

# Ballinagore

## Local Area Plan



Plan made 25 August 2010



## 1 Goal

To facilitate the appropriate development of Ballinagore in order to match the existing scale and character of the village, in accordance with and in order to support the policies and objectives set out in National, Regional and County planning policy hierarchy.

## 2 Introduction

This plan takes the form of a written statement, and accompanying map. If any conflict or ambiguity arises between the written statement and the supporting plans, the written statement shall take precedence.

Ballinagore is located approximately 5 Km to the north of Kilbeggan and approximately 17Km south of Mullingar. It is village of considerable rural character situated in a high quality landscape dominated by the river Brosna and the associated industrial heritage associated with it.

Ballinagore performs a limited number of functions in relation to its wider rural context, not least of which is to provide alternative residential opportunities to single rural development. Ballinagore also provides social and educational opportunities through its pub, school and GAA club.

Ballinagore has been going through a sustained period of decline, in a 1998 survey by Westmeath County Council in addition to the school and pub the settlement contained 2 shops, a post office, and a filling station all now closed, there is a level of vacancy arising from this decline.



**Figure 1 streetscape**

This document sets out the framework in which Ballinagore can continue to function as an active rural village, valuing, preserving, and utilising its many quality attributes

### 3 Context

Ballinagore is designated in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2008-2014 as a tier 4 settlement (centres with limited development potential) and as such a Village Plan is required in order to facilitate the orderly and proper development of the village.

This Village Plan has been prepared as a Local Area Plan as set out in Sections 18 to 20 of The Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. As such this plan must be consistent with the policy and objectives of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2002-2008, and the Midland Regional Authority, Regional Planning Guidelines 2004.

This Proposed Local Area Plan should be read in conjunction with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) documents which form an integral part of the Local Area Plan process.

#### 3.1 Population analysis:

Ballinagore is a small rural settlement

Source of Data	Population
25 residential units (Geodirectory Q109) <b>within speed limits.</b> At an occupancy of 3 per unit	<b>75</b> <b>(estimated)</b>
14 residential units (Geodirectory Q109) <b>within proposed area of this plan.</b> At an occupancy of 3 per unit	<b>42</b> <b>(estimate)</b>

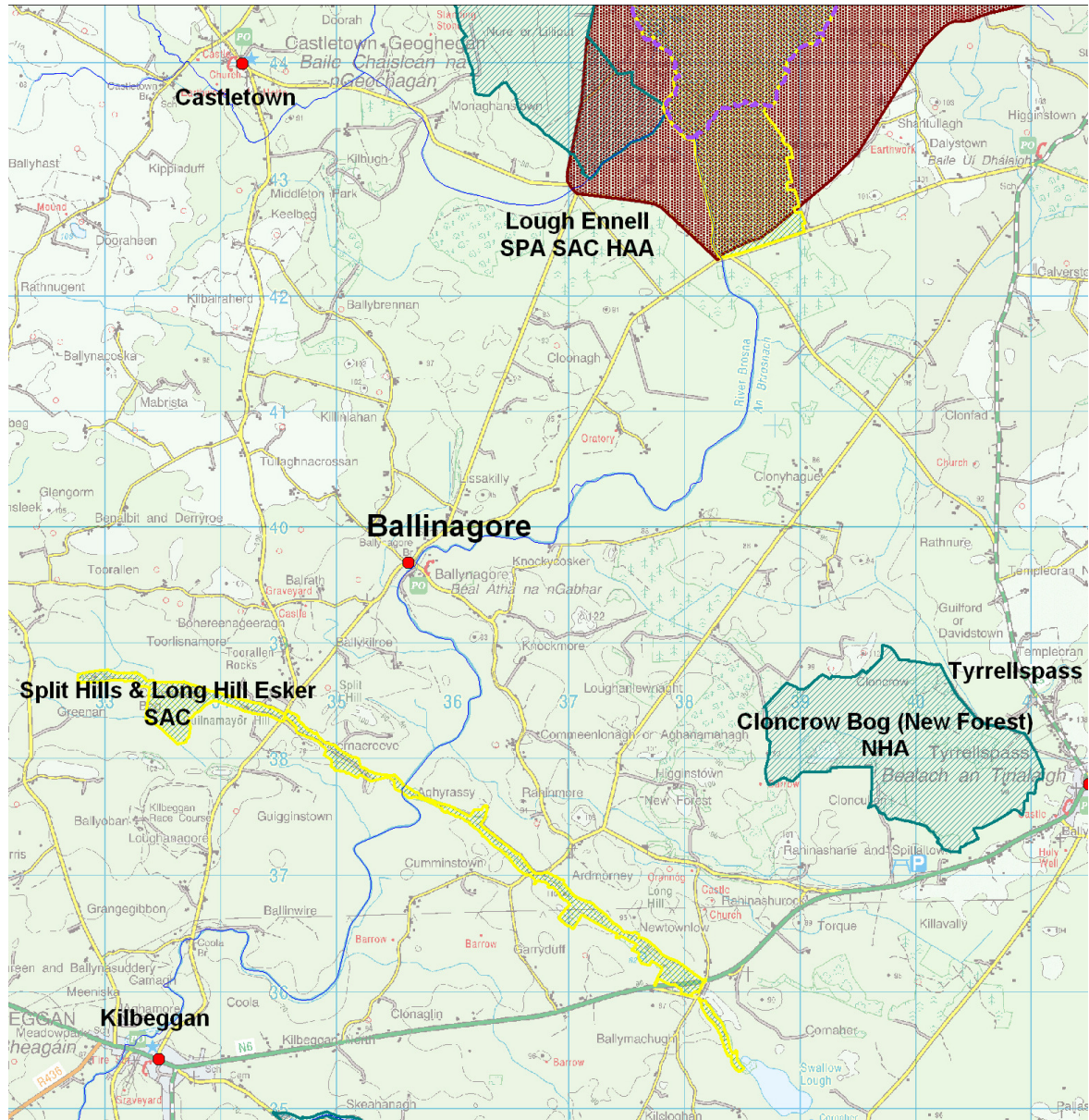
#### 3.2 Natural Heritage:

