



Leitrim County Council

**Environmental Impact Assessment Screening
Report**

**Proposed Glenfarne Wood Project,
Glenfarne, Co Leitrim**

December 2023

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1. Introduction

This is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening report for the proposed development by Coillte CGA in partnership with Leitrim County Council to deliver an ambitious strategy to further develop and enhance the recreational offering of Glenfarne Wood, Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim. The purpose of this report is to screen the proposed development to establish whether it requires the undertaking of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and as a result, if an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required be prepared. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Statement and Ecological Impact Assessment Report have been prepared separately by Oran Ecology Ltd. and inform the preparation of this report.

The EIA requirement is determined as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended.

Projects listed in Schedule 5, Part 1, of the Regulations, shall be subject to systematic assessment (Article 4(1) of the EIA Directive) as they are deemed to be projects of scale that have significant effects on the environment. Others, listed in the Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Regulations, contain threshold levels. For projects that fall below these thresholds, it is the decision of the competent authority (in this case Leitrim County Council) to decide if an EIA (and the associated EIAR) is required or not. If the proposed development cannot be screened out of the need to prepare an EIAR, the proposed development cannot proceed through the Part 8 public consultation process and must be submitted to An Bord Pleanála for approval.

Whether a '*sub-threshold development*' should be subject to EIA is determined by the likelihood that the development would result in significant environmental effects. Significant effects may arise due to the nature of the development, its scale or extent and its location in relation to the characteristics of the receiving area, particularly sensitive environments. This report documents the methodology employed to complete the screening exercise, having regard to relevant legislation and guidance documents. It also sets out a clear rationale for each decision of this EIA screening exercise.

The screening process includes an assessment of the details of the proposal with reference to the relevant EIA legislation including the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) and relevant EU Guidance including *Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive*, EU, 2015 and *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening*, EU, 2017.

The EIA screening covers:

- i. Description of the proposed development
- ii. The legislative basis for EIA
- iii. Screening considerations
- iv. Conclusions

2. The Proposed Development

The proposed project is located in the townlands of Brockagh Lower, Moneyduff, Annagh, Laghty, Ardmoneen and Carrickrevagh, north of the Glenfarne village (Brockagh Lower), Co Leitrim. The project comprises the following elements:

Glenfarne Wood Gate Lodge Entrance / Amenity Start Point

An information point is needed for visitors arriving at Glenfarne Wood, a clear point of direction to the new trails and a hard stand area so as not to block the forest road from other users. The proposed development includes an information point and a small parking area for vehicles and bicycles, located adjacent to the new trails. This small car park and orientation point addresses a known issue whereby new visitors are uncertain and need clearer information. This facility will also provide a small trail head for a riverside greenway link to the main trailhead.

Trailhead

A new Trailhead central point for the overall woods is proposed, which will connect to the existing trail network within the woods as well as the proposed greenway from the Gate Lodge Entrance. The proposed Trailhead centre point includes a services building, car and bicycle parking, sheltered event space, open playground and a sensory trail.

Service Building

The Services Buildings will provide changing rooms and toilet facilities but also include a small office and storage facility.

Congregation Area

The extended roof of the Service Building will provide a rudimentary shelter to form part of a congregation area. The congregation area is suitable for small groups of circa 30 no. people for casual interaction, as a meeting point, a small group performance area or for an outdoor lecture. The alignment of the space with the service block and storage/shelter area provides electrical and other services and supports the use of this area as an adventure activities base. The shelter can be operated as either a shelter for participants in bad weather or as a partially enclosed interpretive space. There is also provision for a coffee / food truck to also provide additional services should the need for such services arise.

Playground

The proposed playground is located adjacent to the local road between the proposed new trailhead and the slipway, parallel to the existing road. The playground features will blend between the trees, and they will be primarily manufactured from wood. A peripheral fence will be installed to prevent children wandering, appropriate parental sightlines throughout and strategically placed benches for oversight will also be included. Individual play items will include a seesaw, low ropes course, slide, balance trail and a climbing frame. Equipment and surfacing will comply with standards and will be appropriate to the site and surrounding features.

Sensory Trail

The proposed sensory trail includes features, surfaces, objects and plants that stimulate the senses. This trail shall be calming with scented plants, wildlife friendly plants, a therapeutic space for people to recuperate, a learning zone with things to touch and smell and a fully universal accessible garden. A simple linear design sensory garden which is easy to reach, with level surfaces either close to the trailhead or within the arboretum area.

Lake Slipway & Forest Bathing

The current car park is located at the slipway but it becomes overcrowded and inconsiderate use can completely block access. Therefore, the area is being redesigned and the main car parking provision moved further back from the slipway and expanded to cope with the larger visitor numbers anticipated. The proposed development includes vehicle control measures, designated parking for slipway users only, a new trail access point, additional picnic benches and bike parking. The current interpretive and information points will also be enhanced. From the slip way area, a new trail will provide access to four specifically designed forest bathing locations. These locations have been specifically located in the adjacent forest to provide green based contemplative spaces one of which will be universally accessible.

Glenfarne Wood River Lake: Greenway

A key element of the Glenfarne Wood Options Report, and the subsequent Strategic Plan was to provide a connecting spine to the various outdoor recreation resources within the wood from the Gate Lodge entrance via Glenfarne Hall ruins to the Trailhead and lake.

A greenway standard trail will start at the Gate Lodge entrance and run parallel to the Glenfarne River. As the rivers meanders away from the forest, the proposed trail will link in with ruins of Glenfarne Hall before descending through a cutting to the new Trailhead.

