

Bord na Móna

Cloontuskert Bog

**Cutaway Bog Decommissioning and
Rehabilitation Plan
2025**

This document seeks to address the requirements of Condition 10.2 of IPC Licence Ref. P0504-01:

“The licensee shall prepare, to the satisfaction of the Agency, a fully detailed and costed plan for permanent rehabilitation of the cutaway boglands within the licensed area.”

This licence condition requires Bord na Móna agree with the EPA the measures that will provide for rehabilitation, i.e., stabilisation of Cloontuskert Bog upon cessation of peat production and complements the licence requirement to decommission the site.

Rehabilitation generally comprises site stabilisation with natural colonisation with or without targeted management.

Industrial peat production has now fully ceased at Cloontuskert Bog.

In addition, to preparing this document to comply with Condition 10 of IPC Licence Ref. P0504-01, due regard was also given to the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme (PCAS) announced by the Minister. This Scheme will see the Minister support, via the Climate Action Fund and Ireland’s National Recovery and Resilience Plan, Bord na Móna in developing a package of measures, ‘the Scheme’, for enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration of cutaway peatlands referred to as, the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme’. However, only the additional costs associated with the additional and enhanced rehabilitation, i.e., measures which go beyond the existing standard mandatory decommissioning and rehabilitation requirements arising from Condition 10 will be eligible for support. The additional costs of the Scheme will be supported by Government, administered by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), while the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) will act as the Scheme regulator.

While this document outlines the enhanced rehabilitation measures planned for Cloontuskert Bog, activities which goes beyond that required by Condition 10 in the Licence, rehabilitation necessary to comply with the ‘standard’ requirement of Condition 10 (in the absence of the Scheme) is also included, to estimate costs. The inclusion of the ‘standard’ rehabilitation together with the enhanced rehabilitation in this document allows the Scheme Regulator to distinguish and objectively determine the specific activities (and their associated costs) eligible for support under the Scheme.

Bord na Móna have defined the key rehabilitation outcome at Cloontuskert Bog as environmental stabilisation, rewetting and setting the bog on a trajectory towards development of naturally functioning peatland and wetland habitats.

Any consideration of any other future after-uses for Cloontuskert Bog will be conducted in adherence to the relevant planning guidelines and consultation with relevant authorities and will be considered within the framework of this rehabilitation plan.

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Note: This finalised version of the Rehabilitation Plan has been updated to take account that several planning actions listed in Section 8.1 have been completed and have been incorporated into the plan. This includes an Appropriate Assessment of the rehabilitation plan. See Cloontuskert Bog Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan – Addendum 1 for more details.

Table of Contents

Non-technical summary	1
1. Introduction.....	3
1.1 Constraints and Limitations	4
2. Methodology	6
2.1 Desk Study.....	6
2.2 Consultation	8
2.3 Field Surveys	8
3. Site Description.....	9
3.1 Status and Situation	9
3.1.1 Site history	9
3.1.2 <i>Current land-use</i>	9
3.1.3. Socio-Economic conditions	10
3.2 Geology and Peat Depths.....	11
3.3 Key Biodiversity Features of Interest	12
3.3.1 Current habitats.....	12
3.3.2 Species of conservation interest.....	15
3.3.3 Invasive species	15
3.4 Statutory Nature Conservation Designations	15
3.4.1 Other Nature Conservation Designations.....	16
3.5 Hydrology and Hydrogeology.....	16
3.6 Emissions to surface-water and watercourses	17
3.7 Fugitive Emissions to air.....	20
3.8 Carbon emissions	20
3.9 Current ecological rating.....	21
4. Consultation	22
4.1 Consultation to date	22
4.2 Issues raised by Consultees.....	22
4.3 Bord na Móna response to issues raised during consultation.....	24
5. Rehabilitation Goals and Outcomes	28
6. Scope of Rehabilitation	30
6.1 Key constraints	30
6.2 Key Assumptions	31
6.3 Key Exclusions	31

7.	Criteria for successful rehabilitation	32
7.1	Criteria for successful rehabilitation to meet EPA IPC licence conditions:	32
7.2.	Critical success factors needed to achieve successful rehabilitation as outlined in the plan.....	36
8.	Rehabilitation Actions and Time Frame	38
8.1	Completed and ongoing.....	40
8.2	Short-term planning actions (0-1 years)	40
8.3	Short-term practical actions (0-2 years)	41
8.4	Long-term (>3 years)	41
8.5	Timeframe	41
8.6	Budget and costing.....	41
9.	Aftercare and Maintenance	43
9.1	Programme for monitoring, aftercare and maintenance	43
9.2	Rehabilitation plan validation and licence surrender – report as required under condition 10.4	44
10.	References	45
	ADDENDUM 1- Appropriate Assessment Report Findings	49
	Appendix I: A standard peatland rehabilitation plan to meet conditions of the IPC Licence	50
	APPENDIX II: Bog Group Context.....	54
	APPENDIX III: Ecological Survey Report.....	59
	APPENDIX IV: Environmental Control Measures to be applied to bog rehabilitation.....	62
	APPENDIX V: Biosecurity	63
	APPENDIX VI: Policy and Regulatory Framework	64
	APPENDIX VII: Decommissioning.....	72
	APPENDIX VIII: Glossary.....	75
	APPENDIX IX: Extractive Waste Management Plan.....	77
	APPENDIX X: Mitigation Measures for the Application of Fertiliser	82
	APPENDIX XI: Consultation Summaries	83
	APPENDIX XII: Archaeology	90
	APPENDIX XIII: Water Quality Monitoring Results for Cloontuskert Bog.....	94
	APPENDIX XIV: Stockpile Decommissioning Procedure	96

