S. 37

File With _____

SECTION 131 FORM

Appeal NO:_ABP -321866-25 **Defer Re O/H** ☐

Having considered the contents of the submission ~~dated~~/ received 7/03/2025. from

P.A. I recommend that section 131 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 ~~be~~/not be invoked at this stage for the following reason(s): no new material planning issues.

E.O.: Karen Byrne **Date:** 7/04/2025.

For further consideration by SEO/SAO

Section 131 not to be invoked at this stage. ☐

Section 131 to be invoked – allow 2/4 weeks for reply. ☐

S.E.O.: _____ **Date:** _____

S.A.O: _____ **Date:** _____

M _____

Please prepare BP _____ **- Section 131 notice enclosing a copy of the attached submission**

to: _____ **Task No:** _____

Allow 2/3/4weeks – BP _____

EO: _____ **Date:** _____

AA: _____ **Date:** _____

S. 37

File With _____

CORRESPONDENCE FORM

Appeal No: ABP - 321866-25

M c Sutton

Please treat correspondence received on 7/03/2025 **as follows:**

1. Update database with new agent for Applicant/Appellant _____	
2. Acknowledge with BP 23	**1. RETURN TO SENDER with BP** _____
3. Keep copy of Board's Letter ☐	2. Keep Envelope: ☐
	3. Keep Copy of Board's letter ☐

Amendments/Comments
P.A. response to S.131 notice.

4. Attach to file	**RETURN TO EO** ☑
(a) R/S ☐ (d) Screening ☐	
(b) GIS Processing ☐ (e) Inspectorate ☐	
(c) Processing ☐	Karen Byrne

	Plans Date Stamped ☐
	Date Stamped Filled in ☐
EO: Karen Byrne	**AA:**
Date: 11/03/2025	**Date:** 12/03/25

Derek Kelly

From:	Bord
Sent:	Friday 7 March 2025 13:40
To:	Appeals2; Karen Byrne
Subject:	FW: Appeal - ABP-321866-25 Our Ref PL20-251
Attachments:	13. Signed Appeal comments to ABP (7 Mar '25).pdf

From: Planning Emails <planning@sligococo.ie>
Sent: Friday 7 March 2025 13:39
To: Bord <bord@pleanala.ie>
Cc: Planning Emails <planning@sligococo.ie>
Subject: Appeal - ABP-321866-25 Our Ref PL20-251

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Apologies, the correct subject reference is above

From: Planning Emails <planning@sligococo.ie>
Sent: Friday, March 7, 2025 1:35 PM
To: bord@pleanala.ie
Cc: Planning Emails <planning@sligococo.ie>
Subject: Appeal - ABP-321886-25 Our Ref PL24-60218

Your Ref: **ABP-321866-25**
Our Ref: **PL 20/251**

FAO/ Karen Byrne,

Further to your correspondence in relation to above appeal received from your office on 20th February, 2025, please find attached Sligo County Council's appeal submission.

Regards,

Fidelma Loughlin
Planning Section
Sráid na Céibhe, Shligigh, F91 PP44
Quay Street, Sligo

+353-71-9114458
floughlin@sligococo.ie
sligococo.ie | sligo.ie

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE SHLIGIGH
HALLA CATHRACH SRÁID NA CÉ SLIGEACH
SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
CITY HALL QUAY STREET SLIGO
+353 71 911 1111
+353 71 914 1119
info@sligococo.ie
www.sligococo.ie

7th March, 2025

Your ref: **ABP-321866-25**
Our ref: **PL 20/251**

Karen Byrne,
Executive Officer,
An Bord Pleanala,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1 D01 V902

Re: 20 year planning permission with 30 year operational life. Construction of 2 wind turbines, 1 meterological mast and all associated site development works. A concurrent planning application is being lodge with Leitrim County Council. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been submitted. Townlands of Carrowmore and Carrownyclowan, Geevagh, County Sligo

Dear Ms Byrne,

The following are the recommended comments in response to the appeal:

The Planning Authority refers the Board to the Planner's Report and other reports prepared in connection with the assessment of this application, as well as the decision of the planning authority to grant planning permission. At the time of decision, the subject development was considered to be in accordance with CDP 2017-2023 (as varied).

However, since our decision on this application, the Sligo County Development Plan (CDP) 2024-2030 has been adopted and come into effect.

