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Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Determination

under
Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
for the

Emerging Draft Loughrea Local Area Plan 2024-2030

In order to comply with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, this determination has been made by Galway County Council relating to the potential for the emerging Draft Loughrea Local Area Plan 2024-2030 to have effects on the integrity European Sites.

In making the determination that Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required, the information on the potential effects on the integrity of European Sites arising from the emerging Draft Plan has been taken into account (this information will be placed on public display in the Natura Impact Report alongside the emerging Draft Plan). The process of screening for AA began at an early stage in the drafting of the Plan. The screening process assessed whether the emerging Draft Plan had the potential to have effects on the integrity of any European Site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

The screening process concluded that an AA of the emerging Draft Plan would be required, as the Plan: is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European Sites; and may, on the basis of objective information, individually, or in combination with other plans and projects, if unmitigated have adverse effects on the integrity of 4 (no.) European Sites.

Factors that could potentially affect the integrity of European Sites include:

- The Plan's provisions, including those relating to land use zoning, strategies for planning and development, town centre and economic development, sustainable communities, transport and connectivity, local heritage, infrastructure, energy and utilities, which introduce sources for potential effects through construction phase such as habitat loss, light pollution, disturbance effects and hydrological interactions through surface hydrological connectivity and/or shared groundwater sources;
- Loading pressures from the operational phase of developments – these sources could result in habitat loss/fragmentation, light pollution, disturbance effects and interactions with water quality (surface and/or groundwater); and
- Increases in visitor numbers to ecologically sensitive areas during the operational phase of developments which have potential to introduce sources for significant effects, such as recreational and tourism developments.

Therefore, Stage 2 AA (including the preparation of the Natura Impact Report) is required for the emerging Draft Plan.

The undersigned, having carefully considered the information referred to above agrees with and adopts the reasoning and conclusion presented above. The undersigned hereby determines pursuant to Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that it could not be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the emerging Draft Plan, individually, or in combination with other plans and projects would have a likely adverse effect on the integrity of a European Site. Therefore, an AA is required.

Signatory:

Brendan Dunne. A/S EP.

Date: 20.11.2023

Valerie Kayne f SP.