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- Bord na Móna is planning to rehabilitate Cloontuskert Bog, located in Co. Roscommon.
- Cloontuskert Bog is a sub-site of Moher Bog (which contains three large sub-sections). The remaining sub-sections of Moher bog, are dealt with in a separate specific rehabilitation plan, called Moher Bog.
- Industrial peat harvesting has now finished at Cloontuskert Bog.
- Bord na Móna are obliged to carry out peatland rehabilitation via an IPC Licence issued by the Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, the Government has agreed to support peatland rehabilitation via the establishment of the Peatland Climate Action Scheme (PCAS). This is funded via the Government and by Bord na Móna.
- The key objective of peatland rehabilitation is environmental stabilisation. This means developing habitats and vegetation back onto the bare peat (putting a “skin” back onto the peat), and minimising effects to downstream waterbodies. Cloontuskert was drained in the past to allow peat production. Better results for water quality improvements, climate action, the reduction of carbon emissions and biodiversity are achieved when the remaining peat is rewetted. This means drain-blocking and other measures to raise water levels to the surface of the bog and to encourage the natural colonisation of vegetation.
- In general, soggy ground conditions are preferred. This means the remaining peat is wet and that plants that prefer wetter conditions, like Bog Cotton will thrive.
- Areas with deeper residual peat have the capacity to regrow *Sphagnum* moss, where there are suitable hydrological conditions. *Sphagnum* is a key species for restoring naturally functioning raised bog conditions.
- Many Bord na Móna bogs cannot be restored back to raised bog in the short-term, as so much peat has been removed, and the environmental conditions have been modified. However other peatland habitats with Heather, Bog Cotton, Rushes, Purple Moor-grass, Bog-mosses and scattered trees will develop, and in time a naturalised peatland can be restored.
- The development of a range of habitats in Cloontuskert Bog will support biodiversity including plants, insects, birds and mammals. This includes some species that are rare and protected in the wider landscape. It will increase the national area of native woodland. Many wetland habitats in the wider landscape have been reclaimed for agriculture and other uses, and peatland rehabilitation is an opportunity to create new peatland and wetland habitats.
- Cloontuskert Bog was in industrial peat production from 1985 until 2020. The majority of the bog still retains a significant depth of peat (“red” or “*sphagnum*” peat also). All of the peat harvested on the site was used as fuel peat in Lough Ree Power in Lanesborough, Co. Longford.
- Cloontuskert Bog has a combination of a pumped and gravity drainage regime. There is one pump that is operational, which will be decommissioned as part of the PCAS works.
- Measures proposed for Cloontuskert Bog include drain blocking and additional measures required to raise water levels to the surface of the peat (bundling for example). Some fertiliser will be spread on headlands and other areas (a small part of the overall area) to encourage vegetation growth.
- Bord na Móna plan to carry out this work in 2025.
- These rehabilitation measures will be planned by a team consisting of expert ecologists, hydrologists and engineers. It is a guiding principle of Bord na Móna rehabilitation planning that no actions or activities will be undertaken that would negatively impact on adjacent land. No boundary drains will be blocked. Water will still leave the bog via the existing outlets.

- A portion of Cloontuskert is already developing pioneer vegetation. It will take some time for vegetation and habitats to fully develop at the most recently peat harvested areas of Cloontuskert, and a wetland/peatland ecosystem to be restored. However, it is expected that most of these areas will be developing pioneer habitats after 5-10 years.
- This is a peatland rehabilitation plan. This plan does not consider future after-use or development. Bord na Móna continually reviews its land-bank to consider future commercial or industrial developments. Any other proposed development will be planned in adherence to relevant planning guidelines and will consider the rehabilitation and the condition of the bog.
- Peatland rehabilitation of this bog will bring a range of benefits to the local community via improvements to the local landscape and is also important for supporting national policies and strategies in relation to reduction of carbon emissions from these peatlands, supporting biodiversity and improvements to water quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Bord na Móna operates under IPC Licence issued and administered by the EPA to extract peat within the Mount Dillon Bog Group (Ref. P0504-01) (see Appendix II for details of the bog areas within this Group). As part of Condition 10.2 of this licence, a rehabilitation plan must be prepared for permanent rehabilitation of the boglands within the licensed area. Cloontuskert Bog is located in Co. Roscommon.

Cloontuskert Bog is a sub-site of Moher Bog (which contains three large sub-sections). The remaining sub-sections of Moher bog, are dealt with in a separate specific rehabilitation plan, called Moher Bog.

This document seeks to address the requirements of Condition 10.2 of IPC Licence Ref. P0504-01:

“The licensee shall prepare, to the satisfaction of the Agency, a fully detailed and costed plan for permanent rehabilitation of the cutaway boglands within the licensed area.”

It also seeks to outline measures to optimise climate action and other ecosystem services benefits, mainly through hydrological management.

This plan is a specific rehabilitation plan for the bog and outlines:

- Description of site management and status.
- Main issues and approaches to rehabilitation.
- Consultation to date with interested parties.
- Interaction with other policy and legislative frameworks (Appendix VI).
- The planned rehabilitation goals and outcomes.
- The scope of the rehabilitation plan.
- Criteria which define the successful rehabilitation and key targets to validate rehabilitation.
- Proposed rehabilitation actions.
- Proposed timeframe to implement these measures.
- Budget and Costings.
- Associated aftercare, maintenance, and monitoring.

Note: This plan should be read in conjunction with the accompanying map book.

It is proposed by Government that Bord na Móna carry out a Peatlands Enhanced Decommissioning, Rehabilitation and Restoration Scheme on its peatlands. Note this proposal is also known colloquially as the ‘Peatlands Climate Action Scheme’ (PCAS, www.bnmpcas.ie) and also as the Enhanced Decommissioning, Restoration and Rehabilitation Scheme (EDRRS). The additional costs of the Scheme will be supported by Government through the Climate Action Fund, and Ireland’s National Recovery and Resilience Plan administered by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), while the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) acts as the Scheme regulator. Bord na Móna have previously identified a footprint of 33,000 ha as peatlands suitable for this scheme. This Scheme will significantly go beyond what is required to meet rehabilitation and decommissioning obligations (Appendix VII & IX) under existing EPA IPC licence conditions. Improvements supported by the Scheme will ensure that environmental stabilisation is achieved (meaning IPC obligations are met), and importantly, significant additional benefits, particularly relating to climate action and other ecosystem services, will also be delivered. The Scheme commenced in 2021.

Only the costs associated with the additional, enhanced, and accelerated rehabilitation, i.e. those measures which go beyond the existing decommissioning and rehabilitation requirements arising from Condition 10, will be

eligible for support under the Scheme. Bord na Móna announced the complete cessation of industrial peat production across its estate in January 2021.

It is expected that the Scheme (PCAS) will have benefits accruing from biodiversity provision, water quality and storage attenuation as well as increased carbon storage, reduced carbon emissions and acceleration towards carbon sequestration. The Scheme will also facilitate monitoring of carbon fluxes (greenhouse gases and fluvial carbon) in selected areas (in addition to other established research programmes), to monitor changes in where the interventions will accelerate the trajectory towards a naturally functioning peatland ecosystem.

It is envisaged that the rehabilitation scheme will support activities, interventions, or measures across the Bord na Móna cutaway peatlands, which accelerate the original timelines. Selected rehabilitation measures will take account of site environmental conditions, which can vary significantly. These measures potentially include:

- More intensive management of water levels through pump management, drain-blocking and cell bunding.
- Re-profiling that will deliver suitable conditions for development of wetlands, fens and bog habitats,
- Targeted fertiliser applications.
- Seeding of targeted vegetation.

