

Appendix O

Plan Level Environmental Protection Policies and Objectives

01

This appendix lists the overarching Plan level environmental protection policies from the *Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021*, the *Galway City Council Development Plan 2017-2023*, the *Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020* and the *Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023* referred to in this report. It also sets out how these relate to protecting European Sites through those policies and objectives.

Table D-1: Environmental protection policies from the Galway City Council Development Plan 2017-2023 and how these relate to protecting European Sites from potential impacts

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p><u>Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity Aim</u> “To provide for a green network in the city that allows for the sustainable use, management and protection of natural heritage, recreation amenity areas, parks and open spaces in an integrated manner. The green network will ensure the protection of nature and provide for the enhancement and expansion of passive and active recreational opportunities. It will be accessible to all and by sustainable modes of transport, where feasible. Ensure better integration of environmental and natural resource considerations in the Development Plan through the SEA process and provide the highest level of protection for European Sites, taking account of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.”</p>	General protection of European sites via any potential impact pathways
<p><u>Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity Strategy</u> “Promote a green network for the city that allows for sustainable use, management and protection of natural heritage, protected ecological sites, flora and fauna, recreation and amenity areas and parks in an integrated manner where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites and /or where the competent authority has ascertained that the use of the site is in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitat Directive.” “Conserve, protect and enhance the designated and non-designated sites and natural habitats, while enabling the sustainable development of the city.”</p>	General protection of European sites via any potential impact pathways
<p><u>Policy 4.1 Green Network</u> “Support sustainable use and management of areas of ecological importance, parks and recreation amenity areas and facilities through an integrated green network policy approach in line with Galway City Recreation and Amenity Needs Study, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites.”</p>	General protection of European sites via any potential impact pathways
<p><u>European Designated sites</u> “Plan and projects should consider DEHLG Guidance for Planning Authorities on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2009) and potential impacts identified in the HDA of the City Development Plan relating to habitat loss and fragmentation, water quality, disturbance and in combination effects.” “The policies and objectives of the City Development Plan have been drafted taking cognisance of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. All plans including lower tier plans and projects identified as having potential to adversely impact on European</p>	General protection of European sites via any potential impact pathways

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
sites are required to adhere to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, to ensure no adverse impact on the integrity of European sites.”	
<p><u>Policy 4.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</u></p> <p>“Protect European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network (including Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) in accordance with the requirements in the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) and associated national legislation. Ensure that plans or projects within the Plan area will only be authorised and /or supported after the competent authority has ascertained based on scientific evidence, screening for appropriate assessment and /or a Habitats Directive Assessment that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The plan or project will not give rise to an adverse direct, indirect or secondary effect on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or 2. The plan or project will have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or 3. The plan or project will have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.” <p>“Protect, conserve and support the development of an ecological network throughout the city which will improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.”</p> <p>“Protect Local Biodiversity Areas, wildlife corridors and stepping stones identified in the Galway City Habitat Inventory 2005 and Galway Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 in supporting the biodiversity of the city and in the Council’s role/responsibilities, works and operations, where appropriate.”</p>	Protection of European sites in considering and consenting proposed plans or projects