Ballinagore has rich natural heritage both in and within easy access of the Village.

There are no natural heritage designations within or directly impacting on the Local Area Plan boundary.

In the wider vicinity there is a range of designated sites including Split Hills and Long Hill Esker, Cloncrow Bog, and Lough Ennell.

The Brosna River runs through Ballinagore with a range of quality habits. There are currently no designations arising from the Habitats Directive or the Wildlife acts within or in the immediate vicinity of Ballinagore.



**Fig 2 Context and Natural Heritage designations in the wider area.**



### 3.3 Cultural heritage



**Fig 3 Glen Brosna House Protected structure**



**Fig 4 Gates to Ballinagore House**

#### 3.3.1 Recognised designations:

- There are currently 5 entries in the record of protected structures within the study area of the LAP.

REF	BUILDING ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION
1	Ballinagore	Mill Building
2	Ballinagore	Ballinagore House
3	Ballinagore	Ballinagore House the gates and piers
4	Ballinagore	Glen Brosna House
328	Ballinagore	Gatelodge to Ballinagore House

(a further 7 structures have been recommended for inclusion in the RPS by Ministerial recommendation issued following completion of the NIAH survey of County Westmeath.) available on [www.buildingsofireland.ie](http://www.buildingsofireland.ie).

- There are no Recorded Monuments with the area covered by the LAP

#### 3.3.2 Other elements of special cultural heritage:

The village layout, heavily influenced by the river, the bridge, mill race and plot sizes are of heritage value, contributing strongly to the village character. These are a major asset to the village.

### **3.4 Village Character Statement**

#### **3.4.1 Layout**

Of the 25 houses within the study area in Ballinagore, 23 are located to the east of the Brosna.

The Layout of the east bank appears to have centred on the bridge over the river Brosna built in 1720 (new central arch added in 1951), the mills to the north and south of the river crossing and associated millraces.

The site of the former flour mill to the north of the bridge is now in use as a farm yard. The former corn, saw and possibly flax mill to the south of the bridge contains remnants of the former mill but is in poor condition due to the substantial removal of the internal structure.

The grain of the village street is atypical of traditional village building and appears to have broadly followed the building line dictated by the flour mill which formed a central part of the village, along with the mill owners houses, Glen Brosna House to the south of the bridge, and Ballinagore house to the north east of the settlement.

There are two styles of residential layout in the village. The majority of traditional village buildings within the settlement are built directly onto the street with no setback and are primarily of terraced construction contributing to the strong character of Ballinagore. There are a small number of exceptions to this particularly to the extremities where the village form is weaker.