These are collectively designed to optimise hydrological conditions (ideally and where possible water-levels +/- 10 cm at peat surface) for climate action benefits and to accelerate the trajectory of the site towards a naturally functioning ecosystem, and eventually a reduced carbon source/carbon sink again. In some areas of dry cutaway this trajectory will be significantly longer, and it is not feasible in the short-term to rewet some areas. These areas will develop other habitats. The key to optimising climate action benefits is the restoration of suitable hydrological conditions and more intensive intervention means that the extent of suitable hydrological conditions can be optimised.

These measures are designed to encourage the development of peat-forming habitats, where possible. They are also designed to further slow the movement of water across the site (with the site acting similarly to a constructed wetland), slowing the release of water (improving local water attenuation) and water quality is also expected to improve as the site returns to a naturally functioning peatland ecosystem. It is anticipated that the combination of active enhanced rehabilitation measures and natural colonisation will quickly accelerate environmental stabilisation. Nevertheless, it will still take some time (30-50 years) for naturally functioning wetland and peatland ecosystems to fully re-establish.

The measures will also accelerate the development of new habitats for a range of species under pressure in the wider landscape and will have the potential to develop habitats (e.g. Annex I raised bog, wetlands that support wader water birds of conservation interest) that will contribute towards the delivery of national biodiversity objectives.

Cloontuskert Bog is proposed to be part of this Scheme (PCAS) and this rehabilitation plan outlines the approach to be taken.

1.1 Constraints and Limitations

This document covers the area of **Cloontuskert Bog** shown in drawing number *BNM-DR-26-01-RP-01: Site Location*. Cloontuskert Bog is a sub-site of Moher Bog (which contains three large sub-sections). The remaining sections of Moher bog, are dealt with in a separate specific rehabilitation plan, called Moher Bog.

A Bord na Móna housing estate was built during the 1950's, situated in the northeastern corner of the Cloontuskert. This has been mapped as a constraint on rehabilitation mapping.

There are known rights of way around the margins of Cloontuskert Bog. Where a public right of way or similar burden exists on Bord na Móna property, consideration will be given to ensuring that this remains intact where possible. In some instances, depending upon previous land uses and management, alternative solutions may be required. These will be explored in consultation with local communities and statutory bodies during the consultation work associated with the decommissioning and rehabilitation work described here.

Rehabilitation in other areas of the bog may also be constrained due to other property issues or archaeological features. There are currently no known archaeological features present at Cloontuskert Bog which may constrain PCAS activities.

2. METHODOLOGY

This rehabilitation plan was developed with a combination of desktop and field surveys, consultations with internal and external stakeholders and cognisance of the Scheme (PCAS). The development of this rehabilitation plan considered recently published guidance issued by the EPA, *'Guidance on the Process of Preparing and Implementing a Bog Rehabilitation Plan'* (EPA, 2020).

The ecological information and site information collected during the Bord na Móna ecological baseline survey, additional confirmatory site visits (covering the period 2011 to 2024 inclusive) and monitoring and desktop analysis forms the basis for the development of the rehabilitation plan for the bog, along with:

- Experience of 40 years of research on the after-use development and rehabilitation of the Bord na Móna cutaway bogs (Clarke, 2010; Bord na Móna, 2016).
- Significant international engagement during this period with other counties in relation to best practice regarding peatland rehabilitation and after-use through the International Peat Society and the Society for Ecological Restoration (Joosten & Clarke, 2002; Clarke & Rieley, 2010; Gann *et al.*, 2019).
- Consultation and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.
- GIS Mapping.
- Bord na Móna drainage surveys.
- Bog topography and LIDAR data.
- Previous research studies on site.
- Hydrological modelling.
- The development of a Methodology Paper outlining the Scheme (PCAS). This rehabilitation includes enhanced measures defined in the Methodology Paper which are designed to exceed the standard stabilisation requirements as defined by the IPC Licence and to enhance the ecosystem services of Cloontuskert Bog, in particular, optimising climate action benefits.

2.1 Desk Study

The desk study involved collecting all relevant environmental and ecological data for the study area. The development of the rehabilitation plan also takes account of research, experience and engagement with other peatland restoration and rehabilitation projects and peatland research including Irish, UK, European and International best practice guidance (full citations are in the References section):

- Anderson *et al.* (2017). An overview of the progress and challenges of peatland restoration in Western Europe.
- Barry, T.A. *et al.* (1973). A survey of cutover peats and underlying mineral soils. Soil Survey Bulletin No. 30. Dublin, Bord na Móna and An Foras Taluntais.
- Bonn *et al.* (2017). Peatland restoration and ecosystem services- science, policy and practice.
- Carroll *et al.* (2009). *Sphagnum* in the Peak District. Current Status and Potential for Restoration. Moors for the Future Report No 16.
- Clark & Rieley (2010). Strategy for responsible peatland management.
- Eades *et al.* (2003). The Wetland Restoration Manual.
- Farrell & Doyle (2003). Rehabilitation of Industrial Cutaway Atlantic Blanket Bog, NW Mayo, Ireland.
- Gann *et al.* (2019). International Principles and Standards for the practice of Ecological Restoration.

- Hinde *et al.* (2010). *Sphagnum* re-introduction project: A report on research into the re-introduction of *Sphagnum* mosses to degraded moorland. Moors for the Future Research Report 18.
- Joosten & Clarke (2002). Wise Use of mires and peatlands – Background and Principles including a framework for Decision-making.
- Lindsay (2010). Peatbogs and Carbon: a Critical Synthesis to Inform Policy Development in Oceanic Peat Bog Conservation and Restoration in the Context of Climate Change.
- Mackin *et al.* (2017). Best practice in raised bog restoration in Ireland. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 99. National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- McBride *et al.* (2011). The Fen Management Handbook (2011), Scottish Natural Heritage.
- McDonagh (1996). Drain blocking by machines on Raised Bogs. Unpublished report for National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- NPWS (2017a). National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation management plan. Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- Pschenyckyj *et al.*, (2021), Optimising Water Quality Returns from Peatland Management while Delivering Co-Benefits for Climate and Biodiversity. An Fóram Uisce.
- Quinty & Rochefort (2003). Peatland Restoration Guide, second edition. Canadian *Sphagnum* Peat Moss Association and New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy.
- Regan, *et al.* (2020). Ecohydrology, Greenhouse Gas Dynamics and Restoration Guidelines for Degraded Raised Bogs. EPA Research Report. Prepared for the Environmental Protection Agency by Trinity College Dublin.
- Renou-Wilson *et al.* (2011). BOGLAND - Sustainable Management of Peatlands in Ireland. STRIVE Report No 75 prepared for the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Schouten (2002). Conservation and Restoration of Raised Bogs: Geological, Hydrological and Ecological Studies. Dúchas - The Heritage Service of the Department of the Environment and Local Government, Ireland.
- Thom (2019). Conserving Bogs – Management Handbook.
- Wheeler & Shaw (1995). Restoration of Damaged Peatlands – with Particular Reference to Lowland Raised Bogs Affected by Peat Extraction.
- Wittram *et al.* (2015). A Practitioners Guide to Sphagnum Reintroduction. Moors for the Future Partnership.

