A total of 346 submissions and observations were received during the public consultation period from members of the public, voluntary groups and bodies and Government bodies and departments such as the EPA, National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) and Office of Public Works (OPW), on aspects of the Draft Plan and associated reports including support of a greenway on the line of the Western Rail Corridor, the protection of the Western Rail Corridor as an item of strategic transport infrastructure, Economic development and Retail; Tourism; Population; Rural housing and related issues; Public access / recreation amenities; Seveso II sites; Environmental protection; Zoning and specific issues pertinent to the a number of the Area Plans; Development Management Standards; and the SEA, AA and SFRA assessments.

Any submissions and observations specifically addressing environmental protection and the SEA and its Environmental report were consistently dealt with by the SEA Officer and were taken into account during the Plan-making process. One submission received pertained specifically to the SEA and / or the ER as follows:

Table 3.1 Submission of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) and how they were taken into account

Issue number	Summary of Submission	Taking account of submission
EPA Issue 1	It is stated that the non-technical summary (NTS) should refer to freshwater pearl mussel catchments. In addition, clarification should be given as to which of the alternatives was chosen as the preferred alternative, and the justification for same.	Revise the NTS of the Environmental Report by the addition of an Addendum 1 to include reference to the reasons for selection of the preferred scenario.
EPA Issue 2	It is suggested that consideration could be given to demonstrating how the issues raised during the scoping stage (as summarised in Table 2.1) were taken into account in the drafting of the plan.	No change to the Environmental Report – a number of policies and objectives recommended during this scoping stage were integrated into the plan directly, or integrated (either directly or in an amended version) from the Environmental Report

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		documenting the SEA.
EPA Issue 3	It was recommended that the policy document <i>Our Sustainable Future - A Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland</i> (DECLG, 2012) should have been considered in Section 3, while local policies should have included reference to adjacent plan areas.	That consideration of <i>Our Sustainable Future</i> (DECLG, 2012) and adjacent plan areas be addressed in the Local Policy Section in Addendum 1 to the Environmental Report.
EPA Issue 4	It is suggested that <i>Air and Noise</i> should include the link between air emissions and climate change, while the waste water treatment plant performance ( <i>Material Assets</i> ) should be updated with 2011 data.	Supplement Section 4.7.2 Baseline Environment ( <i>Air and Noise</i> ) with an additional section to describe the important link between air emissions and climate change. This will be included in new Addendum 1 to the Environmental Report. Similarly, more recent data on waste water treatment plant performance will be provided to supplement Section 4.9.3 <i>Material Assets</i> , in the addendum.
EPA Issue 5	Suggests that further detail on the alternative scenarios and justification for the selection of the preferred alternative is included.	Include a more detailed description of how the alternatives were evaluated and how the preferred alternative was selected in new Addendum 1 to Environmental Report.
EPA Issue 6	While the inclusion of types of effects (cumulative, synergistic, long-term etc.) is acknowledged for <i>Population, Water and Material Assets</i> , it is suggested that this assessment be expanded for other environmental factors.	The types of effects on the entire range of environmental factors as a consequence of the implementation of some policies and objectives in the Draft plan should be addressed in the Addendum to the Environmental Report.
DAHtG Issue 1	It is considered that Issue 1 of the DAHtG was related to some deficiencies of the Natura Impact Report for the Draft Plan and therefore the outcome of this issue was not deemed to influence the contents of the Draft Plan, rather the NIR as a standalone document.	
DAHtG Issue 2	It is stated that Table 2.5; in-combination plans and projects does not include projects, and also that strategies supported by the plan do not appear to be referenced in the NIR.	In addition to in-combination plans, projects should be assessed for their in-combination effects on Natura 2000 sites. This inclusion should be made in an addendum to the NIR.
DAHtG Issue 3	The submission recommends that a number of policies and objectives with risk of significant effects and with possible / uncertain risks of	Should the screening exercise appear to 'screen in' policies and objectives with risk of significant effects and / or possible / uncertain risks of significant

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	significant effects be 'screened in', and the screening exercise repeated.	effects, the re-screening exercise should demonstrate the commitment to the protection and conservation of Natura 2000 sites in/adjacent to Mayo in a more transparent fashion. Therefore, the screening exercise will be repeated and illustrated within the addendum to the NIR.
DAHtG Issue 4	It is stated that little exploration of the potential effects of the plan, alone and in-combination was considered and mitigation proposed is not sufficient.	Mitigation proposed was considered as effective as possible, considering the type of appropriate assessment undertaken. As an upper-tier draft plan encompassing the county and a 15 km zone of influence, it was deemed unmanageable / unfeasible to propose specific mitigation measures for potential significant effects of individual projects and plans, alone and / or in-combination.
DAHtG Issue 5	Minor changes are suggested for objectives NH-01, NH-03 and NH-08.	Amend objective NH-01 a) as follows: a) Candidate Special Areas of Conservation, <b>Special Areas of Conservation</b> , Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas and proposed National Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites and Biogenetic Reserves, including those listed in the Environmental Report documenting the Strategic Environmental Assessment of this plan and any modifications or additional areas that may be so designated during the lifetime of the plan.  Amend Objective NH-03 as follows: NH-03 It is an objective of the Council to implement Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the <i>EU Habitats Directive</i> , by subjecting any <b>screening all plans or and projects for appropriate assessment and to ensure those with potential to have significant effects on</b> likely to adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 or European Sites (cSACs, SPAs), whether directly (in situ), indirectly (ex-situ) or in combination with other plans or projects, <b>are subject</b> to an appropriate assessment <b>and the preparation of an NIR or NIS</b> in order to inform

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		decision making.
		Amend Objective NH-08 as follows: NH-08 It is an objective of the Council to utilise <b>appropriate</b> opportunities to enhance and create wildlife habitats where they arise.
DAHtG Issue 6	It is stated that the SEA did not use in full the available baseline data relating to <i>Margaritifera</i> sensitive Areas, while the sole Environmental Protection Objective (EPO) for biodiversity, flora and fauna is considered 'overly broad to be effective'.	No change to Draft Plan or NIR

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report Addendum No. 1 was prepared to address the above six issues of the EPA and to facilitate the taking into account of amendments proposed to the Draft Plan, and the Natura Impact Report Addendum No. 1 was prepared to address the submission of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Additionally, the evaluation of the proposed amendments (material alterations) described in Section 2.4 was presented in this Addendum to demonstrate how they were taken into account during the preparation of the Draft Plan and also to demonstrate how the submissions made regarding the SEA during the preparation of the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 were taken into account.