Long Tom's View (Myle's Big Stone) Panoramic Platform

The existing Glenfarne Cycle and Walk Loop leads to one of the high points in the Wood known as 'Long Toms' where a glacial erratic boulder 'Myle's Big Stone' was deposited. The ground here falls steeply towards the lake and where a multi access viewing platform extending out from the *Myles Big Stone* will provide a panorama of the forest and the lake which cannot be otherwise seen within the forest. This wooden platform will stand above the tree line and will include two panorama information panels:

- Panel 1: The geological and social history of the area. This will be one of five such information sites within the wood.
- Panel 2: Information on the Marble Arch Cave Global Geo Park and the associated nearby features at Cuilcagh and Enniskillen.

The Native Tree Arboretum

The theme of the Glenfarne arboretum is a section or series of native trees which represent various parts of the county.

Ladies View Changing Place

Ladies View is an already popular open water swimming location facilitated by stepped access into the lake. A simple sheltered changing screen is planned to provide basic facilities for users.

Floating Boardwalk

One of the most magical aspects of Glenfarne is the interaction of the forest with the lake and to bring visitors as deeply into that experience as possible, a floating boardwalk is planned from just beyond Ladies View out to the wooded Bilberry Island and back to shore.

Within the context of the scale of the landholding by Coillte CGA (215 hectares) the full scope of the project is relatively small in scale (see Site Location Map overleaf). The key information as it pertains to Environmental Impact Assessment and thresholds is that the site is not located in an urban area, it is located in a rural area and the proposed development extends to an area of question is **4.78 hectares** (c.

11.8 acres) in size. It is outside of the area identified for the development envelop of Glenfarne (Brockagh Lower) in the County Development Plan 2023-2029 (Map No. 37 of Volume III refers).

The individual components of the proposed development have the following extents:

Area of works for trails including to Myles Rock:	1.6 ha
Area of works for the floating boardwalk:	0.08ha
Slipway area:	0.2 ha
Viewing Platform:	0.6 ha
Main trail head facilities including playground and parking:	1.9 ha
Entrance car park:	0.4ha
Total area:	4.78 hectares



Figure 1: Site Location Map

3. Legislative Basis for EIA

Directive 2011/92/EU was enacted as a means to assess the effects of projects on the environment, and to properly ensure that any potential significant effects are assessed before a project proceeds.

Annex I of Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU defines mandatory projects that require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Annex II lists projects which do not necessarily have significant effects but can be subject to case by case analysis or thresholds to be determined by member states. Section 172 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, provides the legislative basis for mandatory EIA. It states the following:

"An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by a planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for:

- (a) Proposed development of a class specified in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 which exceeds a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule, and*
- (b) Proposed development of a class specified in Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specific in that Schedule but which the planning authority or the Board determines would be likely to have significant effects on the environment"*

Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended outlines the legislative requirements for deciding whether a project needs a mandatory EIA. Projects that automatically require an EIA included in Annex 1 are listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Projects that are assessed either on a case-by-case examination or on the basis of set mandatory thresholds are defined under Annex II of the Directive, and these are transposed in Irish legislation in Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

4. Screening Considerations

4.1 Class of Development

In the first instance, it is necessary to determine whether the project is of a type (or 'class') that requires the preparation of an EIAR. This project does not correspond to any of the prescribed types listed in Annex I. However, it could be considered to correspond to the Infrastructure Projects type set out in Annex II, as discussed hereunder.

Infrastructure Projects

Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, includes this project type:

10. Infrastructure projects (b)

(iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

(In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

The overall area of the proposed development is **4.78 Hectares** (c. 11.8 Acres). The proposed development is not located within an urban area. The relevant threshold is therefore 20 hectares. The proposed development would therefore correspond to 23.9% of this threshold.

Therefore the proposal is a prescribed project type but is considered to be significantly below the applicable threshold as outlined above. **It is therefore concluded that the proposed development is well below the EIA thresholds and therefore mandatory EIA is not required.**

The proposed Greenway element of the overall proposed development does not meet the thresholds that require a mandatory EIAR under Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993, as amended, as this element of the overall project would be considered to constitute a public road.

4.2 Sub-threshold Development

As the proposed development corresponds to an Annex II project type but does not meet the prescribed thresholds above, the project at Glenfarne Wood is considered to be a '*sub-threshold*' development in the context of the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU).

In the case of developments which are under the relevant EIA threshold, but are of a class that is listed, screening of the development must be carried out against the criteria as set out in Schedule 7A of the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018) to determine whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. This is now amalgamated into the Planning and Development Regulations 2011-2021 within Schedule 7A.

Schedule 7A states the following:

Information to be provided by the Applicant or Developer for the Purposes of Screening Sub-Threshold Development for Environmental Impact Assessment

1. *A description of the proposed development, including in particular
 - (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and
 - (b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.*
2. *A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.*
3. *A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from— (a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.*
4. *The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.*

Schedule 7 outlines “Criteria for determining whether Development listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment”.

5. EIA Screening Findings

A description of the proposed development, including in particular

- (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and
- (b) (b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.

5.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development, In Particular:

(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development

The rural site in question **3.02 Hectares** (c. 7.46 Acres) in size. It is outside of the area identified for the development envelop of Glenfarne (Brockagh Lower) in the County Development Plan 2023-2029 (Map No. 37 of Volume III refers).

The detailed project description and site location has been set out in Section 2. It has assessed the size of the proposed development against the relevant EIA class and has been found to only 23.9% of the mandatory threshold.

(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment

In the preparation of this EIA Screening, due regard has been made to other developments within the geographical area, both existing, finished and proposed to assess any in combination and cumulative impacts. To enable an assessment, a scoping exercise was undertaken of the Leitrim County Council Planning Maps for this area. I have reviewed the planning history within a 400 metre radius from the project site. There is no planning permission granted by Leitrim County Council within this area of the proposed development within the past decade with only a planning application for a telecommunications mast having been refused within the landholding (P09/449 refers). Figure 2 overleaf is a screen capture of the general area of the proposed development.

