



**PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO SUPPORT SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT
OF VARIATION NO. 1 TO THE BOYLE LOCAL AREA PLAN 2015-2021**

ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Appropriate Assessment Screening Report: Purpose and Process

Roscommon County Council is preparing Variation No. 1 to the adopted Boyle Local Area Plan 2015-2021 (hereafter referred to as the “BLAP”). The key purpose of this Variation to the Boyle Local Area Plan is to give expression to changes required as part of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and update the written text and maps of the Boyle LAP accordingly.

In summary, the proposed Variation comprises the addition of objectives and policies, as well as the alteration of existing objectives and policies, to address the Council’s approach to vacant sites, as well as background text to provide context for these additions. The proposed amendments to the existing Boyle Local Area Plan 2015-2021 are detailed in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Proposed Amendments to the BLAP 2015-2021 (Variation No. 1)

Table 1.1 Proposed Amendments to the BLAP (Variation No. 1) *

<p>➤ Chapter 5- Vision and Development Strategy</p> <p>Objective 2: improve the vibrancy of the town core by encouraging the philosophy of re-use and redevelopment of existing vacant buildings. Those properties on the Vacant Site Register are of particular relevance.</p> <p>Section 5.2.1: Development Strategy for Residential Development</p> <p>Additional Text: The Council will maintain a Vacant Site Register and implement the Vacant Site Levy as required by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015, as a mechanism to stimulate site activation in urban areas, which is intended to “bring underutilised vacant sites and buildings into beneficial use, ensuring more sustainable urban development and an efficient return on state investment in enabling infrastructure.”¹The site activation measure aims to encourage the release of zoned lands at key locations in order to stimulate development, deliver housing at appropriate locations, and, stimulate the regeneration of vacant urban sites.</p>
<p>➤ Chapter 6- Land Use Zoning figure and Matrix</p> <p>Section 6.1.1: Land Use Zoning Objectives and Matrix- <u>Land Use Zoning Objectives</u></p> <p>This plan identifies specific areas for specific types of land use in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and the Land Use Zoning Maps reflect this detail.</p> <p>Additional Text: In addition, explanatory maps have been provided which apply specific hatching over the Land Use Zones for “Residential” lands to give effect to the requirements of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015. The hatching applies to lands where the Vacant Site Levy may apply.</p>
<p>➤ Chapter 7- Policies and Objectives</p> <p>Section 7.11: Built and Natural Heritage</p> <p>Objective 54: Positively and actively encourage redevelopment of vacant, derelict and obsolete sites in a manner that is sympathetic with and complimentary to the inherent</p>

¹ Circular letter PL6/2015, 31 August 2015.

character of neighbouring structures and the historic character of the town.

Section 7.12: Economic Development and Employment

Policies for Retail and Commercial Development

Policy 88: Encourage consolidation of the existing retail core of the town through the reuse and regeneration of derelict and vacant buildings for retail uses in line with the Sequential Approach, and in order to prevent—

- (i) adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land,
- (ii) urban blight and decay,
- (iii) anti-social behaviour, or
- (iv) a shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses.

Those properties listed on the Vacant Sites Register are of particular relevance.

Policy 89: Encourage and facilitate the reuse of existing vacant units outside the town centre for alternative uses provided proposals are not contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Those listed on the Vacant Sites Register are of particular relevance.

Section 7.13: Urban Development and Design

Policies for Residential Development

Policy 100: Identify and facilitate the development and renewal of vacant sites, obsolete areas, derelict sites and derelict buildings in a manner appropriate to the area, including the completion of unfinished residential estates.

Policy 102: To provide for the renewal of areas in need to regeneration in order to prevent—

- (i) adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land,
- (ii) urban blight and decay,
- (iii) anti-social behaviour, or
- (iv) a shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses.

➤ Chapter 8- Development Management and the Built Form

Section 8.3.4: Dereliction, Vacancy and Regeneration

2. Vacant Sites Register and Levy

The Council will maintain a Vacant Site Register and implement the Vacant Site Levy as required by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015, as a mechanism to stimulate site activation in urban areas, which is intended to “bring underutilised vacant sites and buildings into beneficial use, ensuring more sustainable urban development and an efficient return on state investment in enabling infrastructure.”² The site activation measure aims to encourage the release of zoned lands at key locations in order to stimulate development, deliver housing at appropriate locations, and, stimulate the regeneration of vacant urban sites.

*Additional text brought in through the proposed Variation No. 1 is shown in red

² Circular letter PL6/2015, 31 August 2015.

Proposed land use plans and proposed variations must undergo a formal “test” or “screening” to ascertain whether they are likely to result in any significant adverse effects on specific sites designated for their nature conservation importance. These sites are those designated under the European Commission’s Natura 2000 network of sites (hereafter “European sites”³). These sites are designated on the basis of the presence of certain habitats and species that are deemed to be of international importance. The Irish Government and local planning authorities have a legal obligation to protect these sites.

The EC Habitats and Birds Directives are the framework for the designation of these sites. The EC Habitats Directive requires the “screening” of plans and projects under Article 6(3). If the screening process results in a judgement that likely significant effects may occur or cannot be ruled out, then a more detailed ‘appropriate assessment’ (AA) is required.

Scott Cawley Ltd. was appointed by Roscommon County Council to analyse the proposed Variation during early stages of preparation and prepare an AA Screening Report to inform the Council’s own AA Screening.

2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

The Boyle LAP and its Variations set out the vision and direction for the strategic future development of the town and its environs.

Boyle is located in north County Roscommon, c. 44km north of Roscommon town. The LAP area is in a strategic location and accessibility is a key advantage, with the town being served well by a well-developed road infrastructure.