### **3.3 Submissions and Observations on Proposed Amendments**

As the proposed amendments constituted a material alteration of the Draft Plan, they were placed on public display for a further period of public consultation with the supporting environmental assessments from 15th January 2014 until Thursday 13th February 2014.

Under Article 13(H) of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations (SI 436 of 2004), the planning authority is required to take account of the environmental report and any submission/observation made in response to a notice issued under Section 12 (7) (i.e. notice of proposed amendments) during the preparation of the plan and before it is adopted.

Submissions and observations received from environmental authorities and members of the public on proposed amendments as presented in the Environmental Report (and addendum) were taken into account during the preparation of the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020.

Main submissions and observations pertaining to environmental considerations and in particular to environmental assessments included those from the OPW, Development Applications Unit of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the EPA.

Briefly, the OPW submission focused on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and no change to the Draft Plan or Flood Risk Assessment maps were deemed necessary.

The DAU submission dealt primarily with Natura Impact Report for the Draft Plan and the absence of a scientific determination. Essentially, no changes to the Draft Plan were proposed in this submission and therefore this submission was not reflected in either the Draft Plan or the Strategic Environmental Assessment or associated documents.

The submission from the EPA is summarised in the following table:-

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Table 3.2 Submission of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DAHtG on proposed material alterations and how the submission and observations were taken into account

Issue number	Summary of Submission	Taking account of submission
EPA Issue 1	<p>1. It is noted that many comments and suggestions in the Agency's original submission are reflected in the amendments / Alterations and, additionally, many amendments / alterations are positive from an environmental perspective.</p> <p>2. It is noted that a number (of material alterations) have been assessed as having potential to have likely significant adverse impacts on the environment, both in the SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Report Addenda. Tables 3.3 and 4.1 highlighting material alterations to Volume 1 and 2, respectively, and their potential to have significant effects on the environment, are acknowledged. In particular, it is acknowledged that the proposals to amend the rural settlement strategy and associated population density targets would appear to be in conflict with proper and sustainable development, as well as the Core Strategy, while proposals relating to seeking greater use of wells as a water supply coupled with less strict control on rural development may lead to increased cumulative effects on water quality, biodiversity and human health, if not properly designed / maintained.</p> <p>3. The removal of the requirements to carry out coastal erosion and flood risk assessments for certain coastal developments should be reconsidered and consideration should be given to incorporating integrated coastal zone management into development plans and planning applications as early as possible.</p> <p>4. The Agency notes that a total of 30 proposed material alterations to the Draft Plan have been 'predicted to produce probable significant effects not deemed to be mitigated' and support the SEA / AA recommendations not to proceed with the specific proposed amendments described in Sections 4.3 and 5.</p>	<p>Demonstrates how previous submission / observations were taken into account</p> <p>Agreed and recommended that the Draft Plan not include the material alterations which have been shown to be in conflict with a number of Environmental Protection Objectives</p> <p>This is deemed to be particularly relevant in light of December 2013 / January 2014 storm events which led to a large number of instances of infrastructure damage at a number of coastal sites throughout the county</p> <p>This Manager's response (of County Manager's Report, March 2014) concurred with this submission</p>
EPA Issue 2	<p><b>Updated Legislation / Circulars</b> The Agency recommends the recent DoECLG Circular (Circular PL 9 of 2013) <i>'Article 8 Decision Making) of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</i></p>	<p>Recommendations and advice from Circular PL9 of 2013 have been and will continue to be taken into account during the preparation of</p>

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<i>as amended</i> '.	the Plan including, in particular, ensuring that the SEA Environmental Report is integrated into the Plan preparation / making process. Article 8 of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as amended, in addition to Article 13H of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 (as amended) reiterates the taking into account of the SEA Environmental Report, any submissions or observations made in response to a notice under section 12(1) or (7) of the Act and any consultations made under Article 13F (transboundary environmental effects).
EPA Issue 3 <b>SEA Statement – ‘Information on the Decision’</b> The Agency advises on the format of the SEA Statement following adoption of the Plan, which should be forwarded to all environmental authorities consulted during the SEA process.	The current document takes onboard Issue 3 of the submission of the EPA

**3.4 Environmental Report**

The SEA process was undertaken using a methodical iterative approach in conjunction with a number of experts in different sectors of the environment and this process was guided strictly by legislation. The Environmental Report, prepared to document the SEA process was guided by Article 5 of the SEA Directive and by Schedule 2B of S.I. No. 436 of 2004.

Baseline data was collected from all available and relevant data sources, for each environmental element as referred to in Annex I of the SEA Directive including biodiversity, flora and fauna, population, human health, soil, water, air, climate factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape. The SEA process allowed for early identification of potential environmental issues/pressures requiring attention in the formulation of the Plan, including protected sites for conservation of habitats and species, national monuments and protected structures, at-risk water bodies, location of historic landfills and air monitoring zones, to name but a few.

The preparation of an Environmental Report on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan included the documented the preparation of the Plan with reference to the environmental elements in addition to consideration of the following:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the Plan, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;
- A description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of the environment without implementation of the Plan;
- A description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
- Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the Plan, particularly those relating to European protected sites;

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- A list of the environmental protection objectives at international, EU and national level, which are relevant to the Plan and a description of how they have been taken into account in the formulation of the Plan;
- A description of the likely significant effects on the environment (biodiversity, human health, cultural heritage, air, soil, water etc); and
- Mitigation measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment caused by implementing the Plan.