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>“Encourage, in liaison with the NPWS, the sustainable management of features which are important for the ecological coherence of network of European Sites and essential, by their linear or continuous nature or as stepping stones for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.”</p> <p>“Ensure that plans and projects with the potential to have a significant impact on European Sites (cSAC’s or SPA) whether directly, indirectly or in combination with other plans or projects are subject to Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43 EEC) and associated legislation and guidelines to inform decision making.”</p> <p>“Protect the ecological integrity of Statutory Nature Reserves, refuges for fauna and Annex 1 Habitats.”</p>	
<p><u>Policy 4.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</u></p> <p>“Protect and maintain the integrity of the coastal environment and waterways by avoiding significant impacts and meeting the requirements of statutory bodies, national and European legislation and standards.”</p> <p>“Conserve and protect natural conservation areas within the coastal area and along waterways and ensure that the range and quality of associated habitats and the range and populations of species are maintained.”</p> <p>“Have regard to European and national best practice guidance when assessing development in or near coastal areas which is likely to have significant effects on the integrity, defined by the structure and function, of any designated European Sites, protected coastal and marine fauna and flora.”</p> <p>“Protect and maintain, where feasible, undeveloped riparian zones and natural floodplains along the River Corrib and its tributaries.”</p>	<p>General protection of European sites along the coastline and waterways plus protection from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on water quality</p>
<p><u>Policy 4.5.1 Community Spaces: Greenways and Public Rights of Way</u></p> <p>“Provide controlled access and linkages into all parks/public open spaces, areas of natural heritage, including along waterways, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites. Ensure that paths and structures are constructed from suitable materials.”</p>	<p>Any potential impact pathways in the context of the protection of European sites and developing/managing access and connectivity between public areas, natural heritage areas and waterways</p>
<p><u>Environment and Infrastructure Aim</u></p> <p>“To secure a high quality, clean and healthy environment, while facilitating the sustainable development of the city, through supporting the continued improvement and expansion of infrastructure services, including for water, drainage, communication, energy and waste management facilities. To ensure that environmental protection is an integral part of the development process within the city, by avoiding potential pollution at source and reducing environmental risks to the city</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water, groundwater or air quality</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
and its community. Address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by facilitating and promoting energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy sources.”	
<p><u>Policy 9.3 Flood Risk Assessment</u> “Protect and maintain, where feasible, undeveloped riparian zones and natural floodplains along the River Corrib and its tributaries.”</p>	Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathway in the context of the River Corrib and its hydrological regime/functioning
<p><u>Specific Development Standards</u> 11.28 Extract Industries/Quarries – “The operation of quarries can give rise to land use and environmental issues which require to be mitigated and controlled in the planning process. The protection of residential dwellings, residential amenities, natural amenities, the prevention of pollution, noise/vibration, traffic and the safeguarding of groundwater will be given serious consideration. The Council will have regard to the DEHLG’s Quarries and Ancillary Activities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2004 when assessing all quarry related proposals, in order to achieve more sustainable aggregates development and to avoid and minimise adverse impacts on the environment. Particular constraint will be exercised for sites in the vicinity of/in areas of residential settlements, areas of archaeological importance, recorded monuments, European areas of ecological importance and other environmentally sensitive (designated) areas, unless it can clearly be demonstrated that such quarries would not have significant adverse impacts on residential dwellings, amenities or the environment. All developments should have regard to and comply with the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) publication Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (non-scheduled minerals), 2006.”</p>	Any potential impact pathways in the context of the protection of European sites and consenting proposed plans or projects related to the extractives/quarrying industry
<p><u>Specific Development Standards</u> 11.31 Natura Impact Assessment – “Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive there is a requirement to establish whether, in relation to plans and projects, appropriate assessment (AA) is required. If, following screening, it is considered that AA is required then the proponent of the plan or project must prepare a Natura Impact Statement/Natura Impact Report. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or (b) The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 (that does not host a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and 	Protection of European sites in considering and consenting proposed plans or projects