All existing development which was granted planning permission would have been subject to EIA screening considerations in allowing all of these developments to proceed. There is no development having obtained planning permission within the actual landholding owned by Coillte which incorporates the proposed development.

It is considered that cumulative impacts are most likely to arise due to potential pollution and nuisance during the construction phase. Good construction management practices will minimise the risk of pollution from construction activities at the site. Due to the full implementation of management controls to avoid adverse environmental impacts from the proposed development, it is not expected that

cumulative impacts from this development is likely to result in significant adverse effects on the environment.

Subject to the implementation of adequate mitigation measures in terms of traffic movement, noise and dust, it is not considered that cumulative impacts from the proposed development are not likely to result in significant effects on the environment.

Taking account of the above factors, it is considered that all in-combination impacts have been taken into account of any potential for in-combination impacts in this EIA Screening Report.

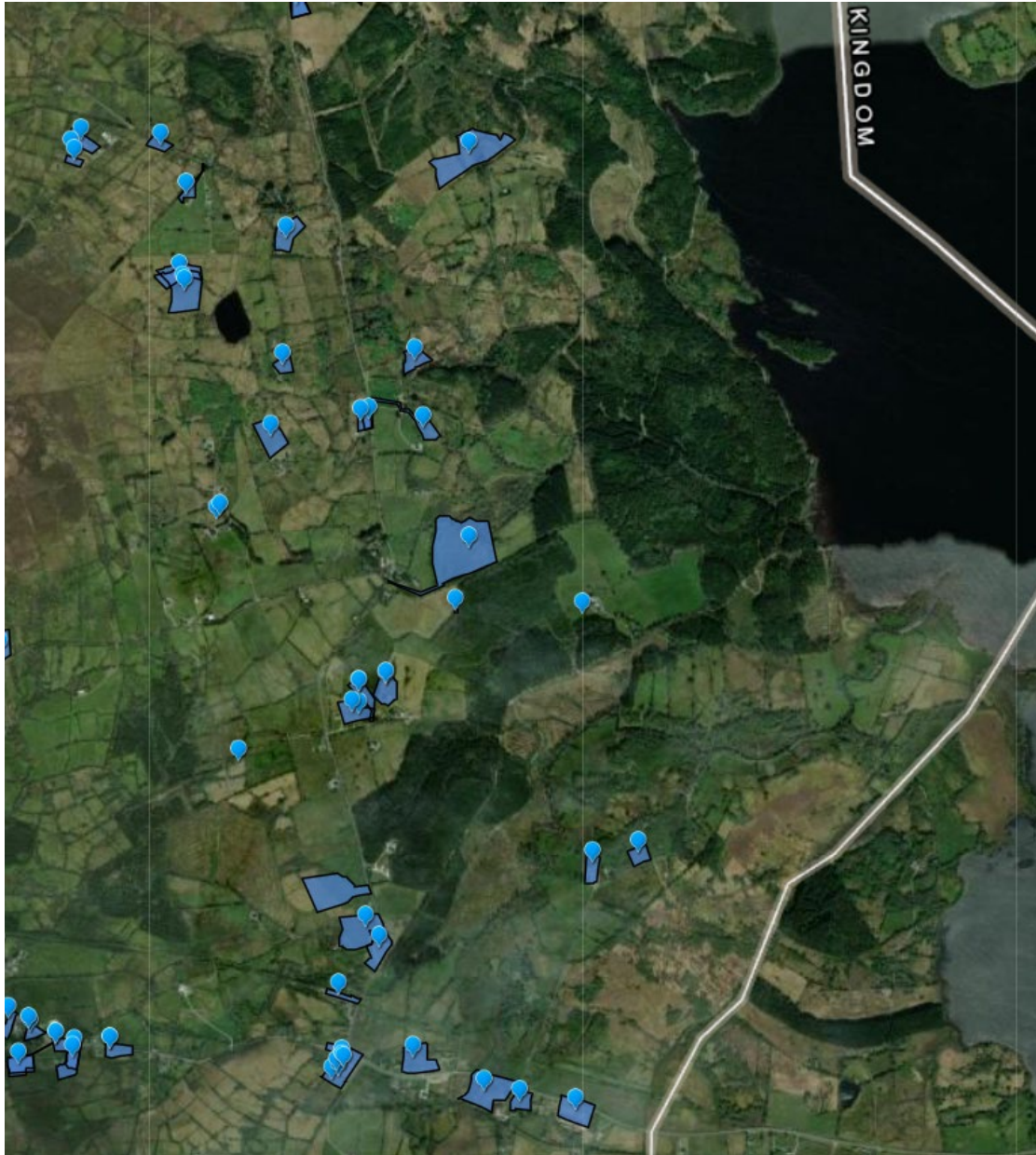


Figure 2: Extract from Leitrim County Council Planning Search Map for Glenfarne Area showing Planning Developments Sites within ca. 400m of the Proposed Development

c) Strategic Environmental Assessment of the current Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement has been prepared as part of the SEA of the current Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 in accordance with national and EU legislation. This document provides information on the decision-making process and documents how environmental considerations, the views of consultees/stakeholders and the recommendations of the Environmental Report and the assessment carried out under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive have been taken into account by, and influenced, the final adopted plan. This SEA Statement was in accordance with Article 8 (Decision Making) of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment; Article 16(2) of the European Communities (Planning and Development) Regulations (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) as amended; and Circular Letter PL 9/2013, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

Therefore the proposed site at Glenfarne Wood which is the subject of this proposed Part 8 Local Authority own development was considered in terms of the SEA in the future development of these lands as part of current Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029. The specific objectives referred to are outlined in the accompanying Briefing Report.