The findings of the SEA process were presented in the Environmental Report which was submitted to the Elected Members with the Draft Plan. The purpose of the Environmental Report was to provide a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the future accommodation of growth in Mayo.

### **3.5 Addendum No. 1 to the Environmental Report**

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report Addendum No. 1 was prepared to address the six issues raised by the EPA, in addition to facilitate a record of the evaluation of the proposed amendments of the Elected Members and members of the public and other bodies.

Additionally, the evaluation of the proposed amendments (material alterations) described in Section 2.4 was presented in this Addendum to demonstrate how they were taken into account during the preparation of the Draft Plan and also to demonstrate how the submissions made regarding the SEA during the preparation of the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 were taken into account

Proposed amendments (and material alterations) made to the Draft Plan at each stage of its preparation process were evaluated for their environmental consequences and these were presented to the Elected Members in the form of an addendum to the Environmental Report. These amendments included alterations of, and additions to and removal of Draft Plan policies and objectives, in addition to land zoning. At each stage of the process the Elected Members were required by the legislation to take into account the Environmental Report - including the Addenda - before the adoption of the plan. In SEA Environmental Report Addendum No. 1, a total of 29 proposed amendments to the Draft Plan were predicted to result in significant adverse effects on the environment, should they be included in the adopted Plan. The Elected Members adopted the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 with 27 of these proposed amendments, contrary to the recommendations of the County Manager's Report.

## **4. Alternatives and the Plan**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This section deals with the examination of the process to examine alternatives to the plan, as adopted, in light of other reasonable alternatives considered, a legal requirement of the SEA Directive.

### **4.2 Description of Alternatives**

In accordance with Article 5(1) and Annex I (h) of the SEA Directive and Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations, 2004 (as amended), the SEA Environmental Report should contain, *inter alia*, the identification, description and evaluation of a plan or programme and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme.

In this instance, three Alternative Scenarios of the Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 were evaluated during the SEA process. The alternative scenarios were:

1. Alternative Scenario 1: Concentration of Growth in the Linked-Hub of Castlebar-Ballina only;
2. Alternative Scenario 2: Concentration of Growth in the Linked-Hub, Key Towns, and other towns with strictly limited development in Rural Areas; and
3. Alternative Scenario 3; Development of the Ballina-Castlebar Linked-Hub, Key Towns, other towns and serviced (sewerage) villages and appropriate development in rural areas

The evaluation of scenarios and selection of the preferred Draft Plan was undertaken using a matrix plotting three Draft Plan scenarios against all EPOs, and is documented in more detail in the main body of this report.

In accordance with Annex I(b) of the SEA Directive '...the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme. . .' should also be considered during the SEA process. Since it is a statutory obligation to have a County Development Plan the 'no-plan scenario' was not described as a reasonable alternative, but was examined hypothetically and is documented in Section 4 of the main body of this report.

The Alternative Scenario which was most preferred according to an assessment and evaluation of three Plan scenarios against Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) was Alternative Scenario 3. This Plan scenario is described as concentrating growth in a hierarchy of settlements which include the Linked Hub, Key Towns, other towns and small serviced (sewerage) villages, along with appropriate development in the rural areas in the county, based on achieving target populations in the settlement hierarchy. Other towns and villages are developed in an appropriate size and scale, and in a sequential manner from the existing town/village centre out.

Alternative Scenario 3, with its more extended growth and promotion of resource-dependant activities in addition to genuine and appropriate residential development was predicted to result in conflict with some Environmental Protection Objectives, but these are deemed to be suitably mitigated by measures. Since a number of environmental aspects are predicted to be improved as a consequence of this Alternative Scenario, the preferred scenario is Alternative Scenario 3.

### **4.3 Assessment of Alternatives Against Environmental Protection Objectives**

The selection of the preferred scenario, the basis of the structure of the Mayo County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 was selected specifically based on the evaluation or assessment of each reasonable

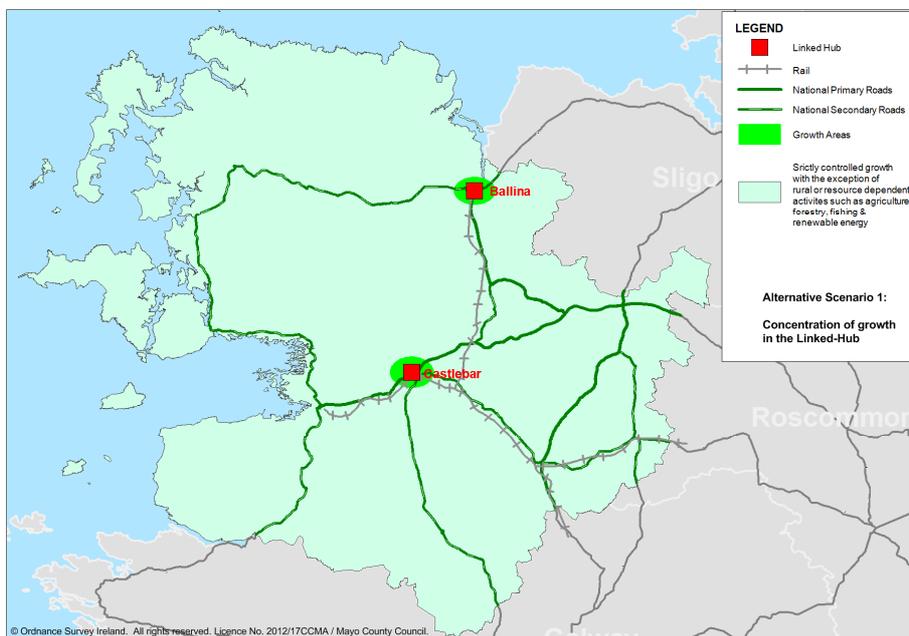
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alternative considered, against previously-proposed Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) for each environmental element examined during the SEA process.

### 4.3.1 Scenario 1 – Concentration of Growth in the Linked-Hub of Castlebar-Ballina only

Alternative Scenario 1 concentrates growth in the Linked Hub of Ballina-Castlebar. Distinctive town centres and defined development boundaries are created for the Linked-Hub with the aim of protecting the natural environment, encouraging suitable employment opportunities and creating sustainable centres in which to live.