The town of Boyle is located within the Upper Shannon catchment and the Boyle sub-catchment. According to the EPA’s online Map Viewer, the River Boyle flows through the centre of the town. The River Boyle then flows north-eastwards where it passes through “*Lough Key*”, before turning south-east and passing through “*Lough Eidin*”, after which it converges with the River Shannon (Upper). The River Shannon flows in a south-easterly direction, along the county border between Roscommon and Offaly, and into “*Lough Derg*”. From here, it flows along the southern border of Clare and through Limerick City, passing through “*Limerick Dock*”, the “*Upper Shannon Estuary*” and “*Lower Shannon Estuary*”, before ultimately discharging into the coastal waterbody of the “*Mouth of the Shannon*”. The waters of the River Boyle are of “*Good (Q4)*” quality both upstream and downstream of the town centre, as measured at the EPA’s designated monitoring stations “*Footbridge 1.8km u/s of Boyle*” and “*Drum Bridge (Boat House Ford)*” respectively. The waters of the River Shannon (Upper) are also of “*Good (Q4)*” quality downstream its confluence with the River Boyle. The three aforementioned lakes are deemed to be “*Oligotrophic/Mesotrophic*” and the transitional waterbodies of the “*Upper Shannon Estuary*” and “*Lower Shannon Estuary*” are considered “*Unpolluted*”. The “*Mouth of the Shannon*” coastal waterbody is considered “*Unpolluted*” also. As such, there have been no breaches of the EPA’s threshold values for nutrient enrichment, accelerated plant growth, or disturbance of the level of dissolved

³ Natura 2000 sites are defined under the Habitats Directive (Article 3) as a European ecological network of special areas of conservation composed of sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II. The aim of the network is to aid the long-term survival of Europe’s most valuable and threatened species and habitats. In Ireland these sites are designed as *European sites* - defined under the Planning Acts and/or Birds and Habitats Regulations as (a) a candidate site of Community importance, (b) a site of Community importance, (c) a candidate special area of conservation, (d) a special area of conservation, (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area. They are commonly referred to in Ireland as candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

oxygen normally present under the EPA's "Trophic Status Assessment Scheme" classification (EPA 2010).

The subject lands are located within the "*Curlew Mountains*" and "*Carrick-on-Shannon*" groundwater bodies. According to the EPA Envision Map Viewer these groundwater bodies are described as '*poorly productive bedrock*' and '*karstic*' respectively. According to GSI Map Viewer, these two groundwater bodies of the area are also described as '*Locally Important Aquifer- Bedrock which is moderately productive only in local zones*' and '*regionally important aquifer- karstified (conduit)*' respectively. The level of vulnerability to groundwater contamination from human activities ranges from '*low*' to '*extreme*' and '*rock at or near the surface*'. The bedrock of the area is classified as '*Dinantian Lower Impure Limestones*', '*Dinantian Mixed Sandstones, Shales and Limestones*' and '*Dinantian Pure Bedded Limestones*'.

3 IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES, GENERIC THREATS AND PRESSURES

As part of the analysis of the proposed Variation, all European sites (SACs and SPAs) within the zone of influence of the BLAP's boundary were identified. Any Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) which were deemed to act as connecting features to European Sites were identified. NHAs, pNHAs and other designated sites such as Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries and Ramsar sites do not form part of the European site network, however they often provide an important supporting role to the network, particularly when it comes to fauna species which often do not obey site boundaries. A list of all European sites, NHAs and pNHAs located within the BLAP's zone of influence can be found in Section 3.1.

Threats and pressures to the integrity of the European sites and hence the sensitivities of the qualifying interests (QI) and special conservation interests (SCI) of the European sites within the zone of influence of the BLAP have been identified. Threats and pressures for QI bird species were extracted from "*Annex 2: Bird Species' status and trends reporting format for the period 2008-2012*" (NPWS, 2008), while those for habitats and protected species (except birds) were taken from "*The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland: Habitat Assessments Volume 2, Version 1.1*" (NPWS, 2013) and "*The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland: Species Assessments Volume 3, Volume 1.1*" (NPWS, 2013). Information on the parameters contributing to achieving and/or maintaining favourable conservation condition were largely compiled from a range site specific conservation objectives (SSCOs) downloaded from the NPWS website, but is also based on professional judgement. Generic threats and pressures to key environmental and ecological conditions required for QIs/SCIs can be found in Section 3.1 also.

3.1 European Sites

The analyses identified 6 SACs and 2 SPAs within 15km of the BLAP boundary –

- Lough Arrow SAC
- Unshin River SAC
- Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC
- Cloonshanville SAC
- Callow Bog SAC
- Tullaghanrock Bog SAC

- Bellanagare Bog SAC
- Lough Arrow SPA
- Lough Gara SPA
- Bellanagare Bog SPA

Figure 1 shows all European sites within 15km of the BLAP boundary. Information regarding these European Sites located within 15km of the BLAP are outlined in Table 2.1.1.

Table 2.1.1. European Sites within 15km of the Draft Plan.

European Sites within 15km of the Draft Plan			
Site Code	Special Areas of Conservation	Site Code	Special Protection Areas
Sites within 15km of Draft Plan's Boundary			
001673	Lough Arrow SAC	004050	Lough Arrow SPA
001898	Unshin River SAC	004048	Lough Gara SPA
001656	Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC	004105	Bellanagare Bog SPA
000614	Cloonshanville SAC		
000595	Callow Bog SAC		
002354	Tullaghanrock Bog SAC		
000592	Bellanagare Bog SAC		

The Qualifying Interests of the European Sites within 15km of the BLAP boundary are presented in Table 2.1.2 below.

Table 2.1.2 Qualifying Interests of European sites within the BLAP's Zone of Influence