As such, it is noted that the following are now considered to be the relevant provisions of the **County Development Plan 2024 -2030** given the nature and scale of the appeal:

Relevant Sections of the County Development Plan 2024-2030 Energy Policies include:
P-EN-1 Support the sustainable development, upgrading and maintenance of energy generation, transmission, storage and distribution infrastructure, to ensure the security of energy supply and provide for future needs, as well as protection of the landscape, natural, archaeological and built heritage, and residential amenity.

P-EN-2 Facilitate the production of energy from renewable sources and secure the maximum potential from wind energy resources within County Sligo, including the augmentation, upgrading and improvements to existing wind farms, subject to strict location, siting and design criteria. All such development proposals will be assessed for their potential impact on urban and rural communities, Natura 2000 sites, designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas, Scenic Routes and scenic views, and all other normal planning considerations.

P-EN-7 Facilitate proposals for secure, appropriately scaled energy storage infrastructure, including green hydrogen gas storage, which support energy efficiency and reusable energy systems, subject to assessment of their potential impact on communities, environmental assessments and normal planning considerations

P-EN-8 Support proposals for hybrid energy systems and co-location of renewable energy infrastructure where it can be demonstrated that such developments will not have adverse impacts on the surrounding environment.

Renewable Energy Objectives include:

O-REN-2 Prepare a Renewable Energy Strategy for County Sligo within one year of the publication of the Regional Renewable Electricity Strategy (NWRA) or the revised Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (SEAI), as provided for in the Climate Action Plan 2024, whichever occurs first.

Section 31.3 Renewable energy
In County Sligo, the principal renewable energy sources are wind and micro-renewables (such as small-scale hydro plants and domestic solar panels). There are opportunities for other sources, such as green hydrogen and biomethane. It must be recognised that gas, particularly renewable and indigenous gas, will continue to have a role to play in the transition to a low carbon economy. As such, renewable energy developments may require support from such sources in times of high energy demand.

Section 31.3.1 Wind energy developments
Sligo's mountainous landscape and exposed location on the western seaboard combine to create good conditions for the generation of wind power. According to the Sustainable Energy Association Ireland (SEAI), the wind farm capacity available in the County in 2023 was 96 MW, produced by seven wind farms located at Kings Mountain, Dunneill, Carran Hill, Geevagh, Blacklough, Derrysallagh and Lackan.

The wind energy potential available in the County is indicated in the Wind Atlas, a digital map providing details on wind speeds, current windfarms etc, maintained on the website of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to support potential developers and community groups in the initial planning stages.

Pressure for future wind farm development is likely to be concentrated in upland and coastal areas, particularly where energy providers can access the national electricity grid. The siting of wind turbines requires careful consideration. While turbines located on elevated sites tend to have a higher output, they also have a significant visual impact. Visual obtrusiveness depends on the location, layout, size, number, design and colour of the turbines, as well as the subjective perceptions of the viewer.

It is a challenge for the Council to achieve a reasonable balance between: (a) responding to government policy on renewable energy; and (b) enabling the wind energy resources of the County to be harnessed in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019

The Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019 contain a specific planning policy requirement (SPPR 1), requiring the Planning Authority to:

- ensure that national policy on renewable energy is acknowledged in the development plan, referring to the National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030 and the Climate Action Plan 2019.
- indicate how the implementation of the development plan will contribute to realising the national targets on renewable energy, in particular wind energy (in megawatts);
- demonstrate compliance with Section 3.4 of the Draft Guidelines, e.g. by setting objectives and identifying suitable areas for wind energy production, among other items.

At the time of writing (2024), the final Wind Energy Development Guidelines had not yet been issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Furthermore, the national renewable energy target set in the CAP 2019 (70% of total electricity, including up to 8.2 GW increased onshore wind capacity) has been superseded by the CAP23.

The revised targets require up to 80% of electricity to be produced from renewable sources by 2030, including 9 GW from onshore wind and at least 5 GW from offshore wind.

The CAP23 also contains three relevant Actions (EL/23/2, EL/23/3 and EL23/4) providing for the preparation of:

A Renewable Electricity Spatial Policy Framework;

A Roadmap for the development and implementation of Regional Renewable Electricity Strategies;

New Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines for onshore renewables.
Sligo County Council will prepare a Renewable Energy Strategy in accordance with the forthcoming Regional Renewable Electricity Strategy and the revised Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (a measure contained in Section 12.3.1 of CAP23), when published. In the interim period, the Planning Authority will continue to assess all wind energy development proposal using the criteria set out in the DECLG's Wind Energy Guidelines (2006).