Development outside the Linked-Hub is strictly controlled with the exception of rural or resource dependent activities such as agriculture, forestry, fishing and renewable energy.



Alternative Scenario 1

This alternative was predicted to result in significant effects on aspects of the environment, which are likely to be immitigable. Regarding population, Alternative Scenario 1 would result in a greater demand for infrastructural provision in the Linked-Hub areas at the expense of existing settlements within Mayo. Surface waters, in particular the River Moy and its 11 tributaries would witness pressures from overloaded wastewater treatment plants and the water treatment plants on Loughs Conn and Mask would be under severe pressure to provide drinking water for a larger population in one large urban centre. It was concluded that this option was not feasible for the future guidance of development in Mayo.

### 4.3.2 Scenario 2 – Concentration of Growth in the Linked-Hub, Key Towns, and other towns with strictly limited development in Rural Areas

Alternative Scenario 2 concentrates growth into the Linked Hub, Key Towns, and other towns in the County.



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### 4.3.3 Scenario 3 – Development of the Ballina-Castlebar Linked-Hub, Key Towns, other towns and serviced (sewerage) villages and appropriate development in rural areas

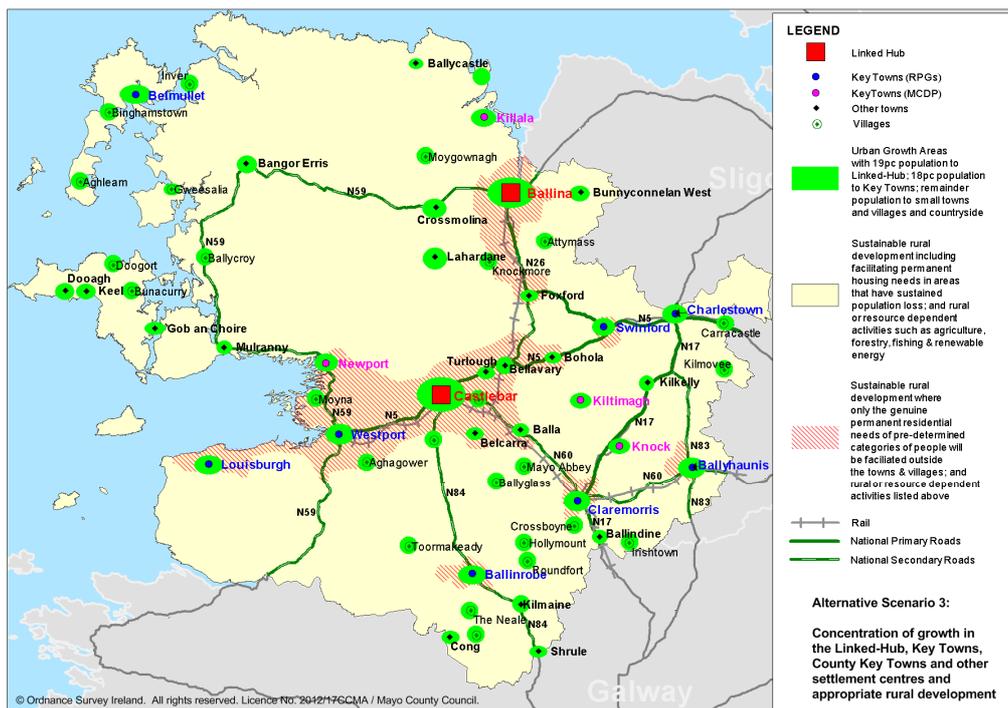
Alternative Scenario 3 concentrates growth in a hierarchy of settlements which include the Linked Hub, Key Towns, other towns and small serviced (sewerage) villages, along with appropriate development in the rural areas in the county, based on achieving target populations in the settlement hierarchy.

Distinctive town centres and defined development boundaries are created for the Linked-Hub and Key Towns with the aim of protecting the natural environment, encouraging suitable employment opportunities and creating sustainable centres in which to live.

Other towns and villages are developed in an appropriate size and scale, and in a sequential manner from the existing town/village centre out.

The rural areas are developed in a sustainable manner to facilitate:

- Permanent housing needs in areas that have sustained population loss;
- Genuine residential needs of pre-determined categories of people in areas identified as being under Strong Urban Influence; and
- Rural or resource dependent activities such as agriculture, forestry, fishing and renewable energy.



Alternative Scenario 3

The third alternative to the Draft Plan was deemed likely to improve the current status of waste management and transport infrastructure in Mayo, as a consequence of the maintenance and upgrade of roads in all areas of the county and the anticipated increase in the sustainability of segregated waste collection (in particular bio-waste collection) respectively.

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Regarding other environmental factors considered, none were predicted to experience significant effects without mitigation measures reducing effects, including air, noise, biodiversity, flora, fauna, water and cultural heritage.

### **4.4 Preferred Scenario**

The evaluation and selection of the preferred alternative scenario entailed a methodical approach which encompassed the examination of each of the aforementioned three alternative scenarios in the context of their capacity to protect, conserve, maintain and / or restore all of the aforementioned environmental factors, by virtue of their Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs). In this way, a holistic evaluation of each alternative scenario was undertaken, with a focus on environmental consideration in addition to sustainable development.

By a process of elimination, the alternative scenario which was anticipated to best promote environmental consideration was selected using a matrix approach which described the effects from each scenario as *'likely to improve status of EPOs'*, *'no likely interaction with status of EPOs'*, *'neutral interaction with status of EPOs'*, *'uncertain interaction with status of EPOs'*, *'potential conflict with status of EPOs – likely to be mitigated by measures'* and *'probable conflict with status of EPOs – unlikely to be mitigated by measures'*. Although assessment of Scenario 3 indicated conflict with a number of Environmental Protection Objectives, these conflicts were deemed to be suitably mitigated by measures which are incorporated into the various supporting strategies, policies and objectives in the Plan.