Additional on-line resources were also incorporated into the desk study, including:

- Mountdillon Integrated Pollution Control Licence.
- Mountdillon Annual Environmental Reports.
- Review of the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) webmapper.
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) Reports.
- Environmental Protection Agency database (www.epa.ie).
- EPA Guidance on Requests for Alterations to a Licensed Industrial or Waste Activity.
- Birdwatch Ireland online data (including I-WeBS and CBS datasets; www.birdwatchireland.ie).
- Geological Survey of Ireland - National Draft Bedrock Aquifer map.
- Geological Survey of Ireland - Groundwater Database (www.gsi.ie).
- Historic Environment Viewer at <https://webgis.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/>.
- National Parks & Wildlife Services Public Map Viewer (www.npws.ie).
- Water Framework Directive catchments.ie/maps/ Map Viewer (www.catchments.ie).

- OPW Indicative Flood Maps (www.floodmaps.ie).
- CFRAM Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) maps (www.cfram.ie).
- River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027.
- Bord na Móna Annual Report 2024.
- Spatial data in respect of Article 17 reporting, available online at <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/habitat-and-species-data/article-17>.

2.2 Consultation

A number of stakeholders have been identified during the course of Bord na Móna's rehabilitation and Biodiversity Action Plan activities and are contacted during the rehabilitation planning process for their views. See Section 4.

2.3 Field Surveys

Bord na Móna carried out a baseline ecological survey of all of its properties in 2009-2012 and developed habitat maps. As part of this exercise, Cloontuskert Bog was surveyed in August 2012. Habitat maps were updated in 2017. A survey also took place in October 2024, in advance of the preparation of this rehabilitation plan. Habitat maps have been updated, where required. This rehabilitation plan is informed by the original baseline survey as well as subsequent confirmatory site walk-over surveys and visits, and updates to baseline data.

Habitat mapping followed best practice guidance from Smith *et al.* (2011). Map outputs including all habitat maps and target notes were produced using GIS software application packages (ArcGIS). General marginal habitats and other habitats that had not been modified significantly by industrial peat extraction were classified using Fossitt *et al.* (2000). Plant nomenclature for vascular plants follows Stace (2019), while moss and liverwort nomenclature follow identification keys published by the British Bryological Society (2010). A more detailed Bord na Móna classification system was previously developed for classifying pioneer cutaway habitats as Fossitt categories were deemed not to be detailed enough for cutaway bog (much of cutaway bog could be classified as Cutover Bog - PB4). Much of the pioneer cutaway vegetation is still at an early stage of its development and cannot be assigned to Fossitt Level 3 categories yet.

A detailed ecological survey report for Cloontuskert Bog is contained in Appendix III.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

Cloontuskert Bog is located approximately 2.5km to the northwest of Lanesborough in County Roscommon. Moher Bog and Erenagh Bog are located immediately to the south and north of the bog. Cloontuskert Bog is part of the Mountdillon group (Lough Ree sub-group) of bogs. Cloontuskert Bog is one of a cluster of bogs that has developed along the floodplains of the River Shannon. The total area of the rehabilitation footprint of the bog is 219.4 ha.

The cutaway bog is still mostly bare peat. Patches of cutaway habitat have developed around the margins of the bog, particularly on higher ground around the western margin. There are variable residual peat depths across the site with both shallow and residual deep peat. A large wetland has developed along the eastern margins, within a low-lying area of the bog. Cloontuskert Bog has a combination of a pumped and gravity drainage regime. There is one pump that is operational, which will be decommissioned as part of the PCAS works.

A housing estate was built by Bord na Móna during the 1950's in the northeastern corner of the site. This estate is still managed by Bord na Móna although individual houses are in private ownership.

Adjacent habitats to the site included improved agricultural grassland, scrub, Birch woodland, raised bog and conifer plantation. The greater surrounding landscape is dominated by a mosaic of farmland, largely consisting of improved grassland, conifer plantation and other bogs, some owned and managed by Bord na Móna including Moher to the southwest, Erenagh and Granaghan to the north and Mountdillon Bog to the northeast. A local road runs separates Cloontuskert Bog from Erenagh Bog.

No EPA listed watercourses are located within the Cloontuskert Bog site boundary. The entire bog falls within the Gorgallan_010 WFD river sub basin. The Gortagallan stream (EPA Code: 26G47) flows to the east below the southern boundary of the bog, meandering to the southeast before discharging into the River Shannon (Upper) (EPA code: 26S02). The Erenagh stream (EPA Code: 26E12) originates north of the northern boundary of the Cloontuskert Bog, flowing southeast along the northern and northeastern boundary to confluence with the Gortagallan stream, close to the eastern side of Cloontuskert Bog.

See Drawing number *BNM-DR-26-01-RP-01: Site Location*, included in the accompanying Mapbook¹, which illustrates the location of Cloontuskert Bog in context to the surrounding area.

3.1 Status and Situation

3.1.1 Site history

Cloontuskert Bog was used to supply fuel peat in Lough Ree Power in Lanesborough, Co. Longford. Cloontuskert Bog was in industrial peat production from 1985 to 2020.

3.1.2 Current land-use

Industrial peat extraction has now completely ceased. The majority of the Cloontuskert Bog former production area is bare peat.

¹ Cutaway Bog Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan – Cloontuskert Bog Map Book

Cloontuskert Bog has one remaining peat stockpile in the southern section. The peat stock on the bog will be subject to decommissioning as part of the rehabilitation measures. This process is described fully in Appendix XIV.

A housing estate was built by Bord na Móna during the 1950's in the northeastern corner of the site. This estate is still managed by Bord na Móna although individual houses are in private ownership.

A local community group is interested in developing a community project (biodiversity and tree-planting) on small area of peatland adjacent to Cloontuskert housing estate.