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest – including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or</p> <p>The plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest- restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.”</p>	
<p><u>Policy 4.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</u></p> <p>“Support the implementation of the recommendations of the Western River Basin District – River Basin Management Plan Water Matters (2009) and future plan in relation to the protection of water quality of surface waters, groundwater and coastal waters.”</p> <p>“Ensure development and uses adhere to the principles of sustainable development and restrict any development or use, which negatively impact on water quality.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>
<p><u>Policy 9.6 Water Quality</u></p> <p>“Support the actions of the Western River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015 and future River Basin Management Plan in order to promote and achieve a restoration of good status, reduce chemical pollution and prevent deterioration of surface, coastal and groundwater quality, where appropriate.”</p> <p>“Protect the city’s groundwater resource in accordance with the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) or any updated legislation and ensure that any development, which threatens the quality of the city’s groundwater is restricted.”</p> <p>“Minimise and control discharges to inland surface water bodies, groundwater and coastal waters to prevent water pollution.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p><u>Policy 9.7 Water Services</u> “Provide a sustainable and effective wastewater drainage collection and treatment system capable of meeting the needs of domestic, commercial, and industrial users in the city in partnership with Irish Water.” “Ensure that all new developments have and are provided with satisfactory drainage systems in the interests of public health and to avoid the pollution of the ground and surface waters.”</p>	Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater
<p><u>Specific Development Standards</u> 11.22 Water Quality – “Proposed developments, which include the storage and/or run-off of potential polluting substances, such as oil and chemicals shall be accompanied with details and specifications, which indicate how risk of pollution will be minimised by using best available practices. This shall also apply to the construction stage.”</p>	Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater
<p><u>Environment and Infrastructure Strategy</u> “Protect and manage water resources effectively and improve coastal and fresh water quality.”</p>	Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater
<p><u>Policy 9.3 Flood Risk Assessment</u> “Protect and promote sustainable management and uses of water bodies and watercourses from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains.” “Ensure the use of SUDS, sustainable urban drainage systems, wherever practical, in the design of development to reduce the rate and quantity of surface water run-off.”</p>	Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater
<p><u>Policy 9.8 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)</u> “Ensure the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and sustainable surface water drainage management, wherever practical in the design of development to enable surface water run-off to be managed as near to its source as possible and achieve wider benefits such as sustainable development, water quality, biodiversity and local amenity.” “Proposals for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) should include provisions for the long term management, operation and maintenance of these systems.”</p>	Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p><u>Policy 9.10 Air Quality and Noise</u> “Maintain air quality to a satisfactory standard by regulating and monitoring atmospheric emissions in accordance with EU policy directives on air quality and Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive (2008/50/EC), by promoting and supporting initiatives to reduce air pollution and by increasing the use of sustainable transport modes and developing urban woodland, encouraging tree planting, conserving and creating green open space.”</p>	Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on air quality
<p><u>Policy 4.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</u> “Support and implement measures to control and manage alien/invasive species, where appropriate.”</p>	Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of introducing/spreading non-native invasive species
<p><u>Policy 4.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</u> “Protect and conserve rare and threatened flora and fauna and their key habitats, (wherever they occur) listed on Annex I and Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and listed for protection under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2000.”</p>	Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathway in the context of Annex I and Annex IV species
<p><u>Policy 4.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</u> “Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation, on protected species.”</p>	Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathway in the context of protected species (i.e. QI species of cSACs and/or SCI species of SPAs)
<p><u>Policy 4.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</u> “Ensure the protection of the River Corrib as a Salmonid River, where appropriate.”</p>	Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathway in the context of the River Corrib and its role in supporting Atlantic salmon (QI of both Lough Corrib cSAC and Galway Bay Complex cSAC)
<p><u>Policy 4.6.2 Open Spaces: Agricultural Lands</u> “Prevent developments which could cause environmental pollution or injury to general amenities.</p>	Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts,

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
Ensure agricultural development complies with the measures set out in the Western River Basin Management Plan (2009) and future plans.”	as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater

Table D-2: Environmental protection policies from the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 and how these relate to protecting European Sites from potential impacts