Therefore, the Draft Plan as selected in light of the other reasonable alternatives considered was done so with regard to environmental considerations, with two alternative Plan scenarios rejected on the basis of their potential to result in significant effects on the environment. While the former alternative was predicted to result in immitigable significant effects on a number of aspects of the environment, the second alternative considered was predicted to result in significant effects, which will be mitigated by other provisions which have been integrated into the Plan, including those which have emerged through the SEA process.

The Draft Plan as selected was that which was predicted to have positive effects on some aspects of the environment, with the remainder of environmental considerations being envisaged to cause mitigable significant effects.

Therefore, it is considered that the Draft Plan, as selected, was done so with regard to environmental considerations and supports the protection of the county's considerable natural, built and cultural resources including the protection of the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.

The following matrix illustrates the evaluation process while the table lists each environmental element and its corresponding Environmental Protection Objective (EPO).

Table 4.1 Evaluation Matrix – Selection of Draft Plan in light of other reasonable alternatives

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of EPOs	<b>No Likely</b> interaction with status of EPOs	<b>Neutral</b> Interaction with status of EPOs	<b>Uncertain</b> interaction with status of EPOs	Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of EPOs- likely to be mitigated by measures	Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of EPOs- unlikely to be mitigated by measures
Alternative Scenario 1					B1, HH1, SG1-3, AR1 & AR2, N1, CF1, CF2, T1, T2, T3, WM2, A1, AH1, L1	P1, W1 & W2, WM1, WW1, DW1,
Alternative scenario 2				WM1, WM2, N1	B1, P1, HH1, SG1-3, W1 & W2, AR1 & AR2, CF2, CF2, T1, T2, T3, WW1, DW1, A1, AH1, L1	
Alternative scenario 3	T1, WM1, WM2			N1	B1, P1, HH1, SG1-3, W1 & W2, AR1 & AR2, CF1, CF2, T2, T3, WW1, DW1, A1, AH1, L1	
<p><i>Where B1 is EPO for Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, P1 is EPO for Population, SG1 – 3 are EPOs for Soils and Geology, W1 &amp; W2 are EPOs for Water, AR1 &amp; AR2 are EPOs for Air, N1 is EPO for Noise, CF1 &amp; CF2 are EPOS for Climatic Factors, T1, T2 &amp; T3 are EPOs for Transport infrastructure, WM1 &amp; WM2 are EPOs for Water Management Infrastructure, DW1 &amp; DW2 are EPOs for Drinking Water, WW1 is EPO for Wastewater Infrastructure, A1 is EPO for Archaeological Heritage, AH1 is EPO for Architectural Heritage and L1 is EPO for Landscape</i></p>						

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Table 4.2 Environmental Protection Objectives for environmental elements and associated codes

Environmental element / EPO code	Environmental Protection Objectives
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	
B1	To protect, conserve and restore habitats and species of local, national and international importance and interdependent species and habitats within the wider environment
Population	
P1	To ensure population growth is managed within a sustainable framework to reduce any potential impact a dispersed rural population may have on the environmental quality of the County
Human Health	
HH1	To protect human health by the minimisation of pollution incidences to water, air and soil and increased traffic arising from incompatible land uses or development in inappropriate locations
Soils and Geology	
SG1	To identify and protect areas which may be deemed to have a significant risk of landslide or erosion
SG2	To maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands
SG3	To ensure sustainable quarrying of non-renewable sand, gravel and rock deposits and to protect the IGH sites as identified by the GSI
Water (excl. drinking water)	
W1	To prevent deterioration of the status of waters with regard to quality, quantity and to improve status for rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters and groundwaters to at least good status, in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and associated legislation and plans (Western River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015, Pollution Reduction Plans for shellfish and <i>M. margaritifera</i> sub-basin management plans)
W2	To achieve and maintain required water quality standards and reduce discharges of pollutants or contamination to waters
Air and noise	
AR1	To maintain and improve air quality status in line with appropriate policies and legislative requirements
AR2	To minimise increases in travel related air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions
Noise	
N1	To avoid, prevent and reduce on a prioritised basis exposure to unacceptable levels of environmental noise
Climatic factors	
CF1	To keep areas free of development that would be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding or would cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations
CF2	To protect aquatic and terrestrial habitats from the spread of invasive species

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Material Assets:	
Roads and transport infrastructure	
T1	To protect the road network of Mayo
T2	To continue to maintain and protect the piers and harbours of Mayo in an environmentally-sensitive manner with due consideration for water quality of designated and non-designated sites
T3	To continue to develop and promote the Great Western Greenway and other cycle / walking routes while ensuring no significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.
Waste management and infrastructure	
W1	To reduce waste volumes through an integrated approach incorporating education and awareness and to increase reuse of waste by recycling and recovery
W2	To divert biowaste from landfill and reduce of landfill emissions
Wastewater Infrastructure	
WW1	To serve new development under the County Development Plan with appropriate waste water treatment
Drinking water	
DW1	To serve new development under the County Development Plan with appropriate waste water treatment
DW2	To maintain and / or improve drinking water quality and quantity throughout the county
Cultural heritage:	
Archaeological heritage	
A1	To protect the archaeological heritage and especially sites identified in the Record of Monuments and Places, National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the State and National Monuments that are subject to Preservation Orders and to safeguard the integrity of the archaeological sites in their setting
Architectural heritage	
AH1	To protect and where appropriate, enhance the character, diversity and special qualities of the architectural heritage of County Mayo
Landscape	
L1	To protect Mayo's sensitive landscapes, vulnerable landscape features and listed highly scenic views, scenic views, scenic viewing points, scenic routes and to protect the visual amenity of Mayo

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**5. Monitoring**

**5.1 Introduction**

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. This SEA Statement identifies the proposals for monitoring the County Development Plan (CDP) which were adopted alongside the CDP.

Monitoring enables, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action. In addition to this, monitoring can also play an important role in assessing whether the CDP is achieving its environmental objectives and targets - measures which the CDP can help work towards - whether these need to be reexamined and whether the proposed mitigation measures are being implemented.