(d) Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029

In addition to the SEA, there was a requirement under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) (as transcribed into Irish law) to assess whether the current Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have significant effect on a European Site, which includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), in view of the site's conservation objectives.

The requirement for an assessment derives from Article 6 of the directive, and in particular Article 6(3) which requires that:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation of a site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.”

In recognition of this, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening was carried out, in parallel with the SEA process. From this it was determined that AA was required and a Natura Impact Report was prepared to inform an AA. The assessment of the current Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 has been carried out in the context of the scope and content presented in the plan.

The Natura Impact Report took a precautionary approach and assessed the impacts that would be anticipated from the plan providing the necessary inclusion of mitigation measures and guiding principles at the strategic level of the plan. The policies and objectives within the plan have been devised, as part of an iterative approach, to anticipate and avoid as appropriate measures that would likely have a significant adverse effect upon the integrity of the European Sites.

Where such measures might be permitted, on foot of provisions of the plan, they shall be required to conform to the mitigation measures contained in the Natura Impact Report (as transposed into the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029) and to the relevant regulatory provisions aimed at preventing pollution or other environmental effects likely to adversely affect the integrity of European Sites.

In addition, lower level projects arising from the implementation of the plan may themselves be subject to AA legislation when details of location and design become known. Based on the Natura Impact Report, and with reference to the scope of the plan, Leitrim County Council determined that the current Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 is compliant with the requirements of Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish law.

The SEA and AA processes have ensured that potential environmental impacts (both positive and negative) associated with the current Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 have been given due consideration in the preparation of the plan.

(e) the nature of any associated demolition works

There are two demolition works associated with any element of the proposed development.

(f) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity

The main use of resources will be the construction materials used during the construction of the proposed development. While the exact quantities of material required for the construction of the proposed development has yet to be confirmed, the amount of materials that will be imported to the site for the construction phase of this development are not likely to cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment.

The proposed development is considered relatively simple in nature and not of the scale that will require any use of resources which would be considered excessive for a development of this nature.

The site is within a large managed commercial forestry with a small recreational element presently consisting of a car park and trails. There is also a slipway to Lough MacNeen. To cope with the anticipated increase in recreational users arising from implementing the proposed development, the forest management regime of Glenfarne Wood is being changed to zone commercial forest operations away from the visitor attractions and to use different access points for forestry equipment and vehicles. In the areas close to the attractions, alternative silvicultural regimes will be practiced including but not limited to the use of Continuous Cover Forestry, small coupe felling, and long-term retention. While some disturbance will be unavoidable, the lower intensity of these management techniques aided by a large parallel forest road network with five access points will help provide continued access with minimal disturbance.

Glenfarne Wood is covered under Coillte's externally verified sustainable forest management as certified by FSC® and PEFC®. As part of this, operations are subject to environmental risk assessment, and in addition all felling operations, be they CCF, small coupe felling, commercial thinnings or clearfells are subject to licence approval by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine, and include public consultation, Appropriate Assessment, and an independent appeals mechanism. Therefore, both now and under the management of the forest post development, the forest will be managed in a sustainable manner.

The ecology of the Glenfarne Woods Project has been described in accordance with *Fossit, J.A., 2000. A Guide to Habitats in Ireland, The Heritage Council, Kilkenny by Oran Ecology Ltd. as follows:*

The walking trails are located within Conifer plantation (WD4), Oak-birch-holly woodland (WN1) dominated by birch. Existing forest roads and tracks categorised as Spoil and bare ground (ED2) and Mesotrophic lakes (FL4). The River-Lake Trail runs adjacent to the Glenfarne River, categorised as Upland/eroding rivers (FW1), for approximately half of the trail length. The landward side of the river is

dominated by immature Conifer plantation (WD4) and a fringing Treeline (WL2) of mature beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) trees. The trail crosses a small unnamed stream which connects to the Glenfarne River and which was also categorised as Eroding/upland rivers (FW1). The trail continues through or adjacent to Conifer plantation (WD4) for the remainder of its length to the lake. A small spur for Sit Spots traverses Conifer plantation (WD4) and birch dominated woodland categorised as Oak-birch holly woodland (WN1). The Arboretum trail also goes through mature Conifer plantation (WD4) which is prone to waterlogging. The floating boardwalk will cross a small section of lake to Bilberry Island which is dominated by Conifer plantation (WD4). The lake habitat was categorised as Mesotrophic lakes (FL4). The remaining amenity footprint will be located within Conifer plantation (WD4) and Spoil and bare ground (ED2).

Rhododendron ponticum was recorded in a number of locations within woodland habitats adjacent to the proposed walking trails and will be avoided during construction. *Rhododendron* is listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).

Where the site is to be built upon as part of the development proposals, it will change from any of the above to Habitat BL3 - Buildings and artificial surfaces.

The site habitat description has demonstrated that the non-priority habitats on-site have no particular ecological conservation value and do not form the basis of designation of any screened Natura 2000 sites and therefore do not form a part of these Natura 2000 sites in terms of feeding grounds, species regeneration or any other intrinsic link. In addition, no part of the proposed development or overall landholding is contained within a Natural Heritage Area or proposed Natural Heritage Area. The element of Lough MacNean in Co. Cavan is a proposed Natural Heritage Area (Site Code 000986). The Site Synopsis for the proposed NHA is contained as an appendix to this screening report.