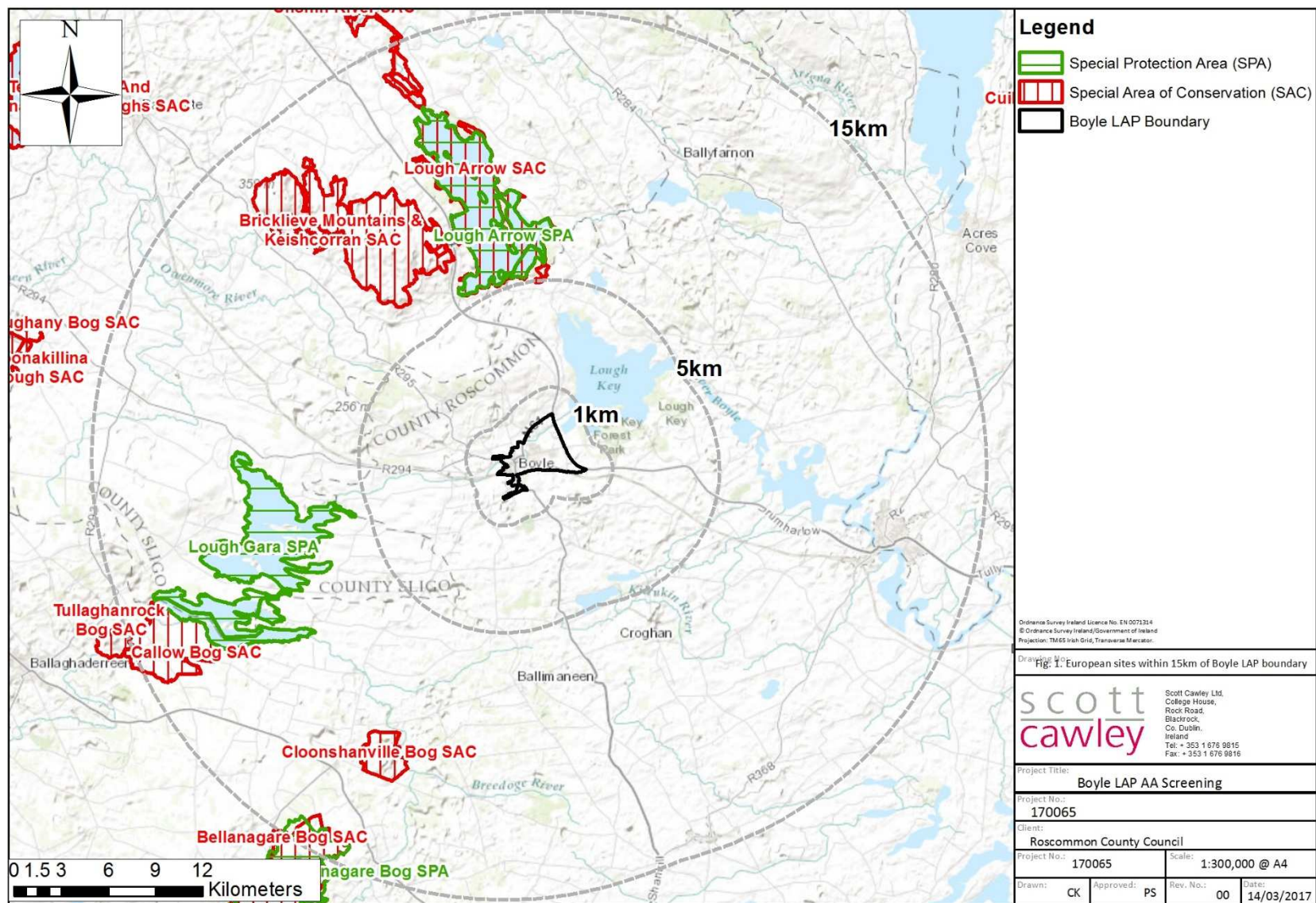
Qualifying Interests of European sites within the BLAP's Zone of Influence	
Site Name:	Lough Arrow SAC
Site Code:	001673
Distance:	c.5.4km north-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. [3140]
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Generic Conservation Objectives for Lough Arrow SAC [001673] (15/08/2016)</i>	
Site Name:	Unshin River SAC
Site Code:	001898
Distance:	c. 12.5km north-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranuncion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] ▪ Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites)* [6210] ▪ Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] ▪ Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)* [91E0] ▪ Salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> [1106] ▪ Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> [1355]
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Generic Conservation Objectives for Unshin River SAC [001898] (15/08/2016)</i>	
Site Name:	Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC
Site Code:	001656
Distance:	c. 6.7km north-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Turloughs* [3180]

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites)* [6210] ▪ Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510] ▪ Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>) [8120] ▪ Marsh Fritillary <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> [1065] ▪ White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> [1092]
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Generic Conservation Objectives for Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC</i> [001656] (15/08/2016)	
Site Name:	Cloonshanville SAC
Site Code:	000614
Distance:	c. 9.5km south-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active raised bogs* [7110] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] ▪ Bog woodland* [91D0]
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Conservation Objectives for Cloonshanville Bog SAC</i> [000614] (21/01/2016)	
Site Name:	Callow Bog SAC
Site Code:	000595
Distance:	c. 12.5km south-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active raised bogs* [7110] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Conservation Objectives for Callow Bog SAC</i> [000595] (19/01/2016)	
Site Name:	Tullaghanrock Bog SAC
Site Code:	002354
Distance:	c. 15km south-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active raised bogs* [7110] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]
Source: (NPWS, 2015) <i>Conservation Objectives for Tullaghanrock Bog SAC</i> [002354] (15/12/2015)	
Site Name:	Bellanagare Bog SAC
Site Code:	000592
Distance:	c. 14.7km south-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active raised bogs [7110]* ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]
Source: (NPWS, 2015) <i>Conservation Objectives: Ballanagare Bog SAC</i> [000592] (27/11/2015)	
Site Name:	Lough Arrow SPA
Site Code:	004050
Distance:	c.5.4km north-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> [A004] ▪ Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i> [A061]
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Generic Conservation Objectives for Lough Arrow SPA</i> [004050] (15/08/2016)	
Site Name:	Lough Gara SPA
Site Code:	004048

Distance:	c. 5.6km south-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> [A038] Greenland White-fronted Goose <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> [A395]
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Generic Conservation Objectives for Lough Gara SPA [004048] (15/08/2016)</i>	
Site Name:	Bellanagare Bog SPA
Site Code:	004105
Distance:	c. 14.9km south-west
Qualifying Interests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Generic Conservation Objectives for Bellanagare Bog SPA [004105] (15/08/2016)</i>	

These European sites were regarded to have source-pathway-receptor relationships with the plan area and therefore any likelihood of significant impacts either in isolation or combination with elements of the BLAP or other plans and projects, could not be immediately ruled out.

***Figure 1. European Sites within 15km of the Boyle LAP
Boundary.***



Sites of national importance were also considered throughout this screening exercise. 3 NHA sites and 13 pNHA sites are located within the BLAP's zone of influence. These sites were considered as they were deemed to provide connectivity to European sites. These sites are presented in Table 2.1.3 below.