**5.2 Indicators and Targets**

Monitoring is based around the indicators which were chosen earlier in the process. These indicators allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Environmental Protection Objectives used in the evaluation.

Focus will be given to indicators which are relevant to the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the CDP and existing monitoring arrangements will be used in order to monitor the selected indicators. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied targets which are derived from the relevant legislation.

Table 5.1 below shows the indicator and targets which have been selected with regard to the monitoring of the plan.

Table 5.1 Targets and Indicators for Monitoring of the Plan

Target	Indicator
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	
To achieve and maintain favourable conservation status for habitats and species	No loss, reduction, fragmentation, disturbance, destruction of habitats and species within Mayo
Population	
(i) increase population growth of the urban centres of the County (ii) reduce the number of new residential properties in the rural countryside	(i) Increase in population of the urban centres (ii) Avoid, where possible, the construction of new residential development in the rural countryside
Human Health	
To ensure protection of environmental elements which are closely linked to human health including water, air, landscape, biodiversity and soil quality	No deterioration of environmental elements such as water, air and soil quality as described individually throughout this document
Soils and Geology	
(i) Number of developments in areas which may be considered to be prone or at risk from landslides (ii) Number of developments in an area identified as a high erosion prone area, or an area at significant risk of erosion	(i) No development in areas which may be considered at significant risk to landslides (ii) No development in areas considered at significant risk of erosion

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(iii) Area of brownfield land available	(iii) No brownfield land to be available (subject to availability on the open market and demand for such land) at the end of the CDP lifespan
(iv) Proportion of excavated area returned to productive use  (v) Number of developments which would be considered to have significant adverse impacts on IGH sites	(iv) All extraction sites to have progressive rehabilitation programmes in place with agreed rehabilitation targets  (v) No developments to adversely impact on IGH sites
Water	
The status of surface waters (lakes, rivers, transitional and coastal waters) will be restored to at least good status and deterioration in good and high status water bodies will be prevented.	100% water bodies designated at good status by 2027 as shown by monitoring within the Western River Basin District
No exceedences of relevant water quality legislation and compliance with appropriate parameters	Breaches and exceedences in water quality parameters
Air and Noise	
Ensure monitoring results are maintained within the appropriate emission limit values	Air monitoring data to indicate compliance with appropriate policies and legislative requirements / compliance with emission limit values
An increase in the percentage of the population travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means	Percentage of population within the Plan area travelling to work or school by public transport or non mechanical means
To manage environmental noise from major roads.  To protect satisfactory noise environments where they exist.  To protect the quality of the future noise environment by acoustical planning.	Traffic flow data collected for all roads in the county.  Number of locations monitored to establish the full extent of major roads in the county with an excess of three million vehicles per annum  New noise maps for areas around major roads carrying 3 million vehicles per annum. Ensure that noise maps are produced for the Westport/Ballina to Dublin railway line and Ireland West Airport Knock, if relevant at this stage (2012)  Revise Noise Action Plan.  Number of IPPC licensed facilities and acoustic compliance details

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Climatic Factors EPOs	
Flooding	
All new developments assessed in line with the OPW <i>Planning System &amp; Flood Risk Management Guidelines</i> (Nov 2009) to ensure that the flood risk is fully assessed and mitigated, and run off from the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere	Flooding of new developments Increase of flooding elsewhere resulting from new developments
Invasive species	
Prevent introduction of new invasive species. Control or manage existing invasive species to prevent increases in their current distribution	Abundance and diversity of new or existing invasive species reported and recorded in Mayo aquatic and terrestrial environment
Material Assets	
(i) Developments to be located off our National Roads and not within sensitive landscapes	(i) Number of developments located close to the National Road Network
(ii) No large-scale developments to be planned in remote locations where access is by local roads only	(ii) Number of large-scale developments located in remote locations where access is by local roads only
Any improvements / modifications made to piers / harbours will not impact on surrounding environment from the viewpoint of water quality, invasive species introduction or adverse impacts on protected structures	Number of piers and harbours maintained / repaired which result in negative effects on water quality, protected structures or the introduction or increase in abundance of invasive species
No significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of Natura 2000 sites by virtue of development and use of the Great Western Greenway and other cycle / walking routes	Number of Habitats Directive Assessment undertaken on Greenway or other cycle / walking routes developments and evidence of significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of Natura 2000 sites
Waste management and infrastructure	
48 % waste recycled, 33% energy recovery and 19% waste landfilled. Attitude change	Increase in percentage of customers participating in a refuse collection service with an increase in waste volumes recovered and recycled and consequential reduction in volume of waste collected and landfilled
Reduction in greenhouse gasses through diversion of bio-waste from landfill.	Number of customers with brown bin collection service
Drinking Water	
100% compliance with the Drinking Water Regulations, 2007 (S.I. No. 278 of 2007)	No boiled water notices or exceedences in parametric values set in S.I. No. 278 of 2007
No new developments granted permission which cannot be adequately served by a water scheme over the lifetime of the County Development Plan in order to maintain water quality and supply standards in line with relevant standards and regulations	(i) Overloaded Water Treatment Plants (ii) Inability to meet drinking water quality standards (iii) Inability to meet pressure requirements
Wastewater infrastructure	
No new developments granted permission which cannot be adequately served by a public waste water	(i) Overloaded Wastewater Treatment Plant (ii) Inability to meet treated effluent discharge