The construction or operational phase of the proposed development will not use such a quantity of water to cause concern in relation to significant effects on the environment. The proposed wastewater treatment system to serve the toilets in the service building at the Trailhead has been designed in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (2021) and Wastewater Treatment Manuals - Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres And Hotels (2000). A Soil Characterisation and Site Suitability Assessment Report has been prepared by Traynor Environmental Ltd. and accompanies the Part 8 suite of documents. An O'Reilly Oakstown Treatment System is proposed to serve the proposed development with a design capacity of 50 Population Equivalent. O'Reilly Oakstown Environmental have prepared a technical proposal to manufacture and install a 50 Population Equivalent Super BAF Wastewater Treatment System and this also forms part of the Part 8 suite of documents.

The proposed boardwalk will be constructed using one of two potential construction methodologies. Both construction methods are taken into consideration in this assessment. One method involves constructing the boardwalk using an anchor block and chain method and the second method involves piling to support the boardwalk. Each 15m long x 3m wide x 1m CCP pontoon unit will be delivered to site using extendable flatbed trailers by a heavy haulage contractor. In the case of the block anchor method, the concrete blocks will be delivered to the site at the same time as the pontoons. The pontoon units will be lifted into the water using a mobile crane. The size of the crane is yet to be confirmed. The certificates for the crane and lifting equipment must be made available before entering the site.

Further details of the proposed construction methods are provided in the Ecological Impact Assessment undertaken by Oran ecology Ltd.

In essence the key surface water information as it pertains to EIA is that all foul drainage from the development will be connected to the proposed wastewater treatment and disposal system. All new hard surfacing will drain primarily to ground. The surface water from the new car parking areas will pass through a petrol interceptor before discharging to soakways. Filter drains are provided along sections of the new Greenway where a sealed surface is proposed.

Once the route has been set out on site and the boundary construction fencing erected, a certain number of trees will be felled, the root system removed and the topsoil along the route is then stripped. On the basis the Greenway trails have approximately 3.0 km which is constructed in areas where topsoil needs to be removed and a width of 3m and having regard to elements of the trail that will involve cut / fill, there will be a surface area of approximately 1.2 ha of topsoil to be relocated. The current design considers the re-use of this material each side of the 3m trail. This will be graded into the surrounding landscape and married into the sides of the Greenway. By doing this it eliminates the need for disposal offsite.

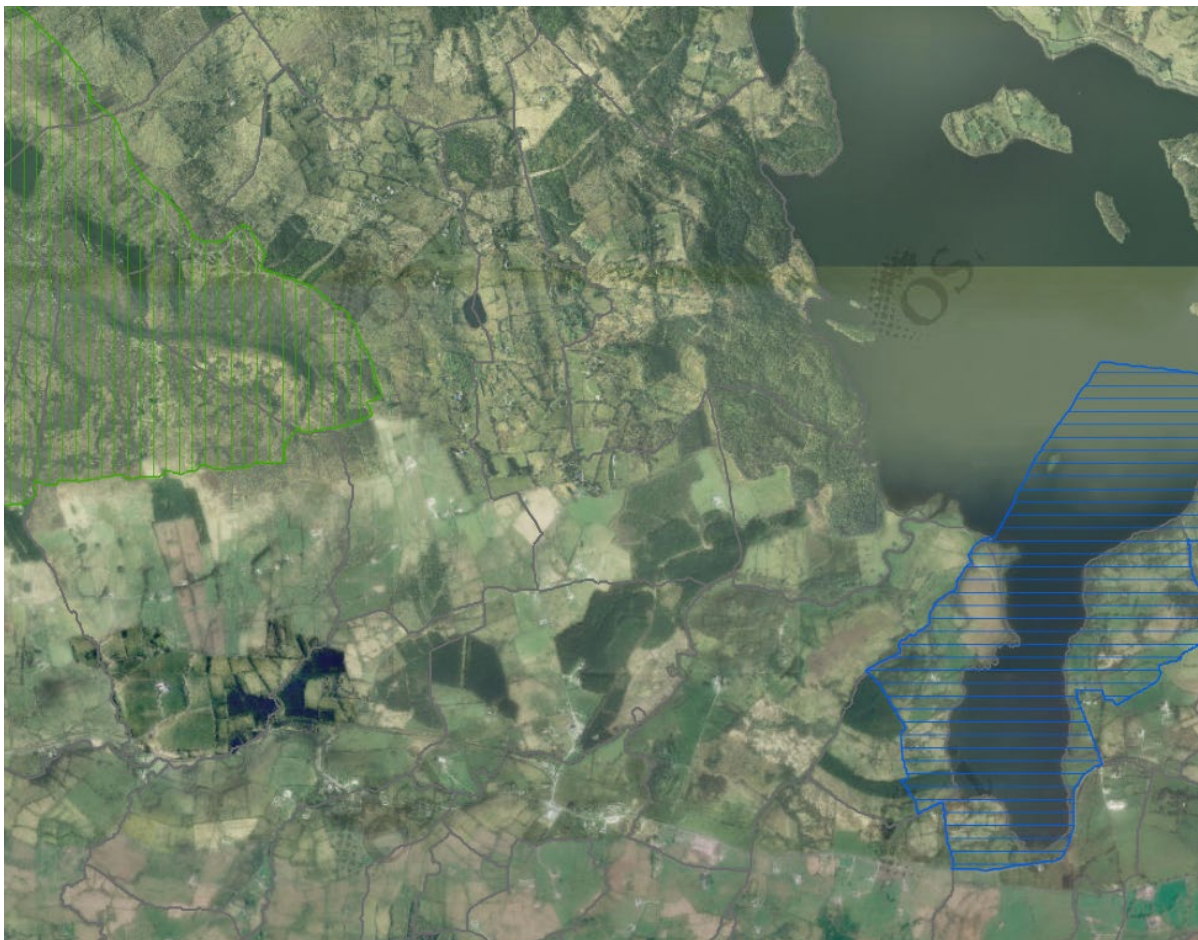


Figure 3: Lough MacNeane Proposed Natural Heritage Area

In conclusion, the proposed works will not negatively impact upon the site hydrology which could have any potential bearing on Environmental Impact Assessment.

g) the production of waste

The project is committed to ensuring on-site segregation and on and off-site reuse recycling / recovery in terms of waste materials arising from the project. The appointed contractor shall have regard to pollution

prevention measures to be implemented during the construction phase of the proposed works. These will be outlined in a detailed Construction Waste Management Plan prepared by the main contractor. This plan will outline the proposals and methodology to achieve compliance with the current waste management and associated waste legislation.