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>Development Strategy Objectives Objectives DS 6 Natura 2000 Network and Habitats Directive Assessment “Protect European Sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network (Including Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) in accordance with the requirements in the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011(SI No.477 of 2011) (and any subsequent amendments or updated legislation) and having due regard to the guidance in the Appropriate Assessment Guidelines 2010 (and any updated or subsequent guidance). A plan or project (e.g. proposed development) within the Plan Area will only be authorised after the competent authority (Galway County Council) has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and/or a Habitats Directive Assessment where necessary, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European Site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or (b) The Plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or (c) The Plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.” 	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways in considering and consenting proposed plans or projects</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>Development Strategy Objectives Objective DS 9 Projects/Associated Improvement Works/Infrastructure and Appropriate Assessment “Ensure that proposed projects and any associated improvement works or associated infrastructure relating to renewable energy projects; water supply and abstraction; wastewater and discharges; flood alleviation and prevention; roads, power lines and telecommunications; and amenity and recreation provision are subject to Appropriate Assessment where relevant.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with the project types listed</p>
<p>Development Strategy Objectives Objective DS 10 Impacts of Development on Protected Sites “Have regard to any impacts of development on or near existing and proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation, Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Salmonid Waters, Refuges for Flora and Fauna, Conamara National Park, shellfish waters, freshwater pearl mussel catchments and any other designated sites including future designations.”</p>	<p>Any potential impact pathways in the context of the general consideration of European sites and existing/proposed development</p>
<p>Roads and Transport Policy Policy TI 1 Transportation Strategy and Compliance with Legislation “Is the overarching policy of Galway County Council to comply with all relevant Irish and European planning and environmental legislation in implementing its Transportation Strategy.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with existing/proposed development linked to transportation</p>
<p>Water & Wastewater Infrastructure &, Waste Management & Extractive Industry Objective EQ 4 Compliance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive “Ensure that projects associated with the mineral extractive industry carry out screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, where required.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with existing/proposed development linked to the mineral extractive industry</p>
<p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies & Objectives Policy NHB 1 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity “Is the policy of Galway County Council to support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity, including the protection of the integrity of European Sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network, the protection of Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas and the promotion of the development of a green/ecological network within the Plan Area, in order to support ecological functioning and connectivity, create opportunities in suitable locations for active and passive recreation and to structure and provide visual relief from the built environment.”</p>	<p>General protection of European sites via any potential impact pathways</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies & Objectives Objective NHB 1 Protected Habitats and Species “Support the protection of habitats and species listed in the Annexes to and/or covered by the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) (as amended) and Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), and regularly occurring-migratory birds and their habitats, and species protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2000 and the Flora Protection Order.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathway in the context of protecting qualifying interest habitats and qualifying interest/special conservation interest species</p>
<p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies & Objectives Objective NHB12 Soil/Ground Water Protection “Developments shall ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken, where appropriate, including investigations into the nature and extent of any soil/groundwater contamination.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on soils or groundwater</p>
<p>Water Policies and Objectives - Objective WS 1 Protection of Ground Waters “Support the protection of groundwater resources and dependent wildlife/habitats in accordance with the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC, the European Communities Environmental Objectives (groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) or any updated legislation and the Groundwater Protection Scheme and source protection plans for water supplies.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on groundwater</p>
<p>Water Policies and Objectives - Objective WS 11 Regionally & Locally Important Aquifers “Protect the regionally and locally important aquifers within the County from risk of pollution and ensure the satisfactory implementation of the groundwater protection schemes and groundwater source protection zones, where data has been made available by the Geological Survey of Ireland.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on groundwater</p>
<p>Water Policies and Objectives - Policy WS 4 Water Quality “Promote public awareness of water quality issues and the measures required to protect both surface water and groundwater bodies.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>
<p>Water Policies and Objectives - Objective WS 2 EU Policies and Directives “Protect, conserve and enhance existing and potential water resources of the County, in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plans, the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009), and implement the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 and ensure that water supplies comply with the parameters in these regulations.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>Wastewater Policies and Objectives - Objective WW 1 EU Policies and Directives “Ensure that all wastewater generated is collected, treated and discharged after treatment in a safe and sustainable manner, having regard to the standards and requirements set out in EU and national legislation and guidance and subject to compliance with the provisions and objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive, relevant River Basin Management Plans, Urban Waste Water Directive and the EU Habitats Directive.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>
<p>Wastewater Policies and Objectives - Objective WW 6 Adherence to Environmental Standards “Promote the provision of safe and secure wastewater infrastructure to ensure that the public is protected and that permitted development, is within the environmental carrying capacity and does not negatively impact on habitat quality or species diversity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>
<p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies & Objectives - Policy NHB 4 “Protect, conserve and enhance the water resources of the county, including, rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, springs, turloughs, surface water and groundwater quality, as well as surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and water dependant species and seek to protect and conserve the quality, character and features of inland waterways by controlling developments close to navigable and non-navigable waterways.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>
<p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies & Objectives Objective NHB 3 Water Resources “Protect the water resources in the Plan Area, including rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, springs, turloughs, surface water and groundwater quality, as well as surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and water dependant species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Western River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015, Shannon International River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015 and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same).”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies & Objectives Policy NHB 7 Invasive Species “It is a policy of the Council to support measures for the prevention and eradication of invasive species. This will include the dissemination of information to raise public awareness, consultation with relevant stakeholders, the promotion of the use of native species in amenity planting and landscaping and the recording of invasive/native species as the need arises and resources permit.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of introducing/spreading non-native invasive species</p>
<p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies & Objectives Objective NHB 2 Biodiversity and Ecological Networks “Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity within the Plan Area, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways in the context of protecting biodiversity and ecological connectivity</p>
<p>Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies & Objectives Objective NHB 6 Protection of Bats and Bats Habitats “Seek to protect bats and their roosts, their feeding areas, flight paths and commuting routes. Ensure that development proposals in areas which are potentially important for bats, including areas of woodland, linear features such as hedgerows, stone walls, watercourses and associated riparian vegetation which may provide migratory/foraging uses shall be subject to suitable assessment for potential impacts on bats. This will include an assessment of the cumulative loss of habitat or the impact on bat populations and activity in the area and may include a specific bat survey. Any assessment shall be carried out by a suitably qualified professional and where development is likely to result in significant adverse effects on bat populations or activity in the area, development will be prohibited or require mitigation and/or compensatory measures, as appropriate.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways in the context of protecting the Lesser horseshoe bat, where it is a qualifying interest species of a European site</p>