Section 31.3.8 Energy storage –
Energy storage systems such as batteries and green hydrogen storage, along with grid stability services, are some of the technologies that will be essential to smoothing out the natural variability that occurs in renewable energy sources and to provide electricity at times of peak demand. Utility-scale battery storage systems enable more efficient use of renewable energy. "Green hydrogen", which is produced from renewable energy sources, offers potential for large-scale, seasonal storage of variable renewable energy. This enables zero-carbon backup to the power system when intermittent renewables such as wind and solar power are not available.

Section 24.1.1 Protecting biodiversity - designated sites

P-DSNC-1 Protect and maintain the conservation status of all natural heritage sites designated or proposed for designation in accordance with European and national legislation and agreements. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), Ramsar Sites, Statutory Nature Reserves, as identified by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and any other sites that may be proposed for designation during the lifetime of this Plan. In addition, the Council will identify, maintain and develop non-designated areas of high nature conservation value which serve as linkages or 'stepping stones' between protected sites in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

P-DSNC-3 Carry out an appropriate level of assessment for all development plans, land-use plans and projects that the Council authorizes or proposes to undertake or adopt, to determine the potential for these plans or projects to impact on designated sites, proposed designated sites or associated ecological corridors and linkages in accordance with the Habitats Directive. All appropriate assessments shall be in compliance with the provisions of Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

P-DSNC-4 Ensure that all development proposals are subject to the process of Screening for Appropriate Assessment and subsequent stages of Appropriate Assessment, as relevant, carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, in consultation with National Parks and Wildlife Service, as appropriate.

24.1.4 Wetlands

P-WET-1 Have regard to the County Sligo Wetlands Surveys 2008-2011 and subsequent wetland surveys that may be published during the lifetime of this Plan. Protect surveyed wetland sites that have been rated of A (International), B (National) and C+ (County) importance.

P-WET-2 Ensure that an ecological assessment at an appropriate level (including EIA, where appropriate) is undertaken in conjunction with proposals involving drainage, reclamation or infilling of wetland habitats.

Landscape Character:
The site is located within an area designated as normal rural landscape and a sensitive rural landscape.

Normal Rural Landscapes: areas with natural features (e.g. topography, vegetation) which generally have the capacity to absorb a wide range of new development forms – these are farming areas and cover most of the County.
Certain areas located within normal rural landscapes may have superior visual qualities, due to their specific topography, vegetation pattern, the presence of traditional farming or residential structures. These areas may have limited capacity for development or may be able to absorb new development only if it is designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing environment.

Sensitive Rural Landscapes: areas that tend to be open in character, highly visible, with intrinsic scenic qualities and a low capacity to absorb new development – e.g. Knocknarea, the Dartry Mountains, the Ox Mountains, Aughris Head, Mullaghmore Head etc

The most relevant landscape protection policies are;

P-LCP-1 Protect the physical landscape, visual and scenic character of County Sligo and seek to preserve the County's landscape character. Planning applications for developments that have the potential to impact significantly and adversely upon landscape character, especially in Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas and along Scenic routes, may be required to be accompanied by a visual impact assessment using agreed and appropriate viewing points and methods for the assessment.

P-LCP-2 Discourage any developments that would be detrimental to the unique visual character of designated Visually Vulnerable Areas.

P-LCAP-4 Strictly control new development in designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, while considering exceptions that can demonstrate a clear need to locate in the area concerned. Ensure that any new development in designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes:

- does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of the area;
- does not detract from the scenic value of the area;
- meets high standards of siting and design;
- satisfies all other criteria with regard to, inter alia, servicing, public safety and prevention of pollution.

Archaeological heritage policies:

P-AH-1 Protect, manage, and enhance archaeological sites, monuments and landscapes, underwater archaeology (including protected wrecks), historic burial grounds (including their setting, appreciation and visual amenity) listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), the Register of Historic Monuments, and any additional newly discovered archaeological sites and/or sub-surface archaeological remains. This shall be done in accordance with conservation principles and best practice guidelines.

P-AH-2 Require Archaeological Impact Assessment, surveys, test excavation and/or monitoring, as appropriate, for development in the vicinity of monuments or in areas of archaeological potential. Where there are upstanding remains, a visual assessment may be required.

P-AH-3 Require the preservation of the context, amenity, visual integrity and connection of archaeological monuments to their setting. Views to and from archaeological monuments shall not be obscured by inappropriate development. Where appropriate, Archaeological Visual Impact Assessments will be required to demonstrate the continued preservation of an archaeological monument's siting and context.