The appointed contractor shall be vigilant in ensuring that no activities will give rise to pollution or other polluting substances.

During the construction phase, waste materials will be segregated at source and placed in dedicated skips such as general waste, wood, mixed ferrous and concrete rubble on site to maximise the opportunity for re-use / recycling of materials.

(h) Pollution and Nuisances

Dust

Dust prevention measures shall be included for control of any site airborne particulate pollution during demolition works and construction works.

The Contractor shall continuously monitor dust over the variation of weather and material disposal to ensure the limits are not breached throughout the project.

Road Dirt Prevention

Given the volumes of construction traffic generated by the Site Works, a road sweeper shall be retained for the duration of the haulage works; and water supplies shall be disposed of off-site in an authorised manner.

Noise

The Contractor shall implement measures to eliminate where possible and reduce noise levels. The proposed development shall comply with BS 5228 *"Noise Control on Construction and open sites Part 1: Code of practice for basic information and procedures for noise control"* (or such further limits as imposed by Leitrim County Council). It is considered that the installation of piles for the proposed floating boardwalk are the element of the proposed development would be most likely to cause noise levels which could cause a nuisance should this method of construction be chosen. However, this element of the proposed development is located well over 800 metres from the nearest occupied habitable dwelling. The noise impact arising from the installation of piles will be of temporary duration.

Vibration

The Contractor shall provide and maintain vibration monitoring equipment for the duration of the works. Condition surveys of adjoining buildings will be required before excavations commence. Vibrations shall be monitored in accordance with BS 7385-1:1990 *"Evaluation and Measurement for Vibration in Buildings"*, with a limit of 5mm/s ppv.

Harmful Materials

Harmful materials shall be stored on site for use in connection with the construction works only. These materials shall be stored in a controlled manner. Where on site fuelling facilities are used, there shall be a bunded filling area using a double bunded steel tank at a minimum. The Method Statement for Lake Piling of a Floating Boardwalk at Glenfarne Lake was also considered in this regard.

(i) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge

There will be no anticipated risks of accidents associated with the development due to the nature and scale of the development proposed. The potential for the proposed development to result in any major accidents and/or disasters can be considered low. This is based on the correct implementation of all standard health and safety procedures, and the lack of substances used in the proposed development which may cause concern for having likely significant effects on the environment.

Furthermore, the site will be secured at all times and construction works will be managed and controlled by using standard best practice measures for construction sites and adhering to normal daytime working hours.

Therefore, it is anticipated that the risk of accidents and/or disasters will be insignificant due to the nature of the proposed development, proper site management, and adherence to all standard health and safety procedures.

During operations, it is anticipated that the risk of accidents and/or disasters will be insignificant due to adherence to emergency type specific corrective action measures for potential spillages or fire.

Any potential risk of major accidents and/or disasters associated with this project, would not cause unusual, significant or adverse effects of a type that would require an EIA.

Absorbent material and spill kits will be maintained at the facility in the event of an oil leak or similar emergency during the construction stage. An emergency plan will be put in for immediate intervention in case of an accidental oil spillage.

A Fire Management Plan will be put in place including appropriate extinguishers.

There will be no anticipated significant impacts upon surface water by the nature of the proposed development.

j) Risk to Human Health

A Construction Management Plan will be prepared. This will set out best practise during the construction phase of this development, including best management practices and good housekeeping and it is not foreseen that there will be any negative impacts on human health.

5.2 Location of Proposed Development

(a) the existing and approved land use

Glenfarne Wood is currently a large commercial forest (215 hectares) with a small recreational element consisting of a car park and trails primarily.

b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground

The site at present has no particular conservation value or natural resources which are rare or unusual. The proposed development is located within a managed commercial forestry that is not designated as a European Natura 200 site, a Natural Heritage Area or proposed Natural Heritage Area. The proximity of

the proposed floating boardwalk to the adjoining proposed Natural Heritage Area is noted (over 1km further south).

(c) The Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment, Paying Particular Attention to the following areas:

(i) Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths

The site is not a “wetland”. Therefore the proposed development and site activities will not impact upon any wetland areas.

The Glenfarne River is categorised as Upland/eroding rivers (FW1), for approximately half of the proposed Greenway trail length and flows through the adjoining rural area before flowing into Lake MacNean. The closest part of the trail is within approximately 12 metres of the Glenfarne River.

Separate drainage details and plans are submitted with the proposed Part 8 suite of documents. The proposed development is not located within an area known to be at risk of flooding and the majority of the proposed development is deemed to be less sensitive development which is considered to be water compatible development.

(ii) Coastal Zones and the marine environment

The site at Glenfarne Woods is inland and is far removed from the sea and will not impact upon the coastal zone or marine environment. There will be no potential impact upon the site from potential coastal flooding.

(iii) Mountain and Forest Areas

The site is not within an upland area and does not form part of a mountain area. There will therefore be no impact upon any mountain areas.