A network of former industrial railway is present in Cloontuskert. It is anticipated that the rail lines will be decommissioned shortly.

3.1.3. Socio-Economic conditions

Bord na Móna has historically been a vital employer for the rural communities in the Irish Midlands. Bord na Móna compiled a report on the role of peat extraction in the midlands historically in which they report that in 1986, by the end of Bord na Móna's Third Development Programme, a total of twenty-three work locations had been established around the country. The company had an average employment of approximately 4,688 in the mid 1980's, with a peak employment of 6,100 during the production season, which placed it among the country's largest commercial employers. The importance of such levels of employment were largely due to its regional concentration in the Midlands and the lack of alternative employment opportunities in these areas at the time.

According to the Energy Crop Socio-Economic Study undertaken by Fitzpatrick Associates in 2011, there were an estimated 1,443 jobs supported by the peat-to-power industry in Ireland at the time, some 81% of which were located in the catchment areas of the three peat-fired generating stations (Lough Ree, West Offaly, and Edenderry Power Stations). These constituted jobs in the plants and in peat extraction, jobs indirectly supported in upstream supply industries and jobs induced through the trickle-down effects of the wages and salaries of those supported directly or indirectly. These job numbers have now declined with the cessation of peat extraction.

In respect of Cloontuskert Bog, jobs included in the above study would have included those to facilitate extraction of peat at this site and associated processing and transfer to Lough Ree power station.

As the primary employer in many Midland counties, Bord na Móna played a central role in building communities through several initiatives, including development and construction of local housing complexes, education bursaries, support of local sporting clubs, the provision of community gain funds, charity programmes and the provision and building of amenity areas.

Employment numbers have now declined following the cessation of peat extraction at this bog. It is anticipated that the scheme (PCAS) will provide some employment for a team of workers at this site for a period of time (> 1 year).

There are approximately 1400 people working in Bord na Móna at present, with approximately 135 roles directly involved in PCAS.

3.2 Geology and Peat Depths

3.2.1 Sub-soil geology

GSI bedrock geology data² indicates that Cloontuskert Bog is underlain by four different bedrock units. This includes a significant portion of undifferentiated Visean limestone to the southeast, with the largest section being argillaceous Visean limestone, characterised by dark limestone and shale, along with chert throughout the centre. Additionally, a small portion of the site (north-western edge) is underlain by the Meath formation (limestone and calcareous sandstone) and a very small portion to the north underlain by the Moathill formation (limestone, calcareous sandstone, and shale). There is a fault line crossing through the bog.

The undifferentiated Visean limestone unit underlying a significant area of the southeastern section of the bog is classified as a regionally important aquifer (Rkc) due to its susceptibility to karstification (conduit). The remaining geological units beneath the bog are classified as locally important aquifers (LI), exhibiting moderate productivity only in local zones. There are no mapped karst features in close proximity to the bog (the nearest mapped features are >4km from the bog).

Quaternary sediment maps show Cloontuskert underlain by cutover peat, yet surrounded by inorganic deposits, including till derived from lower Palaeozoic sandstones and shales surrounding most of the bog, with till derived from limestone occurring to the north. There is a housing development on elevated ground to the northeast of the bog which is mapped as made ground.

There are several mapped wells in the surrounding areas. A record exists of a public supply well within 1km of the southeastern boundary of the bog, which reached a depth of 4.9m; however, no further information is available on depth to bedrock or yield class. Another record indicates that a borehole, drilled in 1970, close to the western boundary of the bog is used for agricultural/domestic purposes. This well reached a depth of 19.8m, with bedrock encountered at 7.3m. The yield was recorded as poor, at 11m³/day.

Groundwater vulnerability across the peat bog is classified as low, while vulnerability increases incrementally from moderate to high to extreme near adjacent to the R371 road, due to the presence of the housing development and made ground, and two pockets of rock/karst close to the surface in the locale.

Subsoil permeability across the bog is mapped as being low by the GSI with an estimated recharge rate of 23-24mm/year across the bog.

3.2.2 Peat type and depths

Peat depths have been mapped across the bog using GPR and are provided in figure *BNM-DR-26-01-RP-04: Peat Depths*. Most of Cloontuskert Bog has deep peat remaining (typical depths range from 1.5 - 4m, although the deepest areas have up to 5.5m of peat remaining). There are some shallow pockets of peat in some areas, particularly to the south-west and along the eastern and part of the northern boundary, which has some areas with peat depths of <1m.

² <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/data-and-maps/Pages/Bedrock.aspx>

3.3 Key Biodiversity Features of Interest

The majority of Cloontuskert Bog comprises a mosaic of bare peat along with developing cutaway pioneer habitats.

3.3.1 Current habitats

The most common vegetation communities/habitats³ present in the former production areas at Cloontuskert include (Codes refer Bord na Móna classification of pioneer habitats of production bog. See Appendix III):

- Bare peat (0-70% cover) (BP) (Plate 3-1 – Plate 3-2)
- Open water (OW) (Plate 3-3 – Plate 3-4)
- Pioneer open habitats dominated with Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*) (pJeff) with less frequent Bog Cotton (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) (pEang) (Plate 3-5 – Plate 3-6)
- Pioneer open habitats and scrub with pJeff, Purple Moore Grass (*Molinia caerulea*) (gMol), open *Betula*-dominated community (oBir) and Dry calcareous grassland (gCal) (Plate 3-7)

The most common habitats found around the margins include⁴

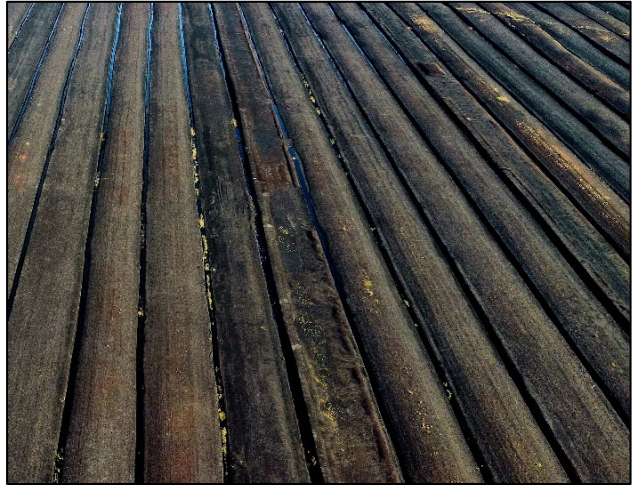
- Scrub (WS1)
- Dry humid acid grassland (GS3)
- Raised bog (PB1)
- Cutover bog (PB4)
- Birch woodland (WN7)
- Improved grassland (GA1) around the boundary extending into adjacent fields

See Drawing number *BNM-DR-26-01-RP-17: Current Habitat Map*, included in the accompanying Mapbook, which illustrates the habitats at Cloontuskert Bog. See also Table 3-1 for photographic plates of habitats (taken in 2024).