P-AH-4 Require Archaeological Impact Assessments, geophysical survey, test excavations or monitoring, as appropriate, where development proposals involve ground clearance of more than 0.5 ha, for linear developments over 1 km in length, and for developments in proximity to areas of known archaeological monuments and history of discovery, as identified by suitably qualified archaeologists.

P-AH-5 Secure the preservation in situ or by record of:

- the archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994;
- any sites and features of historical and archaeological interest;
- any subsurface archaeological features that may be discovered during the course of infrastructural/development works in the operational area of the Plan.

Preservation relates to archaeological sites or objects and their settings. Preservation in situ is most effectively achieved by the refurbishment of existing buildings, in situations where it is possible to retain the greater part of existing structures without the need for new foundations.

Yours sincerely,

S. Gillen

Siobhán Gillen
Administrative Officer
Planning Section

Sligo.

Karen Byrne

From: Appeals2
Sent: Friday 7 March 2025 13:46
To: Karen Byrne
Subject: FW: Appeal - ABP-321886-25 Our Ref PL24-60218
Attachments: 13. Signed Appeal comments to ABP (7 Mar '25).pdf

From: Bord <bord@pleanala.ie>
Sent: Friday, March 7, 2025 1:40 PM
To: Appeals2 <appeals@pleanala.ie>; Karen Byrne <K.Byrne@pleanala.ie>
Subject: FW: Appeal - ABP-321886-25 Our Ref PL24-60218

From: Planning Emails <planning@sligococo.ie>
Sent: Friday 7 March 2025 13:35
To: Bord <bord@pleanala.ie>
Cc: Planning Emails <planning@sligococo.ie>
Subject: Appeal - ABP-321886-25 Our Ref PL24-60218

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Your Ref: **ABP-321866-25**
Our Ref: **PL 20/251**

FAO/ Karen Byrne,

Further to your correspondence in relation to above appeal received from your office on 20th February, 2025, please find attached Sligo County Council's appeal submission.

Regards,

Fidelma Loughlin
Planning Section
Sráid na Céibhe, Shligigh, F91 PP44
Quay Street, Sligo

+353-71-9114458
floughlin@sligococo.ie
sligococo.ie | sligo.ie

Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh
Sligo.

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE SHLIGIGH
HALLA CATHRACH SRÁID NA CÉ SLIGEACH
SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL
CITY HALL QUAY STREET SLIGO
+353 71 911 1111
+353 71 914 1119
info@sligococo.ie
www.sligococo.ie

7th March, 2025

Your ref: **ABP-321866-25**
Our ref: **PL 20/251**

Karen Byrne,
Executive Officer,
An Bord Pleanala,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1 D01 V902

Re: 20 year planning permission with 30 year operational life. Construction of 2 wind turbines, 1 meterological mast and all associated site development works. A concurrent planning application is being lodge with Leitrim County Council. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been submitted. Townlands of Carrowmore and Carrownyclowan, Geevagh, County Sligo

Dear Ms Byrne,

The following are the recommended comments in response to the appeal:

The Planning Authority refers the Board to the Planner's Report and other reports prepared in connection with the assessment of this application, as well as the decision of the planning authority to grant planning permission. At the time of decision, the subject development was considered to be in accordance with CDP 2017-2023 (as varied).

However, since our decision on this application, the Sligo County Development Plan (CDP) 2024-2030 has been adopted and come into effect.

As such, it is noted that the following are now considered to be the relevant provisions of the **County Development Plan 2024 -2030** given the nature and scale of the appeal:

Relevant Sections of the County Development Plan 2024-2030 Energy Policies include:
P-EN-1 Support the sustainable development, upgrading and maintenance of energy generation, transmission, storage and distribution infrastructure, to ensure the security of energy supply and provide for future needs, as well as protection of the landscape, natural, archaeological and built heritage, and residential amenity.

P-EN-2 Facilitate the production of energy from renewable sources and secure the maximum potential from wind energy resources within County Sligo, including the augmentation, upgrading and improvements to existing wind farms, subject to strict location, siting and design criteria. All such development proposals will be assessed for their potential impact on urban and rural communities, Natura 2000 sites, designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas, Scenic Routes and scenic views, and all other normal planning considerations.