The site is within a commercially forested area. There will be an impact upon this commercially forested area with regard to the construction of the proposed trail, car parking areas and trail head. However, this land take in the context of over 20% of the land area of Co. Leitrim being under forest is considered inconsequential.

(iv) Nature Reserves and Parks

There are no nature reserves or parks close to the site and therefore there will be no impact upon the aforementioned.

(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive

A detailed Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared by Oran Ecology Ltd. and is submitted with the suite of documents which form this Part 8 proposal.

The AA Screening Report confirms that there are no Natura 2000 sites deemed to be screened in which warrant further assessment or consideration. In addition there are no nearby Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) with the proximity to the proposed Lough MacNean Natural Heritage Area already referred to.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening findings and conclusions remove all reasonable scientific doubt as to the effects that the works proposed may have on any Natura 2000 site. I have had regard to the AA Screening Report in the preparation of this report.

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure

This is not applicable to this site.

(vii) Densely Populated Areas

This is not applicable to this site.

(viii) Landscapes and sites of Historical, Cultural or Archaeological Significance

The impacts are anticipated to be minor given the scale of the proposed development within an existing forested area.

The proposed development is located within Landscape Character Area 3 – Lough MacNea Upper and Landscape Character Area 8 Valley Farmland and 10 Major Loughs. The entire woodland managed by Coillte is identified as an Area of High Visual Amenity (No. B5) Lough MacNea Upper and Environs. Protected View and Prospect No. V11View towards Lough MacNea Upper from the area of the slipway affects the lakeside element of the proposed development. All of these landscape designations are contained in the County Development Plan 2023-2029. It is not considered that the proposed development would be described as obtrusive development which would interfere with the character and visual amenity of the receiving sensitive landscape. It is considered an appropriate form of development which will enhance the enjoyment of this special landscape quality by future generations in a manner which promotes SLOW tourism.

An archaeological assessment has been prepared with respect to the proposed development. This report provides measures when adopted which will mitigate against any potential impacts upon sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

The Gate Lodge is deemed to be of regional importance in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage based on architectural, artistic and social interest. It is a protected structure (ref. RPS No. 155) in the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029. It is described as a detached three-bay single-storey cruciform former gate lodge, built c.1820, with an extension to the rear. It is provided with tooled limestone gate piers and decorative cast-iron railings to front of site which are the former gates to Glenfarne Demesne. This former gate lodge into the Glenfarne Estate is small in scale and simple in its design, yet well proportioned and attractively positioned on the edge of a woods now managed by Coillte. The gate lodge is now used as a holiday house. Glenfarne Hall was one of the biggest of all the landlord houses in the area. Built around the year 1820, it overlooked Lough Mac Nea. It was the property of Charles Henry Tottenham, whose son Nicholas Loftus was chairman of the Manorhamilton Board of Guardians during most of the famine period. The proposed development does not impact in any way on the Gate Lodge. Glenfarne Hall was destroyed during the Civil War.

The impacts of historical, cultural and archaeological significance are anticipated to be negligible to minor.

5.3 Types and characteristics of potential impacts

The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of ‘environmental impact assessment report’ in section 171A of the Act, taking into account:

(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)

No significant adverse impacts are identified. Any potential minor impacts will be localised and temporary in nature (i.e. noise and dust) and will be minimised by way of best practices in the environmental management of the Construction Management Plan. Overall it is considered that impacts are likely to be positive, particularly in respect of providing further recreational offerings in this remote area of north Leitrim Town but also in conjunction with the proposed Sligo Leitrim Northern Counties Railway Greenway, provide economic opportunities to the wider area and to Glenfarne in particular. Considerable environmental and amenity value which will be added with the improvements to the offerings in Glenfarne Woods in comparison to what is currently present.

The proposed development use is consistent with existing land use in this location. The immediate area of the proposed development may experience a minor impact during the construction phase in terms of nuisance, however the works are not of such a scale or extent that would be considered likely to cause significant effect on the environment or on the dispersed population size in the vicinity of the woods.

Due to the nature and scale of the proposed activities for this development, there are no significant impacts envisaged on the geographical area and size of the affected population in the area.

(b) the nature of the impact

No significant adverse impacts are identified. Any potential minor impacts will be localised and temporary in nature (i.e. noise and dust,) and will be minimised by way of best practices in the environmental management of the construction works.

(c) the transboundary nature of the impact

There will be no impacts of a transfrontier nature as a consequence of the proposed development. The proposed Panoramic Platform and Floating Boardwalk will be visible from the portion of Lough MacNea contained in the Co. Fermanagh but this is not considered to constitute a negative impact.

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact

The design measures employed at the site will ensure that environmental aspects associated with the development at this site are minimised to a degree which ensures they will not have significant effects on the environment. Any potential impacts (such as dust and noise) are not considered to be overly high in magnitude or complex in nature and are standard considerations with respect to such developments. No complex activities will be operated on-site and likewise, there will be no complex effects borne from on-site activities.

(e) the probability of the impact

The design, management and operation of this development at this site has been devised to minimise any potential impacts upon the environment. The proposed construction of the development at this site will cause permanent changes to the visual nature of the landscape but these will be mitigated against by

careful design and appropriate landscaping as outlined in the landscaping plan submitted with the proposed Part 8 suite of documents.

Any potential for dust or noise will be mitigated against in the Construction Management Plan. Likewise with regards to protection of surface waters, all necessary design measures have been incorporated into the design of the activity. Therefore the probability of any significant impacts is **low**.

(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact

The proposed development is unlikely to have any material traffic impact on the operation of the surrounding road network which are characterised as lowly trafficked forest access roads with a very small number of dwellings and agricultural holdings contained adjoining same.

The adoption of effective design measures and compliance with the Construction Management Plan will not have significant effects on the environment. There are no irreversible impacts associated with the development.