³ Codes refer BnM classification of pioneer habitats of production bog.

⁴ Codes refer to Heritage Council habitat classification (Fossitt, 2000).

Table 3-1 Photos of Habitats at Cloontuskert Bog (October 2024)

Photos of Habitats at Cloontuskert (2024)	
	
<i>Plate 3-1 Aerial view of Cloontuskert (view northwest).</i>	<i>Plate 3-2 Aerial view of Bare peat.</i>
	
<i>Plate 3-3 Area of Open water in Cloontuskert bog.</i>	<i>Plate 3-4 Open water.</i>

Photos of Habitats at Cloontuskert (2024)

Plate 3-5 Pioneer open habitats.



Plate 3-6 Pioneer open habitats.



Plate 3-7 Pioneer open habitats and scrub.



Plate 3-8 Bog Cotton dominated pioneer open habitats.

3.3.2 Species of conservation interest

A number of species of conservation interest utilise the habitats available at Cloontuskert Bog. The following is a summary of the records of these species available within both Bord na Móna and NBDC records.

- Mammal species recorded as part of Bord na Móna surveys on or in close proximity to the bog include Badger (*Meles meles*), Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Pine Marten (*Martes martes*) and Hare (*Lepus europaeus*).
- Protected mammal species returned from the NBDC desk study of 2km grid squares within which Cloontuskert Bog is situated include Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and West European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*). Only records from the last 10 years are considered relevant.
- Bird species of conservation interest recorded from the bog include the BOCCI⁵ red listed species Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*), Golder Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) and Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*), and the amber listed Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Teal (*Anas crecca*) and Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*).

Peatland rehabilitation may result in positive quality effects on the relative abundance or proportion of species of conservation concern utilising bogs post rehabilitation. This may include Red or Amber listed species of breeding waders along with wintering species including Swans and other wildfowl⁶.

3.3.3 Invasive species

There are no Bord na Móna records for high impact invasive species recorded from the bog.

A broad range of common garden escapes are occasionally present around the margins of Bord na Móna bogs, and although spatial overlap with the PCAS is expected to be limited, these are, where necessary, to be treated in line with best practice during PCAS activities.

3.4 Statutory Nature Conservation Designations

There are a number of European Sites in close proximity (i.e. within a 5km radius at minimum) to Cloontuskert Bog (*BNM-DR-26-03-RP-23 Cloontuskert Bog: Proximity to Designated Sites*).

Lough Ree SAC (site code: 000440) is located approximately 1.6km to the southeast of the bog and is designated for Natural eutrophic lakes with *Magnopotamion* or *Hydrocharition* - type vegetation [3150], Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) [6210], Active raised bogs [7110], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120], Alkaline fens [7230], Limestone pavements [8240], Bog woodland [91D0], Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* [91E0] and *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355].

Lough Ree SPA (site code: 004064) is located approximately 1.7 km to the south of the bog. This SPA is designated for Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) [A004], Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) [A038], Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) [A050], Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052], Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) [A053], Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) [A056], Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) [A061], Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) [A065], Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) [A067], Coot (*Fulica atra*) [A125], Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140], Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [A142], Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] and Wetland and Waterbirds [A999].

⁵ <https://birdwatchireland.ie/app/uploads/2021/04/BOCCI4-leaflet-2-1.pdf>

⁶ https://www.bnmmpcas.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/18/2023/08/Annual-Monitoring-Report_Final-Rev-A_Redacted.pdf

Corbo Bog SAC (site code: 002349) is located approximately 3 km to the southwest of Cloontuskert bog. This site contains the Annex I habitats Active raised bogs [7110], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120], and Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion* [7150].

A number of NHA's (Natural Heritage Areas) and pNHA's (Proposed Natural Heritage Areas) also occur within 5km of Cloontuskert Bog including:

- Corbo Bog pNHA (site code: 000602) lies approximately 3km southwest.
- Lisnannarriagh Bog NHA (site code: 002072) lies approximately 4.2km southwest.
- Lough Ree pNHA (site code: 001642) lies approximately 1.6km southeast.
- Lough Bannow pNHA (site code: 000608) lies approximately 4.3km southeast.

3.4.1 Other Nature Conservation Designations

The Ramsar Convention entered into force in Ireland on 15th March 1985. Ireland currently has 45 sites/wetlands designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites). These cover a surface area of 66,994ha.

There are no Ramsar sites in close proximity to Cloontuskert Bog.

3.5 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

Cloontuskert forms part of the Upper Shannon Catchment (Catchment ID: 26C) as defined by the EPA under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and is situated within the Shannon [Upper]_SC_070 sub-catchment and the Gortgallan_010 WFD sub basin, which flows to the River Shannon to the east via the Erenagh and Gortgallan streams. The bog contains several drainage pathways and discharge locations, with most of the bog discharging to rivers via silt ponds which eventually flow into Lough Ree. Cloontuskert Bog has a combination of a pumped and gravity drainage regime. There is one pump that is operational, which will be decommissioned as part of the PCAS works.

Hydrological modelling (*BNM-DR-26-01-RP-09: Depression Analysis*) indicates that parts of the bog are in a natural basin with significant potential for rewetting, with the assumption that all drains would be blocked. It is likely that a portion of the basins in target areas will rewet with deeper water, creating a mosaic of wetland habitats, when drains are blocked.

Regional hydrological data suggest that Cloontuskert receives average precipitation of 969mm/yr (1981-2010), with an estimated annual effective rainfall rate of 579mm/yr based on GSI data. The GSI also estimate an annual average recharge rate of 23-24mm/year for Cloontuskert. Across most of the bog, where GPR and coring data suggests the bog may be underlain by lacustrine deposits, this is anticipated to be a reasonable estimate of the recharge rate. However, in areas underlain by more permeable glacial material this is likely to be an underestimate, particularly the section of the bog close to the southwestern margin where there are shallow peat deposits (<1m) underlain an elevated substrate, interpreted as glacial till. A higher recharge rate is expected in areas where shallow peat underlain by glacial till, which would lead to increased losses of water to depth. In these areas an estimated recharge rate of 50-60mm/yr would be considered a reasonable estimate.