Table 2.1.3 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas within the zone of influence of the BLAP

Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas within the Zone of Influence of the BLAP		
Site Code	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)	Distance from Draft Plan's Boundary
001652	Tullaghan Bog NHA	c. 4.8km south-west
000603	Cornaveagh Bog NHA	c. 6.8km south-west
000591	Bella Bridge Bog NHA	c. 7.5km south-west
Site Code	proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)	Distance from Draft Plan's Boundary
001631	Drum Bridge (Lough Key) pNHA	<50m east
001651	Tawnytaskin Wood (Lough Key) pNHA	c. 820m north-east
001638	Hog's Island (Lough Key) pNHA	c. 1.7km north-east
001633	Drumman's Island (Lough Key) pNHA	c.2km east
000596	Corrigeenroe Marsh pNHA	c. 3.2km north-east
000587	Lough Gara pNHA	c. 5.6km south-west
001636	Fin Lough pNHA	c. 4.22km east
001643	Lough Drumharlow pNHA	c. 6.2km east
001673	Lough Arrow pNHA	c.5.4km north-west
001656	Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran pNHA	c. 6.7km north-west
001905	Feenagh and Bunnamuck Loughs pNHA	c. 13.9km north-west
001898	Unshin River pNHA	c. 12.5km north-west
002013	Tullaghanrock Bog pNHA	c. 15km south-west
000614	Cloonshanville Bog pNHA	c. 9.5km south-west
001222	Ardagh Bog pNHA	c. 9.3km south-west
001412	Drumhierny Wood pNHA	c.14.8km north-east

The ecological interest of these national sites are outlined in Table 2.1.4 below while a map of these sites is presented in Figure 2 (overleaf).

Table 2.1.4 Ecological Interests of National sites within the BLAP's zone of influence boundary

Ecological Interests of National sites within the BLAP's Zone of Influence	
Site Name:	Tullaghan Bog NHA
Site Code:	001652
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tullaghan Bog NHA is a site of considerable conservation significance comprising as it does a raised bog, a rare habitat in the E. U. and one that is becoming increasingly scarce and under threat in Ireland. The site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including hummocks and a flush.
<i>Source: (NPWS, 2002) Site Synopsis for Tullaghan Bog NHA [001652] (14/11/2002)</i>	
Site Name:	Cornaveagh Bog NHA
Site Code:	000603
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cornaveagh Bog NHA is a site of considerable conservation significance, comprising as it does, a raised bog, a rare habitat in the E.U. and one that is becoming increasingly scarce and under threat in Ireland. The site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including hummocks, pools and a flush.

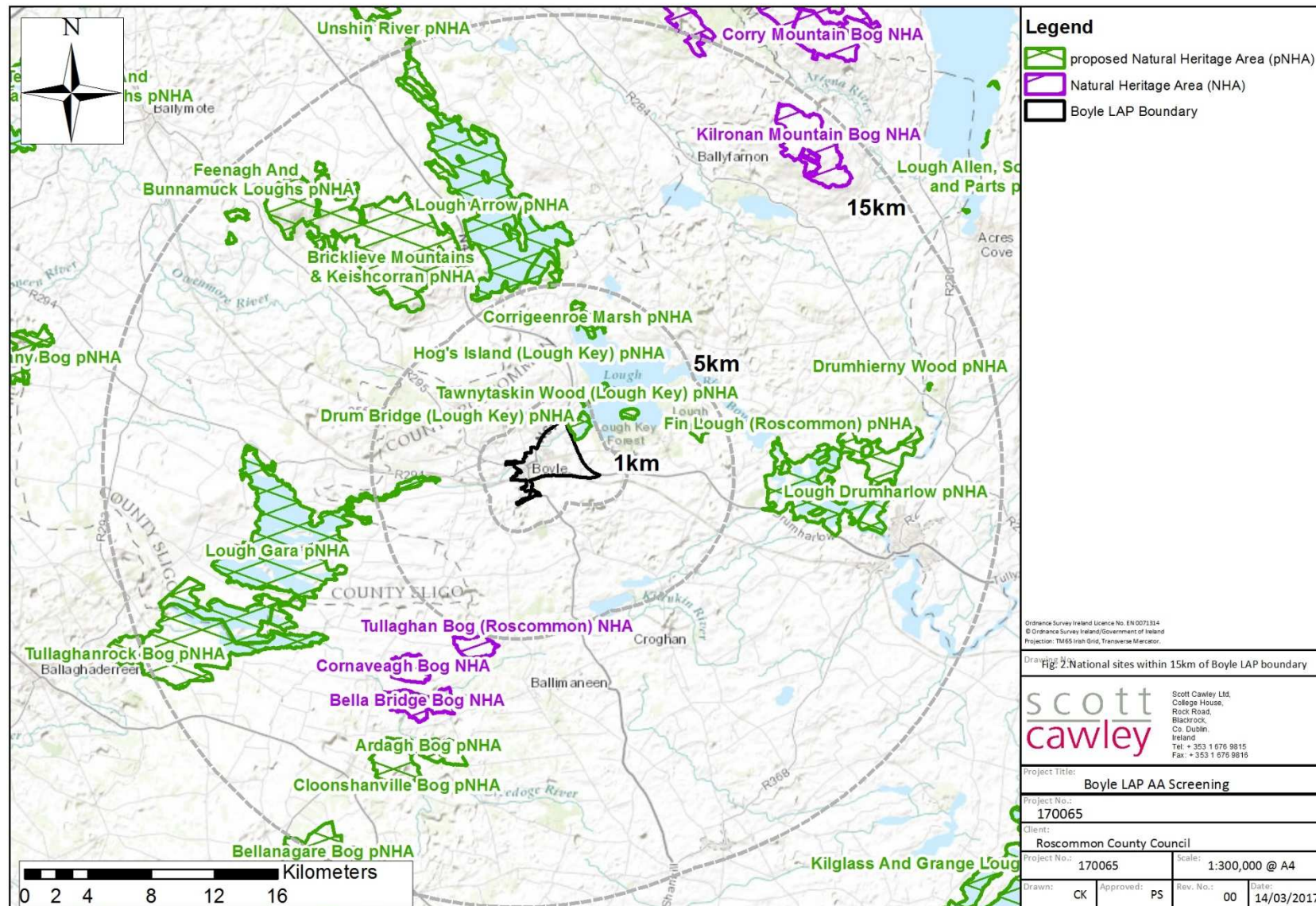
Source: (NPWS, 2002) <i>Site Synopsis for Cornaveagh Bog NHA [000603] (14/11/2002)</i>	
Site Name:	Bella Bridge Bog NHA
Site Code:	000591
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bella Bridge Bog NHA is a site of considerable conservation significance, comprising as it does, a raised bog, a rare habitat in the E.U. and one that is becoming increasingly scarce and under threat in Ireland. ▪ The site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including hummocks, pools and a flush.
Source: (NPWS, 2002) <i>Site Synopsis for Bella Bridge Bog NHA [000591] (14/11/2002)</i>	
Site Name:	Drum Bridge (Lough Key) pNHA
Site Code:	001631
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This site has been rated as probably the most valuable of the marshes around Lough Key. ▪ It is important because of the outstanding diversity of plant species and much of the site is suitable for nesting birds such as Mallard, Coot, Grebes and Water Rail.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for Drum Bridge (Lough Key) pNHA [001631] (24/11/2009)</i>	
Site Name:	Tawnytaskin Wood (Lough Key) pNHA
Site Code:	001651
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The woodland is considered of local importance with a varied woodland flora. The wetter woodland along the lake shore seems to be spreading.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for Tawnytaskin Wood (Lough Key) pNHA [001651] (24/11/2009)</i>	
Site Name:	Hog's Island (Lough Key) pNHA
Site Code:	001638
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The woodland cover on the island provides a good nesting site for several species of warbler and other songbirds. ▪ The woodland is a good example of natural regeneration and is significant given the rarity of woodland within the county.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for Hog's Island (Lough Key) pNHA [001638] (24/11/2009)</i>	
Site Name:	Drumman's Island (Lough Key) pNHA
Site Code:	001633
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In spite of the occurrence of exotic tree and shrub species, the woodland is of considerable value as it is one of the only oakwoods on good soil in the country. ▪ The diverse nature of the woodlands and the presence of at least two uncommon plant species (Bird's-nest Orchid (<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>) and Buckthorn (<i>Rhamnus catharticus</i>)) also enhance the value of the site.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for Drumman's Island (Lough Key) pNHA [001633] (24/11/2009)</i>	
Site Name:	Corrigeenroe Marsh pNHA
Site Code:	000596
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This marshland has a good mix of plant communities and has a good shoreline habitat associated with Lough Key. These habitats are rare due to widespread drainage of wetlands and are of scientific interest.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for Corrigeenroe Marsh pNHA [000596] (11/11/2009)</i>	
Site Name:	Lough Gara pNHA
Site Code:	000587
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lough Gara SPA is of high ornithological importance principally