(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other Enactment

All other developments in the vicinity of the site have been considered and in relation to the EIA Directive. The general area is characterised by a low level of development within a commercially forested area. The traffic levels associated with the development when operational are considered negligible to low and will not cause a cumulative impact upon the local, regional or national road network. The proposed activity is well below the mandatory EIA thresholds and the cumulation with any other off-site activities will not lead to an exceedance of any EIA threshold.

(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

As there are no significant impacts identified or likely, and all necessary mitigation measures have been applied in accordance with best practise, there is no requirement to reduce any impact.

6. Assessment against Other EU Legislation

The following Table assesses the development against other EU Legislation and Directives in considering potential for significant impacts upon the Environment.

Table 1: Assessment against Other EU Legislation

EU Legislation	Assessment Carried Out	Conclusion of Assessment
Directive 92/43/EEC, The Habitats Directive	Appropriate Assessment Screening Report	No Significant Impact
Directive 2000/60/EC, EU Water Framework Directive	Appropriate Assessment Screening Report Surface Water Management Proposals with Petrol Interceptors before discharge to ground and wastewater treatment system designed to EPA	No Significant Impact

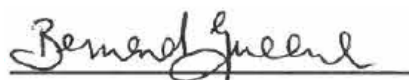
	requirements. Construction Management Plan	
Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA Directive)	Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 SEA Screening Report	No Significant Impact
Directive 2002/49/EC on the assessment and management of environmental noise	EIA Screening Report	No Significant Impact
Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe	Construction Management Plan	No Significant Impact
Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks	Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 Surface Water Management Proposals	No Significant Impact
Birds Directive (79/409/EEC). Bern and Bonn Convention & Ramsar Convention	Appropriate Assessment Screening Report Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029	No Significant Impact
Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of waste from extractive industries	Not relevant to the proposed development	Not Applicable
Directive (EU) 2018/850 on the landfill of waste	Construction Management Plan	No Significant Impact
Directive 2008/98/EC on waste and repealing certain Directives as amended by Directive 2018/851/EU	Construction Management Plan	No Significant Impact
Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions	Not Relevant	No Significant Impact
Regulation (EC) No 166/2006 concerning the establishment of a European Pollutant Re-lease and Transfer Register	Not relevant to the proposed development	No Significant Impact
Directive 2000/14/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the noise emission in the environment by equipment for use outdoors	Construction Management Plan	No Significant Impact
Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency	Building Energy Rating of proposed building	No Significant Impact
Directive 2003/87/EC establishing a system for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the EU	Not relevant to the proposed development	Not Applicable
Regulation (EU) 2018/842 on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement and amending Regulation (EU) No 525/2013	Building Energy Rating of proposed building	No Significant Impact

Regulation (EU) 2018/841 on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry in the 2030 Climate and energy Framework and amending Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 and Decision No 529/2013/EU (Text with EEA relevance)	Not considered of material consideration to the proposed development	Not Applicable
Directive (EU) 2018/2001 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources	Project Design	No Significant Impact
Regulation (EU) No 517/2014 on fluorinated greenhouse gases	Not relevant to the proposed development	Not Applicable
Directive 2012/18/EU on the control of major accident	Not relevant to the proposed development	Not Applicable

7. Conclusion

The findings and conclusions of the EIA Screening Report have been documented, with the necessary supporting evidence and objective criteria. The conclusions are that the proposed **Glenfarne Woods Project** will:

1. Not exceed the EIA Mandatory Threshold for EIA Class 10(b)(iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 20 hectares in area and therefore neither a mandatory EIAR nor an EIA is required.
2. It is considered that the project provides adequate and standard safeguards as inherent components of the overall project so as to ensure that significant risks to the environment are not likely to occur.
3. There is an absence of any environmental sensitivities in the area of the proposed development.
4. Overall it is considered that there is no potential for significant effects on the environment to arise as a result of this proposed development.
5. Having regard to the above, and in particular to the nature, scale and location of the proposed project within an existing commercially managed forest, by itself and in combination with other plans and projects, it is considered that an EIA is **not required** for the proposed development of the Glenfarne Woods Project



Bernard Greene, M.A., M.R.U.P., M.I.P.I.
Senior Planner,
Leitrim County Council,

Date: 02 December 2023

8. Appendix I - Site Name: Lough MacNea Upper Proposed Natural Heritage Area

SITE CODE: 000986

Upper Lough MacNea is a mesotrophic lake about 10km to the north-west of Cuilcagh Mountain. The lake is split into two main basins by a shallow area between Rosscorkey Island, joined to the northern shore by a narrow isthmus, and Copas Point on the Cavan shore. The majority of the lake and its catchment lie on Upper Visean Sandstone and consequently the water chemistry is comparatively low in calcium.

Much of the shore is exposed with little swamp or marsh development, however the shape of the lake is complex enough for there to be sheltered areas with swamps of Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*), and also of Common Spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*). Parts of the Cavan shore have a distinctive flora as a result of being on Upper Limestone rather than sandstone, with exposures featuring the notable plant Northern Bedstraw (*Galium boreale*) which has a limited distribution in Ireland.

In places a heathy community has been described, with species such as Star Sedge (*Carex echinata*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and Heath Wood-rush (*Luzula multiflora*). Low-lying, wet grassland in an unimproved condition was confirmed in 1994 and these areas are included within the proposed National Heritage Area (NHA).

The diverse aquatic plant community, featuring species restricted to nutrient poor water, and some notable species including Six-stamened Waterwort (*Elatine hexandra*) and Needle Spike-rush (*Eleocharis acicularis*), combine to make this an important lake for its aquatic communities. The relatively low intensity of land use adds to the importance of the lake as a functional unit.