GSI bedrock geology data indicates that Cloontuskert Bog is underlain by four different bedrock units. This includes a significant portion of undifferentiated Visean limestone to the southeast, with the largest section being argillaceous Visean limestone, characterised by dark limestone and shale, along with chert throughout the centre. Additionally, a small portion of the site (north-western edge) is underlain by the Meath formation (limestone and

calcareous sandstone) and a very small portion to the north underlain by the Moathill formation (limestone, calcareous sandstone, and shale). There is a fault line crossing through the bog.

The undifferentiated Visean limestone unit underlying a significant area of the southeastern section of the bog is classified as a regionally important aquifer (Rkc) due to its susceptibility to karstification (conduit). The remaining geological units beneath the bog are classified as locally important aquifers (LI), exhibiting moderate productivity only in local zones. There are no mapped karst features in close proximity to the bog (the nearest mapped features are >4km from the bog).

An aquifer is an underground body of water-bearing rock or unconsolidated materials (gravel or sand) from which groundwater can be extracted in useful amounts. GSIs Aquifer classes are divided into three main groups based on their resource potential and further subdivided based on the type of openings through which groundwater flows. There are nine aquifer categories in total. Locally important aquifers are capable of supplying locally important abstractions (e.g. smaller public water supplies, group schemes), or good yields (100-400 m³/d). This data gives an indication of sub-surface deposits (bedrock and unconsolidated materials) in terms of their groundwater resource potential and dominant groundwater flow type.

Regionally important aquifers are those in which the network of fractures, fissures and joints, through which groundwater flows, is well connected and widely dispersed, resulting in a relatively even distribution of highly permeable zones. There is good aquifer storage and groundwater flow paths can be up to several kilometres in length. There is likely to be substantial groundwater discharge to surface waters ('baseflow') and large (>2,000 m³/d), dependable springs may be associated with these aquifers.

There are several mapped wells in the surrounding areas. A record exists of a public supply well within 1km of the southeastern boundary of the bog, which reached a depth of 4.9m; however, no further information is available on depth to bedrock or yield class. Another record indicates that a borehole, drilled in 1970, close to the western boundary of the bog is used for agricultural/domestic purposes. This well reached a depth of 19.8m, with bedrock encountered at 7.3m. The yield was recorded as poor, at 11m³/day.

Groundwater Vulnerability is a term used to represent the intrinsic geological and hydrogeological characteristics that determine the ease with which groundwater may be contaminated by human activities. Groundwater vulnerability maps are based on the type and thicknesses of subsoils (sands, gravels, glacial tills (or boulder clays), peat, lake and alluvial silts and clays), and the presence of karst features. Groundwater is most *At Risk* where the subsoils are absent or thin and, in areas of karstic limestone, where surface streams sink underground at swallow holes.

Groundwater vulnerability across the peat bog is classified as low, while vulnerability increases incrementally from moderate to high to extreme near adjacent to the R371 road, due to the presence of the housing development and made ground, and two pockets of rock/karst close to the surface in the locale. Subsoil permeability across the bog is mapped as being low by the GSI with an estimated recharge rate of 23-24mm/year across the bog.

3.6 Emissions to surface-water and watercourses

Cloontuskert Bog has 3 treated surface water outlets from a previously active peat extraction catchments, all which discharge to the Gortgallan River (IE_SH_26G470700 GORTGALLAN_010), the River Shannon Upper (IE_SH_26S021600 SHANNON (Upper)_100).

The Gortgallan River along both applicable stretches is classed as Moderate water quality status with the downstream Shannon Upper at Poor Status (Ecological Status or Potential SW 2016-2021) – Water Framework Directive.

The locations of silt ponds, associated surface water emission points and those being monitored and sampled as part of the PCAS scheme are detailed on the attached water quality map (*BNM-DR-25-06-13: General Drainage Map*).

There is a robust monitoring program to track and verify any changes in baseline water quality conditions pre and post decommissioning and rehabilitation so that the success or otherwise can be tracked and verified for the National Parks & Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and Local Authority Water Program, amongst a range of stakeholders.

Peat extraction is identified as a pressure in the third cycle of the river basin management plan (Water Action Plan for Ireland) in the lower reaches of the Shannon (Upper) 100.

The main emission limit value (ELV) associated with this bog is 35mg/l suspended solids, with trigger levels for ammonia of 1.42mg/l and COD 100mg/l.

From an analysis of any results over number of years of the IPC licence environmental monitoring of some of the discharges from this bog, these indicate that results were under the Emission Limit Value for Suspended Solids 96% of the period, same level of compliance for COD and under the trigger level for Ammonia.

Ammonia averaged 0.28mg/l and ranged from 0.011 to 1.38mg/l with Suspended Solids ranging from 2 to 49 mg/l and averaging 6.11mg/l.

Table 3-2 Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Programme Water Quality Monitoring.

Bog	SW	Monitoring	pH	SS mg/l	TS mg/l	Ammonia mg/l	TP mg/l	COD mg/l	Colour
Cloontuskert	SW-26	Q4 14	7.1	5	122	1.7	0.05	60	227
Cloontuskert	SW-27	Q4 14	7.1	5	112	1.7	0.71	58	194
Cloontuskert	SW-33	Q1 15	7	5	206	0.33	0.05	79	267
Cloontuskert	SW-26	Q4 17	7.7	8	312	0.6	0.05	27	183
Cloontuskert	SW-33	Q4 17	No Flow	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cloontuskert	SW-27	Q2 18	8.1	5	314	0.27	0.06	52	126
Cloontuskert	SW-26	Q2 20	6.1	2	153	0.6	0.05	75	302
Cloontuskert	SW-33	Q2 20	5.7	2	123	0.396	0.05	83	366
Cloontuskert	SW-27	Q4 20	6.2	2	97	0.603	0.05	61	258
Cloontuskert	SW-26	Q4 22	7.4	3	211	0.088	0.05	51	123
Cloontuskert	SW-33	Q4 22	No Flow	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cloontuskert	SW-27	Q2 23	6.2	14	130	0.009	0.17	112	413

Rehabilitation of cutaway peatland is closely linked with control of emissions. One of the criteria for successful rehabilitation is stabilisation through re-vegetation, which will stabilise all substrates and in turn remove the need for further silt control measures. Rewetted peat also aids the primary objective of stabilizing peat, as when peat is rewetted it is not vulnerable to wind erosion. Rewetted peat and the development of wet peatland habitats can also act as sinks for silt and mobile peat, and increases additional retention time for solids, and the peatland vegetation can quickly stabilise this material within blocked drains on site (by acting like constructed wetlands).

