



Volume 6

Appropriate Assessment Statement

Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014-2020

Appropriate Assessment Conclusion Statement

1 INTRODUCTION

Westmeath County Council has prepared and adopted the Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014-2020 in accordance with Section 20 and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 -2010, as amended.

The Appropriate Assessment (AA) process concluded at stage 1 screening for both the proposed Local Area Plan and the Material Amendments made to the LAP in the form of an addendum to the screening report. Westmeath County Council as the competent authority in the screening of the proposed LAP and the proposed material amendments determined, in accordance with S.177U(5) that an appropriate assessment was not required in either case.

The current and final stage in the Appropriate Assessment process is the preparation and publication of this Appropriate Assessment Conclusion Statement. This report has been prepared following the structure recommended in the 2010 NPWS guidance document.

2 Summary of how the findings of the AA were factored into the plan.

Comprehensive assessment was undertaken of the policies and objectives contained in the draft Westmeath County Development Plan as part of the SEA screening process. These considerations are set out in the Environmental Report of the proposed Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014-2020, and include the pre-screening for the Appropriate Assessment by assessment against a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO) solely relating to the potential for impacts on Natura 2000 network.

Mitigation was designed and applied to policy and objectives of an early draft of the proposed LAP in advance of the AA screening exercise.

2.1 Impact prediction/existing and proposed mitigation measures

2.1.1 Water supply requirements

The absence of data presented a particular problem in the consideration of this issue at both County Development plan and Mullingar Local Area Plan level. In the case of both plans, mitigation by policy was designed and applied in the form of a combined development/future plan led approach.

An objective was included in the LAP to collect data and prepare a report in an effort to understand the issues arising from implementation of the LAP, and for this report to be used in the consideration of any future development applications.

2.1.2 Waste water treatment requirements

As with the water abstraction issue, the adopted Local Area Plan contains a number of provisions derived from consideration of this issue at CDP level. The adopted approach seeks to address the concerns expressed regarding assimilative capacity of the Brosna through a development led approach. This was considered to represent mitigation by policy, which predated the screening of the LAP and therefore did not trigger a stage 2 assessment.

3 Reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in the light of other reasonable alternatives considered as part of the AA process

As the proposed LAP was screened out of the requirement for further consideration, alternatives were not given consideration in the context of Appropriate Assessment.

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

It is considered that the Council's commitment to the Habitats Directive and Appropriate Assessment as presented in the Mullingar Local Area Plan and the Westmeath County Development Plan, including the mitigation measures in the Plans, based on the findings of the Appropriate Assessment process, will be sufficient to prevent inappropriate development that could result in significant negative impacts on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites from occurring.

The Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014-2020 has been formulated to ensure that developments and effects arising from implementation of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