#### **3.4.2 Built form**

The built form of structures in the settlement fall within 3 broad categories each contributing strongly to the character of Ballinagore;

- Residential
- Agricultural
- Industrial (mills)

Roofs throughout are of traditional pitches and spans, with traditional chimney stacks punctuating the roofscape, this contributes strongly to the character. There are examples of both hipped and gable roofs.

Window, door openings and shop fronts for the most part are of traditional proportions with solid to void ratios typical of traditional rural buildings.

#### **3.4.3 Use**

The area encompassed by the LAP is residential with the exception of agricultural development, including an equestrian centre and the Public House.



### 3.4.4 Other features

The views into and out of the settlement as with every aspect of the form of development, are defined by the River Brosna.

Views are dominated by large mature trees on the eastern bank of the river and the last remaining mill building.



**Fig 5 Lower Mill**

The eastern approach to the village is dominated by quality traditional stone walls, substantially intact to each side of the road.

### 3.4.5 Vacancy

There are a number of vacant properties in the settlement, namely the 2 shops, filling station and post office. These are currently in a good state of repair; however it is likely that over time these may detract significantly from the character of the village if they remain vacant/underused.



**Fig 6 Vacant retail unit**



**Fig 7 Vacant Filling station**

### **3.5 Social Infrastructure:**

There is a National School (St. Patrick's) to the North of the Village occupying a site of approx 0.8Ha including the playing pitch to the west of the school. Current enrolment in the school is 66 students based on draft department of education guidelines 2000 this represents an adequate site.

There is a GAA pitch and club house 1.5km to the north east on local primary road L-1122 the main Mullingar to Kilbeggan road and a Public House to the west of the bridge.



### **3.6 Physical infrastructure:**

#### **3.6.1 Waste water**

Wastewater treatment is currently on an on-site basis with individual systems provided for each property. Groundwater has been designated by the Geological Survey of Ireland as being Highly Vulnerable and as such significant care is required in the maintenance of existing and provision of future on site waste water treatment systems in the area.

#### **3.6.2 Water supply**

No issues have been identified regarding water supply to Ballinagore.

#### **3.6.3 Surface water drainage**

There is a limited road surface water drainage system in the centre of Ballinagore.

#### **3.6.4 Transport**

Road infrastructure is generally good, with Ballinagore in close proximity to Mullingar (18Km) and Kilbeggan and the M6 (6Km), on a good quality Local Primary Road.

There is no bus service through Ballinagore with the exception of rural transportation scheme. Bus Eireann Services from Mullingar to Kilbeggan formerly passed through Ballinagore prior to the completion of the current N52 to N6 link via Tyrrellspass.

The Westmeath Way walking route and Tain trail pass through Ballinagore however footpaths are generally inadequate.

It was the intention for the Westmeath Way to follow the bank of the Brosna river to Ballinagore from the south, however this was diverted onto local roads reportedly due to concerns of landowners. This initial route remains the preferred option of Westmeath County Council.



**Fig 8 'Preferred route' of Westmeath Way between the Brosna and the Lower Mill tail race**

Driver speeds through the village on the local primary road are considered to be excessively high. This is likely to be reflective of the historical use of this road.

Further speed reduction measures would be required in order to address the traffic hazard created by the speed and volume of traffic.

Parking is currently on an on street and ad-hoc basis. Provision has been made for a drop off area at the school which appears to be functioning in a satisfactory manner. There is a substantial car parking area to the rear of the pub which also contains a bring bank re-cycling facility.



## 3.7 Policy context

### 3.7.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy sets out a 20 year national planning framework to ensure the appropriate, sustainable and balanced development of Ireland.

*'Ireland needs to renew, consolidate and develop its existing cities, towns and villages – i.e. keeping them as physically compact and public transport friendly as possible and minimising urban sprawl, while also achieving a high quality of design in new development and refurbishment. Urban land needs to be used carefully, sensitively and efficiently – with the aim of reducing dereliction and under-utilisation. Where greenfield development is necessary it should take place through the logical extension of existing cities, towns and villages.'*

*Village strengthening and rural area opportunities*

*In these areas local authorities should examine closely and activate the potential for new residential, commercial and local employment related development within the structure of small towns and villages.*

#### Housing Location in Urban Areas

Box 5.2 in section 5.3.1 of the National spatial strategy sets out a test for the considerations of locations for housing future housing provision.