Table D-3: Environmental protection policies from the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and how these relate to protecting European Sites from potential impacts

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>The implementation of specific objectives (outlined in the plan) which reinforce statutory requirements, such as:</p> <p>Objective CD 12.1 “It is an objective of the development plan: To require proposals for development which may impact on a European Site to undertake and submit a Natura Impact Statement in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive as part of any planning application.”</p> <p>Objective CD 14.9 – “It is an objective of Clare County Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To implement the EIA Directive, ensuring that all elements/stages or components of the project are included in one overall assessment and all reasonable alternatives are taken into consideration in choosing the option with the least environmental impact. b) To have regard to “Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (2013) when considering proposals for which an EIA is required. c) To ensure full compliance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive, SEA Directive and associated legislation/regulations, including the associated European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004-2011, and the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 – 2011 (or any updated/superseding legislation).” 	<p>Protection of European sites in considering and consenting proposed plans or projects</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>Implementation of objectives that place conditions and caveats, such as:</p> <p>Objective CDP 9.7 “It is an objective of Clare County Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) To work with local communities and relevant agencies to achieve the sustainable development of County Clare as a world-class destination for sports and recreation-related tourism development at appropriate locations and in full compliance with all relevant environmental legislation in particular the requirements of the Habitats Directive. (b) To support the appropriate development of low-impact experiential tourism in order to diversify the range of tourist activities available in the County and expand the tourist season; (c) To support the sustainable development of watersports, surfing, sailing and water-related events at appropriate locations in the County, subject to an analysis of their potential environmental impact.” 	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways in the context of the general consideration of European sites and existing/proposed plans/projects linked to developing tourism</p>
<p>Objective CDP 9.12 “It is an objective of the development plan: To support the development of tourism activities in lakeland areas and waterways subject to normal planning and environmental criteria. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EC Directives.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways in the context of the general consideration of European sites and existing/proposed plans/projects linked to developing tourism</p>
<p>Objective CDP 12.11 “It is an objective of the development plan: To facilitate the sustainable development of marinas and associated amenities at appropriate locations along the Atlantic coastlines, ensuring that such developments shall not adversely affect species and habitats designated by the Birds and Habitats Directives and is in compliance with all relevant environmental designations.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways in the context of the general consideration of European sites and existing/proposed plans/projects linked to developing marinas and associated amenities along the coastline</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>Objective CDP 12.12</p> <p>“It is an objective of Clare County Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To engage with the OPW to develop appropriate strategies for the management of identified coastal flood and erosion hazards and associated risks; b) To have regard to the Clare County Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, CFRAM Flood Risk Management Plans (when finalised), the OPW Coast Protection Strategy Study, and any updated version/more detailed local studies, in the assessment of development applications in coastal areas; c) To permit developments only where the Council is satisfied that they will not be at risk from coastal erosion or inundation in the future; d) To permit developments only where the Council is satisfied that it will not result in an increase in coastal erosion or increase the risk of inundation, either at the subject site or at another location in the vicinity; e) To prohibit developments outside the boundaries of existing settlements where such development could not be adequately defended over the lifetime of the development without the need to construct additional or new coastal defences; f) To seek funding for coastal defence works based on the outcome of detailed Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management Studies undertaken in areas identified as being at risk from coastal flooding; g) To ensure full compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive with regard to developments in the coastal area; h) To have regard to any future adopted Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the coastal and estuarine areas of the county, undertaken in accordance with the Habitats and SEA Directive.” 	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways in the context of the general consideration of European sites and existing/proposed plans/projects linked to coastal flood and erosion protection</p>
<p>“Ensure any development application is accompanied by a hydrogeological assessment and concludes that the development will not interfere with groundwater movement to the groundwater dependent Qualifying Interest of the European Site.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on groundwater</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>“Ensure any further development application is connected to a WWTP with adequate capacity for foul water during operation, or that it is serviced by an on-site treatment system that will ensure no impact to water quality in the area.”</p> <p>“Ensure a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is produced as part of any planning application for development detailing how surface water run-off, especially in relation to release of silt and other pollutants, will be controlled during construction.”</p> <p>“Ensure that surface water run-off during operation is treated via a combination of appropriate SUDS (i.e. green roofs, permeable paving, petrol interceptor, silt trap) prior to discharge to any surface water features.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water or groundwater</p>
<p>“Any development application should address the potential for introduction and spread of invasive species via water craft/equipment movement into the area and/or out of the area to other European Sites.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of introducing/spreading non-native invasive species</p>
<p>“Any development applications should include an assessment by a suitably- qualified Ecologist as to the potential for the site to support SPA SCI bird species. If the site is deemed suitable, detailed bird surveys should be undertaken on the site to accompany the development application. These assessments and/or surveys should inform an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and/or Natura Impact Statement, dependent on the outcome of the site survey. If the site is deemed suitable, a full light- spill modelling study should accompany all development applications and demonstrate that the chosen lighting design would not create any increase in ambient light levels beyond the perimeter of the development applications and demonstrate that the chosen lighting design would not create any increase in ambient light levels beyond the perimeter of the development footprint in relation to SCI birds.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways in the context of protecting bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests of any SPA</p>