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treatment plant over the lifetime of the County Development Plan in order to maintain effluent standards in line with relevant regulations	limits (iii) Long Term Indicator: Water Status in 2015 Report
Cultural heritage	
No developments carried out over the lifespan of the Mayo CDP 2014 -2020 which will result in the full or partial loss of the archaeological heritage and especially sites identified in the Record of Monuments and Places, National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the State and National Monuments that are the subject of Preservation Orders. No developments which result in the full or partial loss of the integrity of the archaeological sites in their setting.	Number of developments carried out over the lifespan of the Mayo CDP 2014 - 2020 which results in the full or partial loss of the archaeological heritage and especially sites identified in the Record of Monuments and Places, National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the State and National Monuments that are the subject of Preservation Orders. The integrity of the archaeological sites in their setting can also be impacted upon by new developments
To prohibit the number of unauthorised developments that result in the full or partial loss of architectural heritage of the county.	Number of developments carried out over the period of the CDP that result in full or partial loss of the architectural heritage of the county.
Landscape	
(i) No developments to be conspicuously located within or on sensitive landscapes, vulnerable landscape features and listed highly scenic views, scenic views, scenic viewing points and scenic routes sensitive landscapes (ii) No developments to adversely impact upon sensitive landscapes, vulnerable landscape features and listed highly scenic views, scenic views, scenic viewing points and scenic routes. (iii) No loss of sensitive landscapes, vulnerable landscape features and listed highly scenic views, scenic views, scenic viewing points and scenic routes. (iv) Developments should be sited and designed so as not to interfere with the visual amenity of the landscape of Mayo	(i) Number of conspicuous developments adversely impacting upon vulnerable landscape features  (ii) Number of developments adversely impacting upon vulnerable landscape features  (iii) Number of vulnerable landscape features lost  (iv) Number of developments interfering with the visual amenity of the landscape of Mayo

**5.3 Sources of Information**

Measurements for indicators should come from existing monitoring sources and no new monitoring should be required to take place. Existing monitoring sources exist for each of the indicators and include those maintained by Mayo County Council and the relevant authorities e.g. the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Central Statistics Office, Marine Institute, BirdWatch Ireland, Irish Whale and Dolphin Group, research / peer-reviewed journals, Mayo County Council Environment Section, Health Service Executive (HSE) West, CFRAMS, Mayo County Council Area Office and Planning Section, WRBD / WFD reports and websites, CAISIE, Mayo County Council Archaeology Section, Office of Public Works (OPW), Heritage Service, Mayo County Council Heritage Officer and National Museum of Ireland. The Development Management Process in Mayo County Council will provide passive monitoring of various indicators and targets on an application by application basis. Where significant adverse

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effects are likely to occur upon, for example, entries to the RMP, entries to the RPS or ecological networks as a result of the undertaking of individual projects or multiple individual projects such instances should be identified and recorded and should feed into the monitoring evaluation.

### **5.4 Responsibility for Monitoring**

Mayo County Council is responsible for collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of a monitoring report, the publication of this report and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action.

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**Appendix I 29 proposed amendments which were evaluated and predicted to result in probable immitigable significant effects; 27 included in adopted Plan**

Volume 1 probable immitigable conflict - 11

Proposed Amendment ref. no.	Policy / objective with material alteration	Environmental element on which significant effects are predicted and unlikely to be mitigated by measures	Comment(s)	Included in Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020, Adopted by the Elected Members
V1-T4	Draft Plan Goal 1	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	More people in rural areas = disturbance of key species and habitats, NOT protected within N2K sites	Yes
V1-T10	Rural population density targets	Population, biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population: with respect to population, it is not clear if it is sustainable to restore the rural population to 1951 levels. Rural population densities of 1951 were 117 181 with the 2011 equivalent at 82 808. Biodiversity, flora & fauna: FF = More people encouraged in rural areas = disturbance of key species and habitats, NOT protected within N2K sites	Yes
V1- T11	The Settlement Strategy	Landscape, biodiversity, flora and fauna	The exclusion of the section on housing in rural areas and the current unsustainable rate and scale of dispersed rural housing is considered to weaken control and management of housing in rural areas and consequently is also considered to have <b>significant effects</b> on biodiversity, flora and fauna. <del>However it is apparent that the current rate and scale of dispersed rural housing is not sustainable and is costly in terms of infrastructure provision, water quality and quality of life.</del>	Yes

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V1-T18	Deletion of HG-03	Population		Yes
V1-T52	Amendment of objective RD-01	Material Assets – transport infrastructure	Omission of strategically important regional road network not compatible with Council policy on roads	Yes

**Area Plans for the Key Towns – Ballinrobe**

V1-T101 & V1-M9	Inclusion of KTBE-18	Cultural heritage – architectural heritage, biodiversity, flora and fauna	Cultural heritage (architectural heritage): The proposed boundaries to the opportunity sites should be amended to consider the setting of the Bowers Walk and conditions should be attached regarding the scale of the proposed developments to protect these important items associated with the cultural heritage of Ballinrobe. Elements of built heritage and associated landscape elements should be protected. Mitigation may not be possible if the boundary of the opportunity site is not amended and conditions imposed on the scale of development on the proposed site. Biodiversity, flora and fauna: Disturbance of key species and habitats, NOT protected within Natura 2000 sites and not generally protected following ecological assessment	Yes
V1-T102 & V1-M10	Inclusion of KTBE-19	Landscape	The proposed boundaries to the opportunity sites should be amended to consider the setting of the Bowers Walk and conditions should be attached regarding the scale of the proposed developments to protect these important items associated with the cultural heritage of Ballinrobe. Elements of built heritage and associated landscape elements should be protected. Mitigation may not be possible if the boundary of the opportunity site is not amended and conditions imposed on the Scale of development on the proposed site.	Yes

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V1-M6	Rezoning of lands from Recreation & Amenity to Opportunity Site 1	Landscape, biodiversity, flora and fauna	Biodiversity, flora & fauna: Disturbance of key species and habitats, <b>not</b> protected within European sites. Recreation & Amenity zoned sites will likely include wild flowers, hedgerows, ecological corridors, trees but not within designated sites.	Yes
V1-M7	Rezoning of lands from Recreation & Amenity to Opportunity Site 2	Landscape, biodiversity, flora and fauna	Disturbance of key species and habitats, not protected within European sites. Recreation & Amenity zoned sites will likely include wild flowers, hedgerows, ecological corridors, trees but <b>not</b> within designated sites.	Yes