	<p>on account of the internationally important populations of Greenland White-fronted Goose and Whooper Swan that are associated with the lake.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lough Gara is used regularly by an internationally important population of Greenland White-fronted Goose and an internationally important population of Whooper Swan. ▪ The following bird species are known to use the lake; Great Crested Grebe, Mute Swan, Wigeon, Teal, Mallard, Shoveler, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Goldeneye, Lapwing and lesser Black-backed Gull. ▪ The occurrence of these species, along with Golden Plover, is of particular note as they are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. ▪ Lough Gara is a Ramsar Convention site and a Wildfowl Sanctuary.
Source: (NPWS, 2014) <i>Site Synopsis for Lough Gara SPA [004048] (07/07/2014)</i>	
Site Name:	Fin Lough pNHA
Site Code:	001636
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This site has considerable ecological interest due to the diversity of habitats and the extent of the fen vegetation within the site. ▪ The lake supports populations of nesting wildfowl and Reed Buntings.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for Fin's Lough pNHA [001636] (24/11/2009)</i>	
Site Name:	Lough Drumharlow pNHA
Site Code:	001643
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drumharlow Lough is a large complex of habitats typical of the Shannon Lakes and the lake and surrounding grasslands are important sites for the internationally important Goose species.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for Lough Drumharlow pNHA [001643] (24/11/2009)</i>	
Site Name:	Lough Arrow pNHA
Site Code:	001673
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lough Arrow and its environs incorporate a variety of habitats, including the E.U. Habitats Directive Annex I listed habitat, hard water lake. ▪ The site also supports important numbers of birds ▪ The diversity of lakeshore vegetation and the presence of protected species, in particular Otter, adds to the conservation significance of the site.
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>Site Synopsis for the Lough Arrow SAC [001673] (06/11/2013)</i>	
Site Name:	Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran pNHA
Site Code:	001656
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran are exceptionally diverse in habitats and species and form a discrete unit of scenic and amenity value. ▪ The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive: Turloughs, orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland, Lowland Hay Meadows, Calcareous Scree, Marsh Fritillary, White-clawed Crayfish. ▪ The site is notable for supporting an excellent population of the scarce butterfly, Marsh Fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>), a species that is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. ▪ Lough na Leibe also supports a good population of White-

	<p>clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>), a species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is also of geomorphological, geological and archaeological importance. Overall, this site is of high conservation importance.
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>Site Synopsis for the Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC [001673] (06/11/2013)</i>	
Site Name:	Feenagh and Bunnamuck Loughs pNHA
Site Code:	001905
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This small site is of ecological interest because it is a complex wetland area with a very good selection of plant communities. It contains eight species which are rare in the catchment including one, Hemp-agrimony, which was seen nowhere else.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for Feenagh and Bunnamuck Loughs pNHA [001905] (27/11/2009)</i>	
Site Name:	Unshin River pNHA
Site Code:	001898
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive: Floating river Vegetation, Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland, Molinia Meadows, Alluvial Forests. The Unshin and its tributaries form a very important system for Atlantic Salmon, a species that is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive The Annex II species Otter has been recorded in and near this site. Two notable bird species which occur along the river are Whooper Swan, which feeds in the wet grasslands that flank the river, and Kingfisher. Both are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.
Source: (NPWS, 2016) <i>Site Synopsis for the Unshin River SAC [001898] (11/02/2016)</i>	
Site Name:	Tullaghanrock Bog pNHA
Site Code:	002013
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tullaghanrock Bog is a site of considerable conservation significance as it comprises a raised bog, a rare habitat in the E.U. and one that is becoming increasingly scarce and under threat in Ireland. This site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including hummock/hollow complexes, pools, flushes and regenerating cutover. The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive: Raised Bog, Degraded Raised Big and <i>Rhynchosporion</i> Vegetation.
Source: (NPWS, 2014) <i>Site Synopsis for the Tullaghanrock Bog SAC [002354] (09/01/2014)</i>	
Site Name:	Cloonshanville Bog pNHA
Site Code:	000614
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cloonshanville Bog is a site of high conservation importance as it contains good examples of the Annex I habitats bog woodland, active raised bog, degraded raised bog and <i>Rhynchosporion</i> depressions on peat substrates, with the first two habitats being listed with priority status. The area of bog woodland ranks as one of the most extensive and well-preserved examples of wet bog woodland in the country. The bog also supports a large population of the uncommon bog