The potential for Ballinagore to accommodate additional housing in the context of this test is as follows:

- **Asset test:** the existing community resources consist of a primary school only.
- **Carrying capacity:** there is capacity in the water supply in the area, while waste water treatment is on an on-site basis. The area of the settlement is generally designated as being of high ground water vulnerability in the interim classifications by the Geological Survey of Ireland which would have the effect of limiting development potential relying on on-site waste water treatment.
- **Transport:** there is no public transport available in Ballinagore with the exception of the rural transportation scheme. Access to all services is by private car.
- **Economic:** there are limited employment opportunities in the area, which are confined primarily to agriculture.
- **Character:** there is potential for further development to reinforce the built character of the settlement particularly in relation to returning vacant buildings in the village core to a sustainable use.
- **Community:** an increased population would have the potential to reinforce the integrity and vitality of the settlement
- **Integration:** the provision of additional quality residential development would be likely to provide alternatives for one-off rural housing.

### **5.3.2 Housing Location in Rural Areas**

*As part of the response to the housing needs of a growing population, local authorities need to ensure that where new development is proposed in smaller towns and villages, this is of a design, character and scale that is in keeping with its context. This can be achieved by preparing detailed local plans and design frameworks, to ensure that new development adds to a village or town in urban design terms and that the settlement in question grows in an orderly and planned fashion. This is particularly relevant to smaller towns and villages close to the cities and main towns that are experiencing rapid growth.*

*Additionally, such development should aim to promote a high quality living environment and enhanced public transport usage, in preference to increasing reliance on car based commuting. Development plans should focus in particular on development possibilities in smaller towns and villages with ready access to public transport networks. Development plans also need to identify policies for ensuring the development in these towns of the economic and social infrastructure needed to support employment options and residential development.*

*County development plans therefore need to recognise the resource that is the rural village and small town. Such plans should promote policies that incorporate a presumption in favour of appropriate development in villages and small towns, together with specific and practical measures in terms of providing serviced land and improved amenities that support and encourage the development of these towns and villages.*

**Conclusion:** the provision of limited development potential in Ballinagore is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy.

### **3.7.2 Regional Planning Guidelines 2004**

The Regional Planning Guidelines advocate the development of a hierarchy of settlements and the prioritisation of development in these centres. The guidelines do not deal with settlements of the scale of Ballinagore, which the guidelines state is a function of the relevant County Development Plan.

#### **4.5 Town and Village Settlement**

The location and density of new development should be carefully considered to ensure a more sustainable pattern, which affords a better life balance between home, work, leisure, commercial activities, cultural facilities and community services. The central aim is to focus development at appropriate densities in areas where the necessary physical and social infrastructure is present and where benefits arising from public and private investment can be maximised.

**Conclusion:** The provision of limited development in Ballinagore in a manner by which it does not detract from the priority settlements is consistent with the Regional planning guidelines.



### **3.7.3 Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities Dec 2008**

The following guidance is given with respect to villages; no one proposal for residential development should increase the existing housing stock by more than 10-15% and for villages with populations under 400 persons, and that no one proposal should increase the existing housing stock by more than 10-12 Units

**Conclusion:** Taking the scale and existing population of Ballinagore into account provision should be made for no more than 5 houses within the time period of the Local Area Plan.

The provision of limited development potential in Ballinagore is consistent with these guidelines.

### **3.7.4 Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines April 2005**

These guidelines support the provision of an appropriate level of housing provision within established settlements in order to provide an alternative to one-off rural housing.

*A range of different housing options in small towns, villages and in more rural areas is required to meet the differing needs of the people who live in those communities.*

### **3.7.5 Westmeath County Development Plan 2008-2014**

Ballinagore is designated as a tier 4 settlement (centres with limited development potential) in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2008-2014 as such a village plan is required in order to facilitate the orderly and proper development of the village.

#### **2.4.2 Urban and Village Settlement**

##### **Village Settlement**

*The basic fundamentals of sustainable urban settlement also apply to village settlement, however, greater sensitivity is required in relation to the scale and design of new build in villages given their reduced capacity to absorb new development and the significantly greater impact inappropriate development may have on the established form and character.*

*Village centre mixed use developments and development linked to transport will be encouraged as the most sustainable forms of development.*

*The established character and fabric of existing towns and villages will be protected and development that undermines or detracts from the role and character of rural villages and towns will not be permitted.*

### **3.7.6 Compliance with policy Hierarchy**

The provision of limited development in Ballinagore, resulting in a small increase in the population would be consistent with National, Regional and County Policy.