**Area Plans for the Key Towns – Knock**

V1-T122	Inclusion of KTKK-10	Material Assets – transport infrastructure	The Local Authority considers the extension of the Knock 60 k.p.h. Speed Limit Zone west of the existing 60 k.p.h. speed limit Zone on the R323 Regional Road for a distance of over 1 Km inappropriate, as it would not be in keeping with the recommendations of the ‘Guidelines for the Application of Special Speed Limits’ published by the Department of Transport in December 2010. A review of a speed limit zone, in an isolated location should be dealt with separately and should not form part of a County Development Plan	No
V1-M38	To accommodate added objective KTKK-10	Material Assets – transport infrastructure	The Local Authority considers the extension of the Knock 60 k.p.h. Speed Limit Zone west of the existing 60 k.p.h. speed limit Zone on the R323 Regional Road for a distance of over 1 Km inappropriate, as it would not be in keeping with the recommendations of the ‘Guidelines for the Application of Special Speed Limits’ published by the Department of Transport in December 2010. A	No

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review of a speed limit zone, in an isolated location should be dealt with separately and should not form part of a County Development Plan

Volume 2 probable immitigable conflict - 18

MA ref. no.	Policy / objective with material alteration	Environmental element on which significant effects are predicted and unlikely to be mitigated by measures <sup>1</sup>	Comment(s)	Included in Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020, Adopted by the Elected Members
V2-T1	Deleted Sections 1.1; 1.2 and 1.3, General	W1 & W2; L1; B1	Water – water body status would likely be compromised by occupying new properties, <i>in lieu</i> of existing incl. impacts from on-site WWT, group water schemes (quantity).	Yes
V2-T2	Altered Text Section 2.3 , Rural Areas	L1; B1	Disturbance of key species and habitats, NOT protected within N2K sites. Countryside will likely include wild flowers, hedgerows, ecological corridors, trees but not protected within designated sites.	Yes
V2-T3	Altered Text Section 2.3.1, Rural Areas	P1; B1	Loosens up the control and management of rural development. Disturbance of key species and habitats <b>not</b> protected within European sites. Areas will likely include wild flowers, hedgerows, ecological corridors, trees but not protected within designated sites.	Yes
V2-T4	Deleted	P1; L1; B1	Loosens up the control and management of rural	Yes

<sup>1</sup> Where W1 & W2 are environmental protection objectives (EPO) for water quality (surface and groundwater), L1 is EPO for landscape, B1 is EPO for biodiversity, flora & fauna, P1 is EPO for population, T1 is first EPO for transport (roads) and HH1 is EPO for human health

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	Section 2.3.1.2 , Rural Areas		development Disturbance of key species and habitats species and habitats, <b>not</b> protected within European sites. Areas will likely include wild flowers, hedgerows, ecological corridors, trees but not protected within designated sites.	
V2-T5	Altered Text Section 2.3.1.3 , Rural Areas	P1; B1	Loosens up the control and management of rural development Disturbance of key species and habitats species and habitats, <b>not</b> protected within European sites. Areas will likely include wild flowers, hedgerows, ecological corridors, trees but not protected within designated sites.	Yes
V2-T6	Deleted Section 2.3.1.4, Rural Areas	P1; B1	The 'Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities' April 2005 states that an Occupancy Condition should be attached to a planning permission in circumstances where the need to live at a particular location has been established and that this should be imposed under Section 47 of the Planning Act.	Yes
V2-T8	Deleted Old Section 2.3.3 , Rural Areas	B1	There's a prospect of disturbance of key species and habitats, <b>not</b> protected within European sites by the removal of 'proper planning' and 'sustainable development'. Potential for encroachment on habitats which are not legally protected, in addition to their species	Yes
V2-T9	Altered Text Section 3.1, Occupancy Condition	P1; W1 & W2; B1	1) The change in occupancy clause does not comply with the 'Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities' April 2005. 2) The proposed changes makes the use of the Occupancy Condition redundant	Yes
V2-T10	Altered Text Section 4.1, Ribbon	P1	1) Restricting Ribbon development to National Roads is contrary to the 'Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities'	Yes

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	Development		April 2005. 2) This change could increase rural population in an unsustainable manner	
V2-T11	Deleted Section 5.3 and Added New Section 5.3, Infill Development	P1; L1; B1	1) The deletion of the Section is contrary to the 'Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities' April 2005. 2) This change could increase rural population in an unsustainable manner Regarding the text insertion:- 1) No Guidelines relating to this aspect 2) This change could increase rural population in an unsustainable manner Potential for encroachment on habitats which are not protected under specific legislation, in addition to their species	Yes
V2-T14	Deleted Text Section 6.2, Site Sizes in Rural Areas	P1	1) No Guidelines 2) The deleted text could increase rural population in an unsustainable manner	Yes
V2-T31	Altered Text Section 16.1.2, Access	P1	1) This does not comply with the 'Spatial Planning and National Roads: Guidelines for Planning Authorities' Jan 2012 2) The elimination of Strategically Important Regional Road could increase rural population in an unsustainable manner	Yes
V2-T41	Altered Text Section 20.1.2, Water	W1 & W2; B1	Contradicts the key objective of the Water Framework Directive, including the quality and quantity of water bodies	Yes
V2-T42	Deleted Section 20.1.3, Water	W1 & W2; B1	Will encourage private wells, leading to threat to groundwater body status	Yes

**Appendices**  
**SEA Statement for the Mayo County Development Plan**  
**2014 – 2020**

V2-T43	Added Text Section 20.1.4, now Section 20.1.3, Water	W1 & W2; B1	Will encourage private wells, leading to threat to groundwater body status	Yes
V2-T52	Deleted Section 28	T1; L1; B1	1) No guidelines 2) May have an indirect effect on increasing population in rural areas due to changes in criteria outlined in the residential section.	Yes
V2-T56	Deleted Section 32.1.4, Coastal Edge	W1 & W2; HH1; B1	Water: Water Framework Directive – threats to quality of transitional & coastal water quality Human health – recent coastal floods; threats to property and human life and health Marine biodiversity – pollution of areas which are not protected as SACs and SPAs	Yes
V2-T76	Added Text Section 44.1.1, Water	W1 & W2	Water Framework Directive – where possible will encourage use of wells; this could pose a serious threat to groundwater status, which must be ‘good’ by 2015	Yes