	moss, <i>Sphagnum pulchrum</i> .
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>Site Synopsis for the Cloonshanville Bog SAC [000614] (04/09/2013)</i>	
Site Name:	Ardagh Bog pNHA
Site Code:	001222
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Site Synopsis available
No Site Synopsis available	
Site Name:	Drumhierny Wood pNHA
Site Code:	001412
Ecological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This wood is an example of oak woodland on a base-rich soil which is a rare occurrence in Ireland as such areas are usually cleared for agriculture. It is probably one of the best areas of mature oakwood in the county. ▪ A number of uncommon bird species have been recorded from the woodlands.
Source: (NPWS, 2009) <i>Site Synopsis for the Drumhierny Wood pNHA [001412] (20/11/2009)</i>	

Figure 2. National Sites within 15km of the Boyle LAP Boundary and surrounding environs.



3.2 Threats and Pressures

The threats to, and pressures on, the integrity of the 8 European sites, as obtained from relevant published NPWS materials are displayed below (Table 2.2.1), followed by generic threats and pressures specific to their qualifying interests. None of the threats and pressures listed below would be regarded to be potential consequences of implementing the proposed Variation.

Table 3.2.1 Threats and Pressures

Threats and Pressures	
Site Specific Threats/Pressures:	
Site Name:	Lough Arrow SAC
Site Code:	001673
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Piers/ tourist harbours or recreational piers ▪ Sports and leisure structures ▪ Removal of hedges or copses of scrub ▪ Infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for Lough Arrow SAC [001673]</i>	
Site Name:	Unshin River SAC
Site Code:	001898
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agricultural intensification ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Forest and plantation management and use ▪ Management of aquatic and bankside vegetation for drainage purposes
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for the Unshin river SAC [001898]</i>	
Site Name:	Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC
Site Code:	001656
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agricultural intensification ▪ Restructuring agricultural land holding ▪ Burning down existing vegetation ▪ Intensive sheep grazing ▪ Paths, tracks, cycling tracks ▪ Mechanical removal of peat ▪ Hunting, fishing or collecting activities not referred to above ▪ Removal of hedges or copses of trees
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for the Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC [001656]</i>	
Site Name:	Cloonshanville Bog SAC
Site Code:	000614
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grazing ▪ Restructuring agricultural land holding ▪ Forest planting on open ground ▪ Peat extraction ▪ Roads, motorways ▪ Noise nuisance, noise pollution ▪ Modifying structures of inland water courses ▪ Fertilisation
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for Cloonshanville Bog SAC [000614]</i>	
Site Name:	Callow Bog SAC
Site Code:	000595
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grazing ▪ Mowing/cutting of grassland ▪ Sylvicultural, forestry ▪ Peat extraction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paths, tracks, cycling tracks Roads, motorways Fire and fire suppression
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for Callow Bog SAC [000595]</i>	
Site Name:	Tullaghanrock Bog SAC
Site Code:	002354
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grazing Sylviculture, forestry Cultivation Peat extraction Landfill, land reclamation and drying out general
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for Tullaghanrock Bog SAC [002354]</i>	
Site Name:	Bellanagare SAC
Site Code:	000592
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanical removal of peat Invasive non-native species Modification of hydrographic functioning, general Disposal of household/ recreational facility waste
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for Bellanagare Bog SAC [000592]</i>	
Site Name:	Lough Arrow SPA
Site Code:	004050
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fertilisation Leisure fishing
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for Lough Arrow SPA [004050]</i>	
Site Name:	Lough Gara SPA
Site Code:	004048
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fertilisation Sylviculture, forestry
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for Lough Gara SPA [004048]</i>	
Site Name:	Bellanagare SPA
Site Code:	004105
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grazing Forest planting on open ground Peat extraction Roads, motorways Modifying structures of inland water courses
Source: (NPWS, undated) <i>NATURA 2000- Standard Data Form for Bellanagare Bog SPA [004105]</i>	
Habitat Specific Threats/Pressures:	
Habitat Name:	Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. [3140]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diffuse groundwater pollution due to agriculture and forestry activities Invasive non-native species Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to agricultural and forestry activities Pollution to surface waters by industrial plants Diffuse groundwater pollution due to non-sewered population Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to other sources not listed Pollution to surface waters by storm overflows Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to household sewage and waste waters Surface water abstractions for public water supply Changes in abiotic conditions
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	

Habitat Name:	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Problematic native species ▪ Garbage and solid waste ▪ Grazing in forests/ woodland
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to agricultural and forestry activities ▪ Pollution to surface waters by industrial plants ▪ Mechanical removal of peat ▪ Modification of hydrographic functioning, general
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites)* [6210]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Species composition change (succession) ▪ Problematic native species ▪ Fertilisation ▪ Intensive cattle grazing ▪ Walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles ▪ Garbage and solid waste ▪ Intensive horse grazing ▪ Stock feeding ▪ Abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing ▪ Agricultural intensification
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing ▪ Abandonment/lack of mowing ▪ Water abstractions from groundwater ▪ Species composition change (succession) ▪ Forest planting on open ground ▪ Paths, tracks, cycling tracks ▪ Problematic native species ▪ Agricultural intensification ▪ Artificial planting on open ground (non-native trees) ▪ Forest and plantation management and use ▪ Intensive cattle grazing ▪ Intensive horse grazing ▪ Fertilisation ▪ Accumulation of organic material
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Turloughs* [3180]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intensive cattle grazing ▪ Diffuse groundwater pollution due to agriculture and forestry activities ▪ Diffuse groundwater pollution due to non-sewered population ▪ Stock feeding ▪ Pollution to groundwater (point source and diffuse sources) ▪ Agricultural intensification