## 4 Village Plan Policies

### 4.1.1 Social Infrastructure and tourism

It shall be the policy of the Council:

To facilitate the creation and enhancement of a riverbank park.

To provide signage and details regarding existing recreational routes, and to propose further recreational walking and cycling routes for locals and visitors, including the continuation of the Westmeath Way between the lower mill, mill race and the River, and to continue south along the banks of the River Brosna.

### 4.1.2 Residential:

It will be the policy of the Council:

To ensure that future residential development is carefully sited on residential or village core zonings, designed, laid out and of a scale, such that it contributes positively to the character of the village in its immediate and wider context.

To direct any future development to the village core, with particular focus where possible on vacant buildings therein.

To provide a range of house types, and sizes in order to fulfil the needs of the community over time.

To ensure that the long term future expansion of the village is within its environmental carrying capacity, with particular reference to wastewater treatment.

### 4.1.3 Retail/commercial:

It will be the policy of the Council:

To facilitate the sensitive expansion of commercial functions in the designated village core in order to ensure a range and level of service appropriate to cater for the demands of both residents and visitors alike.

To facilitate the provision of retail development within the existing village core at a scale appropriate to serve local needs, taking Ballinagore's position in the County Retail Strategy into account.

To prevent inappropriate shop fronts and signage from detracting from the village character.

### 4.1.4 Transport, roads and parking

It will be the policy of the council:



To ensure that adequate parking is provided for residents and/or customers of any new development.

To facilitate the renewal of existing footpaths and the provision of both new footpaths and walking routes in association with parking points for visiting walkers including the provision of a footpath and lighting to Boreen Road when finance allows.

To facilitate where possible public transport provision.

To address traffic safety concerns on the L-1122.

#### **4.1.5 Conservation and Design:**

It will be the policy of the council:

To protect from further endangerment the remaining mill building, facilitate works and its re-use in order to secure its future.

To encourage the re-use of existing buildings, in the designated village core rather than demolition and replacement.

To facilitate the reuse of the existing vacant buildings in the designated village core.

To ensure that any application for development within the Local Area Plan will be of high quality design, taking account of its specific site and wider surroundings including the use of stone boundary walls as appropriate in keeping with the character of the existing distinctive stone walls in the area.

To ensure that any application for development will positively contribute to the rural Village Character of Ballinagore.

To encourage the redevelopment of derelict, underused, and unsightly sites within the designated village core in order to maintain and improve the village character.

To maintain, or improve the quality of existing natural heritage assets in the area.

To secure the undergrounding of overhead cables where the opportunity arises.

To secure the provision of new high quality coordinated street lighting where possible.

To secure the provision of new coordinated street furniture, throughout the village.

To ensure that proposals for surface water drainage are in accordance with Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

To protect contribution of the bridge, mill race and setting of the Brosna to the special character of Ballinagore.

## 5 Specific Objectives

### 5.1 Site specific objectives

The above policies will be implemented through the following specific objectives on the zoning map:

1. Secure the preferred route for the Westmeath Way between the lower mill, mill race and the River and to continue south along the banks of the River Brosna.
2. Protect the lower mill from further endangerment.
3. Secure the demolition of the abandoned derelict housing development and return the site to agricultural use with hedgerows of native species indigenous to the area with provision for mature trees therein.

### 5.2 General Objectives

To protect the mature trees and existing stone walls which contribute to the character of the settlement.

To facilitate the provision of an appropriate scale of residential, retail and commercial uses within the village core as defined on the LAP map.

To protect the existing educational use of the curtilage the school as defined by the education/institutional zoning.

To facilitate the provision of up to 5 additional houses in the area designated for future residential development over the plan period (no more than 3 of these to the west of the Brosna), taking account of the groundwater sensitivities and the provisions of the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities Dec 2008 as may be amended. These houses would be likely to be on large well landscaped sites set back from the public road.

The ecological importance of both the watercourse and the banks of the River Brosna, along with associated structures and vegetation shall be taken into account, in consultation with National Parks and Wildlife Service in the design of any development with the potential to affect the river and associated species and habitats.

High quality landscaping and maintenance to be provided for public open spaces in the village.