Table D-4: Environmental protection policies from the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 and how these relate to protecting European Sites from potential impacts

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>E-05 General “It is the objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate home-based employment of appropriate type, size and scale, where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, residential amenity or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with home based employment related development</p>
<p>AG-01 Agriculture “It is an objective of the Council to support the sustainable development of agriculture, with emphasis on local food supply and agriculture diversification (e.g. agri-business and tourism enterprises) where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, residential amenity or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with agricultural development</p>
<p>FY-01 Forestry “It is an objective of the Council to promote sustainable forestry development of appropriate scale in accordance with the Indicative Forest Strategy for Mayo or any amendment to it where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, residential amenity or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with forestry development</p>
<p>MF-02 Marine Resources, Aquaculture & Fishing “It is an objective of the Council to support the sustainable development of marine aquaculture and fishing industries having regard to best environmental practices so as to maximize their contribution to jobs and growth in coastal communities where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, residential amenity or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with developing marine aquaculture and the fishing industry</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>TM-01 Tourism</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to support and promote sustainable tourism development, accessible to all throughout the County and to work in partnership with tourism organisations, and adjoining Local Authorities where necessary, in securing the development of tourism enterprises and infrastructure in suitable locations where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, residential amenity or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with tourism development</p>
<p>EI-01 Extractive Industries</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the development of aggregate resources (stone and sand/gravel deposits) is carried out in a manner which minimises effects on the environment, including the Natura 2000 network, amenities, infrastructure and the community, and has full regard to the principles of sustainability.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with development linked to the extractives industry</p>
<p>RE-02 Renewable Energy</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to identify at least one renewable energy hub in the County which will allow for the development of renewable energy devices and associated infrastructure/vessels/equipment and deployment of the same having regard to the needs of the industry while ensuring no adverse impact on the environment including Natura 2000 sites.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with development linked to renewable energy infrastructure</p>
<p>I-01 General</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to provide, or facilitate the provision of, all infrastructure projects set out in Table 3, with priority given to infrastructure serving the Linked-Hub and Key Towns or areas where significant environmental or safety issues are evident and require the particular infrastructure to solve the issues and where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, the integrity of the Natura 2000 network or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with the listed infrastructure development – roads parking, pedestrian and cycle facilities, rail, bus and air transport, and port, water, waste and telecommunications infrastructure</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>RD-02 Roads</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to support improvements to the existing National Road and Regional Road network including road schemes and by-passes where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, the integrity of the Natura 2000 network or visual amenity.”</p> <p>RD-03 Roads</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council, in co-operation with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, to continue with the strengthening and improvement of the local road network including links, by-passes and relief roads, with priority given to those serving the Linked-Hub and Key Towns and interconnection between such settlements, where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment or Natura 2000 network.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with road infrastructure</p>
<p>PP-01 Parking Provision</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the provision of public parking facilities at appropriate locations, including the provision of bus parking facilities within and on the edge of towns and villages, and at appropriate scenic viewing points and scenic routes where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, residential or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing public parking</p>
<p>PC-01 Pedestrians & Cyclists</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate the maintenance and further development of the public footpath network, public rights of way, walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure, including the provision of bicycle racks in all towns and villages, in the County, including where possible the retrofitting of cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network, by carrying out works in accordance with the National Transport Authority’s National Cycle Manual and to support the establishment of a network of interlinked cycle ways and walk ways in the County and the adjoining Counties, having regard to best practice standards and where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment or the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>RL-01 Rail</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to support and encourage the provision of a high-quality rail network and service (including commuter services) and ancillary works for passenger and freight carriage to, from and within the County, including the re-opening of the Western Rail Corridor where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing rail infrastructure</p>