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Removal of stone wall and embankments ▪ Flooding and rising precipitations ▪ Grassland removal for arable land ▪ Abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing ▪ Species composition change (succession)
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grassland removal for arable land ▪ Abandonment/ lack of mowing ▪ Fertilisation ▪ Species composition change (succession) ▪ Problematic native species ▪ Dredging/ removal of limnic sediments ▪ Agricultural intensification
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>) [8120]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-intensive sheep grazing ▪ Mining and quarrying ▪ Paths, tracks, cycling tracks ▪ Air pollution, air-borne pollutants ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Changes in abiotic conditions ▪ Changes in biotic conditions
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Active raised bogs* [7110]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water abstractions from groundwater ▪ Peat extraction ▪ Artificial planting on open ground (non-native trees) ▪ Fire and fire suppression ▪ Mining and quarrying ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Problematic native species ▪ Grazing ▪ Motorised vehicles
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water abstractions from groundwater ▪ Peat extraction ▪ Artificial planting on open ground (non-native trees) ▪ Fire and fire suppression ▪ Mining and quarrying ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Problematic native species ▪ Grazing ▪ Motorised vehicles
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-intensive sheep grazing ▪ Artificial planting on open ground (non-native species) ▪ Hand cutting of peat

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mechanical removal of peat ▪ Air pollution, air-borne pollutants ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Burning down existing vegetation ▪ Water abstractions from groundwater ▪ Erosion ▪ Changes in abiotic conditions ▪ Changes in biotic conditions
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Habitat Name:	Bog woodland* [91D0]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peat extraction ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions ▪ Burning down existing vegetation ▪ Intensive grazing ▪ Grazing in forests/ woodland ▪ Problematic native species ▪ Disposal of household/ recreational facility waste ▪ Roads, motorways
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.1.</i>	
Species Specific Threats/Pressures:	
Species Name:	Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agricultural intensification ▪ Intensive sheep grazing ▪ Fertilisation ▪ Artificial planting on open ground (non-native trees) ▪ Forest replanting (non-native trees) ▪ Use of fertilisers (forestry) ▪ Peat extraction ▪ Disposal of household/ recreational facility waste ▪ Disposal of industrial waste ▪ Intensive fish farming, intensification ▪ Poaching ▪ Pollution to surface waters by industrial plants ▪ Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to agricultural and forestry activities ▪ Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to household sewage and waste waters ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Modification of hydrographic functioning, general ▪ Water abstraction from surface waters ▪ Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes ▪ Predation ▪ Threats and pressures from outside the Member State
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Species Assessments Volume 3. Version 1.1.</i>	
Species Name:	Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roads and motorways ▪ Professional passive fishing ▪ Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish)
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Species Assessments Volume 3. Version 1.1.</i>	
Species Name:	Marsh Fritillary <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> [1065]

Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agricultural intensification ▪ Abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing ▪ Species composition change (succession) ▪ Forest planting on open ground ▪ Missing or wrongly directed conservation measures ▪ Anthropogenic reduction of habitat connectivity ▪ Peat extraction
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Species Assessments Volume 3. Version 1.1.</i>	
Species Name:	White-clawed Crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> [1092]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invasive non-native species ▪ Leisure fishing ▪ Dredging/ removal of limnic sediments ▪ Management of aquatic and bankside vegetation of drainage purposes ▪ Introduction of disease (microbial pathogens) ▪ Pollution to surface waters (limnic and terrestrial, marine and brackish)
Source: (NPWS, 2013) <i>The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Species Assessments Volume 3. Version 1.1.</i>	
Species Name:	Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> [A004]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No specific threats or pressures detailed
Source: http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=ie/eu/art12/envuvesya/IE_birds_reports-14328-144944.xml&conv=343&source=remote#A206_B	
Species Name:	Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i> [A061]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No specific threats or pressures detailed
Source: http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=ie/eu/art12/envuvesya/IE_birds_reports-14328-144944.xml&conv=343&source=remote#A206_B	
Species Name:	Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> [A038]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utility and service lines ▪ Renewable abiotic energy use ▪ Modification of cultivation practices ▪ Agriculture activities not referred to above ▪ Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities ▪ Other forms of pollution
Source: http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=ie/eu/art12/envuvesya/IE_birds_reports-14328-144944.xml&conv=343&source=remote#A206_B	
Species Name:	Greenland White-fronted Goose <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> [A395]
Threats/Pressures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Changes in biotic conditions ▪ Modification of cultivation practices ▪ Annual and perennial non-timber crops ▪ Renewable abiotic energy use ▪ Utility and service lines ▪ Improved access to site ▪ Marine and freshwater aquaculture ▪ Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial) ▪ Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities ▪ Marine water pollution ▪ Grazing ▪ Agriculture activities not referred to above ▪ Forest planting on open ground

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other forms of pollution ▪ Interspecific faunal relations ▪ Changes in abiotic conditions
Source: http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=ie/eu/art12/envuvesya/IE_birds_reports-14328-144944.xml&conv=343&source=remote#A206_B	

Following on from the identification of the main threats and pressures to the integrity of the European Sites within the zone of influence, these threats and pressures were grouped into impact types. Impact types were determined by the nature of activities (relevant to the BLAP's Variation No. 1) which could potentially result in such impacts occurring, e.g. agricultural and rural activities may lead to grazing. A summary of the main pressures and threats with regard to impact types is presented in Table 3.2.2 below.

Table 3.2.2 Summary of Pressures and Threats on QIs/SCIs in the zone of influence of the BLAP