To strictly adhere to most recent EPA guidelines on the protection of surface and ground water quality in order to protect water quality.

To provide a waste water collection network and treatment plant for the settlement (of appropriate scale), when finance allows. The preferred site for such a plant will require the preparation of a technical report at that time.

### **5.3 Part V**

The Council's policy is to reserve 20% of lands zoned for residential use or mixed development for social and affordable housing in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000-2006 (Part 5) and the Housing Strategy for County Westmeath 2008-2014. Accordingly Westmeath County Council will require a 20% quota of social/ affordable housing to be provided on each housing development within the county on lands zoned or reserved for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses. This policy shall apply within the Village Plan area.

### **5.4 Development Contributions**

The Council will when granting a permission under S 34 include conditions for requiring the payments of contributions in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in its area and that is provided, or that is intended will be provided, by or on behalf of the Local Authority, in accordance with a Development Contribution Scheme made under S 48 (2) of the Planning And Development Act 2000-2006.

In addition to the terms of the scheme, the Planning Authority will require the payment of a special contribution in respect of a particular development where specific exceptional costs not covered by a scheme are incurred by any Local Authority in respect of public infrastructure and facilities which benefit the proposed development.

Wherever appropriate, the Council may require payment of a contribution in respect of any public infrastructure service or project in accordance with the terms of S. 49 (2) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006.



## **6 Environmental considerations in decision making.**

In the course of preparing and adopting the Ballinagore Local Area Plan processes were undertaken to ensure a high level of protection of Natura 2000 network, and the general environment along with the integration of environmental considerations into the Plan. These processes are referred to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and Appropriate Assessment (AA) (Birds and Habitats directives). Both processes involved the preparation and consideration of reports at the various stages in drafting and adoption of the LAP, each of these reports have been made available for consideration of interested parties.

Information on how the SEA and AA processes influenced the making of the plan as presented is required as set out in Article 14I of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) and section 4.13 of the Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities December 2009, these requirements are set out in the prescribed format below.

### **6.1 SEA Statement**

#### **6.1.1 How have environmental considerations been integrated into the plan**

A comprehensive desk based, and walking survey of the area was conducted. All planning history and pre-draft submissions were reviewed including substantial submissions from the Ballinagore Development Association. Consideration was given to the merits of the various proposals and the plan was drafted in accordance with county, regional and national policy.

SEA screening was carried out of the proposed LAP, this process identified a number of vulnerabilities, policy had been included within the proposed LAP to protect against each of the identified vulnerabilities. The SEA screening concluded that the potential environmental effects were not significant and that a full environmental report was not required.

The proposed plan along with an SEA screening in accordance with article 14A of the Planning and Development SEA regulations 2004 were referred to the prescribed environmental authorities for comment on 17/11/09 seeking response by 18/12/09. Responses to referrals are summarised in section 6.1.2 below.

Following consideration of the managers report on the initial consultation the elected members resolved to materially amend the proposed LAP to provide for additional revised zoning.

A report on the likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed amendments was prepared in accordance with Article 14G of the SEA regs. This

document identified a number of vulnerabilities and concluded that a determination regarding potential for significant effects would be made following consideration of responses from prescribed environmental authorities. The material amendment and report on likely significant effects was referred to the environmental authorities for comment.

Minor amendments were made to the proposed plan following initial consultation stage by way of managers report (03/03/10). Relevant amendments are as follows:

- A policy included to take stone walls, mill race, bridge and river in to account in consideration of any interventions
- The existing policy with regard to ecological value of the river and its banks was strengthened
- The policy with regard to consideration of proposals for on-site wastewater treatment was strengthened.

Further amendments were made to the LAP on foot of the managers report (14/07/10) following display of material amendments proposed by the elected members. These amendments do not relate to the integration of environmental considerations.

### **6.1.2 How response to submissions and observations have been taken into account in making the plan**

#### **6.1.2.1 Submissions arising from initial referral of SEA screening to prescribed environmental authorities.**

Responses to referrals of the initial proposed plan were received from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), dated 7<sup>th</sup> January and 13<sup>th</sup> January (ref: G2009/729). These submissions/observations were received after the SEA screening determination, that a full environmental report was not required had issued.

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources responded 22/12/09 that they had no observations on the proposed plan.

No response was received from the EPA.