P-EN-7 Facilitate proposals for secure, appropriately scaled energy storage infrastructure, including green hydrogen gas storage, which support energy efficiency and reusable energy systems, subject to assessment of their potential impact on communities, environmental assessments and normal planning considerations

P-EN-8 Support proposals for hybrid energy systems and co-location of renewable energy infrastructure where it can be demonstrated that such developments will not have adverse impacts on the surrounding environment.

Renewable Energy Objectives include:

O-REN-2 Prepare a Renewable Energy Strategy for County Sligo within one year of the publication of the Regional Renewable Electricity Strategy (NWRA) or the revised Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (SEAI), as provided for in the Climate Action Plan 2024, whichever occurs first.

Section 31.3 Renewable energy
In County Sligo, the principal renewable energy sources are wind and micro-renewables (such as small-scale hydro plants and domestic solar panels). There are opportunities for other sources, such as green hydrogen and biomethane. It must be recognised that gas, particularly renewable and indigenous gas, will continue to have a role to play in the transition to a low carbon economy. As such, renewable energy developments may require support from such sources in times of high energy demand.

Section 31.3.1 Wind energy developments
Sligo's mountainous landscape and exposed location on the western seaboard combine to create good conditions for the generation of wind power. According to the Sustainable Energy Association Ireland (SEAI), the wind farm capacity available in the County in 2023 was 96 MW, produced by seven wind farms located at Kings Mountain, Dunneill, Carran Hill, Geevagh, Blacklough, Derrysallagh and Lackan.

The wind energy potential available in the County is indicated in the Wind Atlas, a digital map providing details on wind speeds, current windfarms etc, maintained on the website of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to support potential developers and community groups in the initial planning stages.

Pressure for future wind farm development is likely to be concentrated in upland and coastal areas, particularly where energy providers can access the national electricity grid. The siting of wind turbines requires careful consideration. While turbines located on elevated sites tend to have a higher output, they also have a significant visual impact. Visual obtrusiveness depends on the location, layout, size, number, design and colour of the turbines, as well as the subjective perceptions of the viewer.

It is a challenge for the Council to achieve a reasonable balance between: (a) responding to government policy on renewable energy; and (b) enabling the wind energy resources of the County to be harnessed in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019

The Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019 contain a specific planning policy requirement (SPPR 1), requiring the Planning Authority to:

- ensure that national policy on renewable energy is acknowledged in the development plan, referring to the National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030 and the Climate Action Plan 2019.
- indicate how the implementation of the development plan will contribute to realising the national targets on renewable energy, in particular wind energy (in megawatts);
- demonstrate compliance with Section 3.4 of the Draft Guidelines, e.g. by setting objectives and identifying suitable areas for wind energy production, among other items.

At the time of writing (2024), the final Wind Energy Development Guidelines had not yet been issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Furthermore, the national renewable energy target set in the CAP 2019 (70% of total electricity, including up to 8.2 GW increased onshore wind capacity) has been superseded by the CAP23.

The revised targets require up to 80% of electricity to be produced from renewable sources by 2030, including 9 GW from onshore wind and at least 5 GW from offshore wind.

The CAP23 also contains three relevant Actions (EL/23/2, EL/23/3 and EL23/4) providing for the preparation of:

A Renewable Electricity Spatial Policy Framework;

A Roadmap for the development and implementation of Regional Renewable Electricity Strategies;

New Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines for onshore renewables.
Sligo County Council will prepare a Renewable Energy Strategy in accordance with the forthcoming Regional Renewable Electricity Strategy and the revised Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (a measure contained in Section 12.3.1 of CAP23), when published. In the interim period, the Planning Authority will continue to assess all wind energy development proposal using the criteria set out in the DECLG's Wind Energy Guidelines (2006).

Section 31.3.8 Energy storage –
Energy storage systems such as batteries and green hydrogen storage, along with grid stability services, are some of the technologies that will be essential to smoothing out the natural variability that occurs in renewable energy sources and to provide electricity at times of peak demand. Utility-scale battery storage systems enable more efficient use of renewable energy. "Green hydrogen", which is produced from renewable energy sources, offers potential for large-scale, seasonal storage of variable renewable energy. This enables zero-carbon backup to the power system when intermittent renewables such as wind and solar power are not available.