<p>BS-01 Bus</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to support the provision of public and private bus services, including the Rural Transport Programme, in the County by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Encouraging appropriate and sustainable development patterns that will support the provision of services; and (b) Supporting the provision of bus shelters and park & ride facilities at appropriate locations in the County where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.” 	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing bus infrastructure</p>
<p>AT-04 Air Transport</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to ensure any development associated with light aircraft/helicopter activity is located in areas that avoid significant adverse effects on the environment, the integrity of the Natura 2000 network and residential amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing air transport infrastructure</p>
<p>PH-01 Ports, Harbours and Piers</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to develop and improve ports, harbours, piers, slipways and associated shore facilities and access, including those that can be shared by leisure, tourism, fishing, renewable energy and aquaculture, where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing port/harbour infrastructure</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>WS-01 Water Services “It is an objective of the Council to ensure the provision of an adequate level of water services infrastructure throughout the County to meet domestic, commercial, industrial and other needs, having regard to the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy of this Plan, the Water Services Investment Programme, the Rural Water Programme... and where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing water service infrastructure</p>
<p>WL-01 Waste – “It is an objective of the Council to implement the Regional Waste Management Plan for the Connaught Region (as amended) or replacement plan with particular emphasis on reuse, recycling and disposal of residual waste in the most appropriate manner where it can be demonstrated that the development will not will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, residential or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing waste infrastructure</p>
<p>TC-01 Information and Communication Technology – “It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the delivery of high capacity ICT infrastructure, broadband networks and digital broadcasting in the County having regard to the Government Guidelines Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures-Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1996 (DoEHLG) and Circular Letter PL 07/12 and where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with providing telecommunications infrastructure</p>
<p>CC-01 Climate Change “It is an objective of the Council to support the National Climate Change Strategy and methods of reducing anthropogenic greenhouse gases on an ongoing basis through implementation of supporting objectives in this Plan, particularly those supporting use of alternative and renewable energy sources, sustainable transport, air quality, coastal zone management, flooding and soil erosion and promotion of the retention of, and planting of trees, hedgerows and afforestation subject to no significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with plans or projects implemented in support of the national Climate Change Strategy</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>WQ-01 Water Quality</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to implement the Western River Basin District Management Plan “Water Matters” 2009-2015 to ensure the protection, restoration and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and transitional waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to deterioration in water quality or quantity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from habitat degradation, and any associated species impacts, as a result of effects on surface water, groundwater or the marine environment</p>
<p>NH-01 Natural Heritage</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to protect, enhance, conserve and, where appropriate restore:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Areas of Conservation, 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. Natural habitats and plant and animal species identified under the Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, Wildlife Act and the Flora Protection Order, or any other relevant legislation that may be implemented during the lifetime of the plan. Bogs, fens and turloughs listed in the Environmental Report documenting the Strategic Environmental Assessment of this plan. The conservation value of disused railway lines, waterways, walkways etc. notwithstanding that some of these items (e.g. disused rail lines) may be developed at some future date as part of the County’s infrastructure where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. Surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and water-dependent species through the implementation of all appropriate and relevant Directives and transposed legislation.” 	<p>Protection, enhancement and conservation of European sites from any potential impact pathways</p>
<p>NH-03 Natural Heritage</p> <p>“It is an objective of the Council to implement Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive, by screening all plans and projects for appropriate assessment and to ensure those with potential to have significant effects on 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, are subject to an appropriate assessment and the preparation of an NIR or NIS in order to inform decision making.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites in considering and consenting proposed plans or projects</p>

Environmental Protection Policies	Protection of European sites and Potential Impact Pathways
<p>AoH-01 Archaeological Heritage “It is an objective of the Council to: Facilitate public access to National Monuments in State care or in the ownership of the State where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, the integrity of the Natura 2000 network, residential amenity or visual amenity.”</p>	<p>Protection of European sites from any potential impact pathways associated with development linked to facilitating public access to National Monuments</p>