- NPWS responses expressed concerns regarding impacts of proposed development on both ground and surface water quality referring to it as a significant environmental concern.
- NPWS were of the view that development arising from the LAP has the potential to impact on Annex II and Annex IV species.
- These responses also expressed concerns regarding implementation of the riverbank park and walkway objectives contained in the plan.

Notwithstanding the late receipt of submissions from NPWS new and amended policies were included in the proposed Local Area Plan at the first managers report stage in order to address the concerns highlighted by NPWS.

#### **6.1.2.2 Submission arising from referral of likely significant effects on the environment of material amendment to prescribed environmental authorities (14G) of SEA regs**

A response was received from NPWS (16/06/10 ref: G2010/11) to the referral of information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the materially amended Local Area Plan.

- The response noted the potential risks to groundwater and water quality in the river Brosna
- Potential for conflict with the Shannon river basin management plan.
- In light of these effects the Department of the Environment support the preparation of an SEA environmental report for the material amendments to the proposed Ballinagore Local Area Plan.

Having taken into account this submission the managers report (14/07/10) determined that an environmental report was not required, that any potential risks to groundwater and water quality in the river Brosna although considered not significant must have regard to the policies of the County Development Plan as they relate to ground and surface water.

#### **6.1.2.3 Submissions to initial consultation under section 20(3) of Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.**

27 submissions were received to the initial consultation seeking more extensive zoning with one detailed submission seeking the zoning of 75 acres in and around the settlement. Consideration of the potential environmental effects of implementation of each submission was taken into account in the Manager's Report. Amendments made to the proposed LAP on foot of these submissions and observations were of a minor nature and were concerned with the integration of environmental considerations (see managers report signed 03/03/10)

#### **6.1.2.4 Submissions to material amendment consultation under section 20(3) of Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.**

3 submissions were received to the notice and display of the proposed material amendments. Environmental concerns were raised by reference to the previous managers report and Appropriate Assessment supplementary statement.

The Managers report 14/07/10 responds to these concerns that the impacts shall be negligible by virtue of the small scale of the proposed amendment. The reservations expressed in the previous managers report no longer apply by virtue of the reduced area proposed for zoning. The manager concluded with a recommendation to make a revised amendment to the Local Area Plan.



### **6.1.3 Reasons for choosing the plan as adopted in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with.**

3 significant alternatives were considered in the course of drafting and adopting the Ballinagore Local Area Plan. These included the long standing Ballinagore Development Association Plan, the Ballinagore Local Area Plan as drafted by the forward planning and policy section of Westmeath County Council and the plan as proposed by resolution (26/04/10) of the elected members of Westmeath County Council.

The plan as adopted was chosen on foot of the recommendations of the manager. The plan as amended is in keeping with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. It was considered that the material amendments made to the proposed plan on foot of the managers recommendation would be likely to have a minimal impact and that reservations previously expressed with regard to waste water and traffic no longer apply due to the reduced scale of these amendments comparatively to that which was proposed in submissions received.

## **6.2 AA Conclusion Statement**

### **6.2.1 Summary of how the findings of the AA were incorporated into the plan**

A comprehensive desk based, and walking survey of the area was conducted. Consideration was given to potential impacts of development in the area of Ballinagore on the Natura 2000 network. The plan was drafted with particular cognisance of the function of the Brosna as a water body along with its banks and associated vegetation as a wildlife corridor. Potential impacts of a Local Area Plan policy on water quality are paramount particularly regarding potential impacts on Annex II and IV species.

The issue of waste water treatment has been a primary concern for Ballinagore and has been raised by all stakeholders prior to and in the course of the statutory process. The lack of municipal treatment represents a major physical and environmental constraint in consideration of development potential of Ballinagore.

These considerations played a significant role in shaping the very limited development character of the Ballinagore LAP as adopted.

### **6.2.2 Reasons for choosing the plan as adopted in light of other reasonable alternatives considered**

The plan as adopted was chosen in light of the alternatives considered due to the limited extent of proposed development. There was also an expectation that the contribution of additional on site waste water treatment nutrient loadings to ground and surface waters in the locations provided for Greenfield sites would not be significant with regard to potential for adverse impacts on water quality and consequently the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.

### **6.2.3 Declaration that the plan as adopted will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site or sites.**

Having regard to the above considerations and correspondence received from NPWS, I County Manager of Westmeath County Council declare that the Ballinagore Local Area Plan as adopted will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site or sites.

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County Manager