Section 24.1.1 Protecting biodiversity - designated sites

P-DSNC-1 Protect and maintain the conservation status of all natural heritage sites designated or proposed for designation in accordance with European and national legislation and agreements. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), Ramsar Sites, Statutory Nature Reserves, as identified by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and any other sites that may be proposed for designation during the lifetime of this Plan. In addition, the Council will identify, maintain and develop non-designated areas of high nature conservation value which serve as linkages or 'stepping stones' between protected sites in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

P-DSNC-3 Carry out an appropriate level of assessment for all development plans, land-use plans and projects that the Council authorizes or proposes to undertake or adopt, to determine the potential for these plans or projects to impact on designated sites, proposed designated sites or associated ecological corridors and linkages in accordance with the Habitats Directive. All appropriate assessments shall be in compliance with the provisions of Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

P-DSNC-4 Ensure that all development proposals are subject to the process of Screening for Appropriate Assessment and subsequent stages of Appropriate Assessment, as relevant, carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, in consultation with National Parks and Wildlife Service, as appropriate.

24.1.4 Wetlands

P-WET-1 Have regard to the County Sligo Wetlands Surveys 2008-2011 and subsequent wetland surveys that may be published during the lifetime of this Plan. Protect surveyed wetland sites that have been rated of A (International), B (National) and C+ (County) importance.

P-WET-2 Ensure that an ecological assessment at an appropriate level (including EIA, where appropriate) is undertaken in conjunction with proposals involving drainage, reclamation or infilling of wetland habitats.

Landscape Character:
The site is located within an area designated as normal rural landscape and a sensitive rural landscape.

Normal Rural Landscapes: areas with natural features (e.g. topography, vegetation) which generally have the capacity to absorb a wide range of new development forms – these are farming areas and cover most of the County.
Certain areas located within normal rural landscapes may have superior visual qualities, due to their specific topography, vegetation pattern, the presence of traditional farming or residential structures. These areas may have limited capacity for development or may be able to absorb new development only if it is designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing environment.

Sensitive Rural Landscapes: areas that tend to be open in character, highly visible, with intrinsic scenic qualities and a low capacity to absorb new development – e.g. Knocknarea, the Dartry Mountains, the Ox Mountains, Aughris Head, Mullaghmore Head etc

The most relevant landscape protection policies are;

P-LCP-1 Protect the physical landscape, visual and scenic character of County Sligo and seek to preserve the County's landscape character. Planning applications for developments that have the potential to impact significantly and adversely upon landscape character, especially in Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas and along Scenic routes, may be required to be accompanied by a visual impact assessment using agreed and appropriate viewing points and methods for the assessment.

P-LCP-2 Discourage any developments that would be detrimental to the unique visual character of designated Visually Vulnerable Areas.

P-LCAP-4 Strictly control new development in designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, while considering exceptions that can demonstrate a clear need to locate in the area concerned. Ensure that any new development in designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes:

- does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of the area;
- does not detract from the scenic value of the area;
- meets high standards of siting and design;
- satisfies all other criteria with regard to, inter alia, servicing, public safety and prevention of pollution.

Archaeological heritage policies:

P-AH-1 Protect, manage, and enhance archaeological sites, monuments and landscapes, underwater archaeology (including protected wrecks), historic burial grounds (including their setting, appreciation and visual amenity) listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), the Register of Historic Monuments, and any additional newly discovered archaeological sites and/or sub-surface archaeological remains. This shall be done in accordance with conservation principles and best practice guidelines.

P-AH-2 Require Archaeological Impact Assessment, surveys, test excavation and/or monitoring, as appropriate, for development in the vicinity of monuments or in areas of archaeological potential. Where there are upstanding remains, a visual assessment may be required.

P-AH-3 Require the preservation of the context, amenity, visual integrity and connection of archaeological monuments to their setting. Views to and from archaeological monuments shall not be obscured by inappropriate development. Where appropriate, Archaeological Visual Impact Assessments will be required to demonstrate the continued preservation of an archaeological monument's siting and context.

P-AH-4 Require Archaeological Impact Assessments, geophysical survey, test excavations or monitoring, as appropriate, where development proposals involve ground clearance of more than 0.5 ha, for linear developments over 1 km in length, and for developments in proximity to areas of known archaeological monuments and history of discovery, as identified by suitably qualified archaeologists.

P-AH-5 Secure the preservation in situ or by record of:

- the archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994;
- any sites and features of historical and archaeological interest;
- any subsurface archaeological features that may be discovered during the course of infrastructural/development works in the operational area of the Plan.

Preservation relates to archaeological sites or objects and their settings. Preservation in situ is most effectively achieved by the refurbishment of existing buildings, in situations where it is possible to retain the greater part of existing structures without the need for new foundations.

Yours sincerely,

S. Gillen

Siobhán Gillen
Administrative Officer
Planning Section

Sligo.