Summary of Pressures and Threats on QIs/SCIs in the zone of influence of the BLAP	
Agricultural and Rural activities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of hedges or copses of scrub • Infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits • Agricultural intensification • Forest and plantation management and use • Restructuring agricultural land holding • Intensive sheep grazing • Mechanical removal of peat • Hunting, fishing or collecting activities not referred to above • Grazing • Forest planting on open ground • Peat extraction • Fertilisation • Artificial planting on open ground (non-native trees) • Intensive horse grazing • Hand cutting of peat • Forest replanting (non-native trees) • Poaching • Marine and freshwater aquaculture • Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mowing/cutting of grassland • Sylvicultural, forestry • Cultivation • Diffuse groundwater pollution due to agriculture and forestry activities • Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to agricultural and forestry activities • Diffuse groundwater pollution due to non-sewered population • Grazing in forests/ woodland • Intensive cattle grazing • Stock feeding • Abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing • Abandonment/lack of mowing • Forest planting on open ground • Removal of stone wall and embankments • Grassland removal for arable land • Non-intensive sheep grazing • Use of fertilisers (forestry) • Intensive fish farming, intensification • Modification of cultivation practices • Agriculture activities not referred to above
Economic and Infrastructure Development, Communications and Energy Network Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of aquatic and bankside vegetation for drainage purposes • Roads, motorways • Landfill, land reclamation and drying out general • Pollution to surface waters by industrial plants • Water abstractions from groundwater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dredging/ removal of limnic sediments • Mining and quarrying • Disposal of industrial waste • Utility and service lines • Renewable abiotic energy use • Surface water abstractions for public water supply
Tourism, Recreation and Leisure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piers/ tourist harbours or recreational piers • Sports and leisure structures • Paths, tracks, cycling tracks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposal of household/ recreational facility • Professional passive fishing • Outdoor sports and leisure activities,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure fishing 	recreational activities
Other	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invasive non-native species Burning down existing vegetation Noise nuisance, noise pollution Modifying structures of inland water courses Fire and fire suppression Problematic native species Garbage and solid waste Modification of hydrographic functioning, general Air pollution, air-borne pollutants Changes in biotic conditions Erosion Predation Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish) Introduction of disease (microbial pathogens) Annual and perennial non-timber crops Improved access to site Interspecific faunal relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to other sources not listed Pollution to surface waters by storm overflows Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to household sewage and waste waters Changes in abiotic conditions Species composition change (succession) Accumulation of organic material Pollution to groundwater (point source and diffuse sources) Flooding and rising precipitations Motorised vehicles Threats and pressures from outside the Member State Missing or wrongly directed conservation measures Anthropogenic reduction of habitat connectivity Other forms of pollution Marine water pollution

4 OVER-ARCHING POLICIES & OBJECTIVES CONTAINED WITHIN THE ROSCOMMON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2014-2020)

The following “protective” policies and objectives were extracted from the Roscommon County Development Plan (2014-2020). They are regarded as the strategic policies and objectives for the County and will be implemented in the Boyle Local Area Plan. In this way measures in the County Development Plan which set out to protect ecological networks and resources will, through the planning hierarchy, help to prevent any adverse effects on European sites (and their supporting networks) which may arise as a result of implementing the proposed Variation No. 1 to the Boyle Local Area Plan.

Chapter 3: Economic Development

Objective 3.9: “Ensure that agricultural development and intensification is screened for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, where required”.

Policy 3.39: “Discourage new (non-broadleaf) forestry development in proposed/candidate/adopted NHAs, SACs and SPAs, in designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, water quality sensitive areas, along designated Scenic Routes. Broadleaf forestry may be open to consideration on a case by case basis in some of these areas and in some proposed/candidate/adopted NHAs, SPAs and SACs, subject to consultation with the DEHLG, screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and shall have regard to any management plans prepared by the DAHG/NPWS”.

Policy 3.52: “No wind energy development or Pumped Hydro Electric Storage (PHES) schemes will be considered in any Natura 2000 site or their surrounding buffer areas. All renewable energy schemes will be subject to screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. Only proposals that will not adversely affect the integrity any Natura 2000 site will be permitted. Where an Appropriate Assessment or Environmental Impact Assessment is to be carried out for any renewable energy project, proponents of such projects shall adhere to the minimum survey requirements for protected species and habitats as included in the Natura Impact Report that accompanies this Plan”.

Policy 3.61: “Ensure that all projects associated with the extractive industry carry out screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, where required”.

Policy 3.63: “Promote Roscommon as a cultural, heritage and eco-tourism destination in order to diversify the range of tourist facilities in the county. All tourist developments will be screened for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive”.

Chapter 4: Infrastructure

Policy 4.18: “Ensure that all road plans and project proposals in the County, including improvement works on national and non – national roads which could, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, undergo an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive. Any proposal for new roads will be subject to route selection, emphasising the avoidance of Natura 2000 sites where possible”.

Policy 4.25: “All proposals for the development an upgrade of the water supply in the County will be screened for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive”.

Policy 4.36: “Ensure all developments included in the Water Services Investment Programme (WSIP) will be screened for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive”.

Policy 4.41: “Protect and enhance the County’s turloughs, lake/river floodplains and wetlands as strategically important green infrastructure which provides space for storage and conveyance of floodwater and enables flood risk to be more effectively managed, subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive”.

Policy 4.71: “Ensure that all plans and projects associated with telecommunication networks will be subject to screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive”.

Chapter 5: Housing

Policy 5.7: “Ensure that, where relevant, housing development will be subject to screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive”.

Policy 5.42: *“Prohibit residential development protection areas. Housing arising from locally generated need exceptional circumstances”.*

Policy 5.43: *“Ensure that development in, near or likely to affect a designated site should avoid any significant adverse impact on any features or species for which that site has been designated and require an Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment as appropriate”.*

Chapter 7: Natural Heritage and Landscape Character

Policy 7.1: *“Protect proposed and designated Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation”.*

Objective 7.2: ***“Ensure Appropriate Assessment Screening, and, where required, Appropriate Assessment, is carried out for any plan or project which, individually, or in combination with other plans and projects is likely to have a significant direct or indirect impact on any Natura 2000 site or sites; in accordance with best practice guidance as issued by the National Parks & Wildlife Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht and/or the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government”.***

5 CONCLUSION OF THE SCREENING PROCESS

Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular, the nature of the Variation and its potential relationship with European sites, as well as considering other plans and projects, and applying the precautionary principle, it is the professional opinion of the authors of this report that it is possible to rule out likely significant effects on all European sites. This judgement has been reached for the reasons outlined below.

- **The nature of the Variation and the lack of any viable “source-pathway-receptor” linkages:** While linkages between the European sites and the LAP area do exist, the absence of a source of an impact is regarded as the limiting factor in this situation. The Variation will not result in any changes to zonings of land and merely outlines the approach the Council will take to vacant sites within the LAP area, upon adoption of the variation. Therefore, no source for potential impacts on European sites exist.

For this reason, it is the professional opinion of the authors of this report that the proposed Variation No. 1 to the Boyle Local Area Plan 2015-2021 does not require an Appropriate Assessment.

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