Water quality of water discharges from restored peatlands normally improves as a result of bog restoration measures and the restoration of natural peatland processes (Bonn *et al.*, 20017). Bog restoration is also expected to improve water attenuation of the site as the drains are blocked, slowing water movement and water release from the site. Restored peatlands help slow the release of water and aid the natural regulation of floods downstream (Minayeva *et al.*, 2017). The National River Basin Management Plan (NRBMP) 2022-2027 (DHPCLG, 2024) is the key national plan for Ireland to achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The NRBMP outlines how key actions such as the Bord na Móna peatland rehabilitation is expected to have a positive impact on water quality and help the NRBMP deliver its objectives in relation to the WFD.

Water will still discharge from designated emission points when rehabilitation at Bloomhill East Bog has been completed. This discharge will have improved water quality and there will be increased wetland attenuation, meaning slower release of water. This is expected to have a positive impact on status of downstream water bodies. While water quality improvements assist in meeting water frameworks directive ambitions and targets, they can also improve drinking water sources in applicable catchments with drained peatlands and the potential for associated reduction in treatment requirements at drinking water treatment facilities.

Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Programme Water Quality Monitoring.

The licence obligation of quarterly sampling regime on a selected number of ponds to be sampled over a 3-year cycle would not be sufficient to be able to appropriately track the changing water chemistry that will occur as part of this enhanced rehabilitation programme, so this sampling regime will occur monthly.

To assist in monitoring surface water quality from this bog, it was agreed to increase the existing licence monitoring requirements of the IPC Licence, to sampling for the same parameters every month.

This new sampling programme commenced in November 2020 and is enabling a baseline to be established, with sampling to progress during the scheduled works, and for a period of up to 2 years post rehabilitation. Depending on the period required to confirm that the main two parameters, suspended solids, and ammonia as remaining compliant with the licence emission and trigger limit values and there is an improving trajectory in these two parameters i.e., reduction in concentration, the monitoring programme and intensity will be periodically reviewed and amended.

Initial monthly results are included in Appendix XIII, for Cloontuskert bog. These results cover the period from November 2020 to December 2024 and are from some of the surface water outlets from the sections of bog to be rehabilitated in 2025. Peat extraction ceased in this bog in 2020 and as expected some of the key water quality parameters that can impact water quality from peat extraction activities, remain on a relatively static trajectory, with suspended solids indicating a level trend from all outlets during the period, all well below any limits of concern. During this same period there was a slight downward trend in Ammonia for applicable emission points, with all other parameters fluctuating slightly, most likely influenced by normal weather patterns, including rainfall.

Monthly ammonia concentrations from emission points for November 2020 to December 2024 had a range of 0.011 to 1.38 mg/l with an average of 0.28 mg/l. Results for suspended solids for the same period indicated a range of 2 to 49mg/l with an average of 6.11 mg/l.

In the preparation of this monitoring programme, Bord na Mona have been providing the Local Authority Water Programme (LAWPRO) with details of the surface water emissions points associated with this bog and will be amending some of the proposed monitoring locations on foot of this engagement. LAWPRO have in turn provided details of their monitoring programme and these are included in the Water Quality Map.

This is necessary to ensure that there is alignment with the WFD monitoring programme and that where possible, the monitoring programme will enable any improvements in water quality or establishing trends to be quantified against any available WFD monitoring data. It will also enable the periodic sharing of data which will inform the monitoring reports, success criteria and enable LAWPRO under the Water Framework Directive to track any changes in pressures and be aware of changes in water chemistry.

Monitoring results will be maintained, trended every six months and reported on each year and as required, as part of the requirement to report on Condition 10.1 of the IPC Licence on Bog Rehabilitation in the Annual Environmental Report, and will be provided to LAWPRO and the EPA as required to inform progress and national monitoring requirements under the WFD.

These results will also be available in April each year as a requirement of the Annual Environmental Report at www.epa.ie.

The parameters to include as per condition 6.2 of the IPC Licence include monthly monitoring for pH, Flow, Suspended Solids, Total Solids, Total Phosphorus, Total Ammonia, Colour & COD. In addition, DOC has been included as a parameter to try and identify any changes in carbon in the surface water, and where required by LAWPRO, to assist in investigating other changes in water chemistry, the series of parameters can be reviewed and amended.

3.7 Fugitive Emissions to air

None.

The bog is no longer in industrial peat production. Rehabilitation of the cutaway peatland will seek to rewet the dry peat where possible and re-vegetate all areas (whether wet or dry). Collectively, ceasing industrial peat production, rewetting and re-vegetating will minimise any risk of emission to air from dust.

3.8 Carbon emissions

Irish peatlands are a huge carbon store, containing more than 75% of the national soil organic carbon (Renou-Wilson *et al.* 2012). Peatland drainage and extraction transforms a natural peatland which acts as a modest carbon sink (taking in 0.1 to 1.1 t of carbon as CO₂-C /ha/yr) into a cutaway ecosystem which is a large source of carbon dioxide (releasing 1.3 to 2.2 t of carbon as CO₂-C /ha/yr) based on Tier 1 Emission factors (Evans *et al.* 2017). Renou-Wilson *et al.* (2018) reported losses of between 0.81 – 1.51 CO₂-C /ha/yr from drained peatlands located in Ireland.

Rewetting of dry peatlands will increase methane emissions (Gunther *et al.* 2020) as a consequence of the anoxic conditions within the peat body that provide a suitable environment for the microbial breakdown of plant litter and root exudates. Tanneberger *et al.* (2021) describes how peatland management has to choose between CO₂ emissions from drained peatlands or increased methane (CH₄) emissions from rewetted industrial peatlands. However, when radiative effects and atmospheric lifetimes of both GHG gases are considered and modelled, postponing rewetting increases the long-term warming effect of continued CO₂ emissions (Gunther *et al.* 2020). This means the increase in methane due to rewetting of dry peatlands is still negated by the CO₂ emissions reductions. Further, Wilson *et al.* (2022) confirmed the benefit of rapid rewetting to achieve strong carbon reductions and potentially altering the warming dynamics from warming to cooling depending upon the climate scenario.

It is expected that Cloontuskert Bog will become a reduced carbon source following rehabilitation. The potential of any cutaway site to develop as a carbon sink in the longer-term depends on the success of the rehabilitation measures, the extent of development of *Sphagnum*-rich or other peat-forming habitats, the balance of carbon fluxes from different cutaway habitats and future climatic conditions. Much of this bog is expected to develop as regenerating wet deep peat vegetation on deep peat areas, with smaller areas developing wetland habitats on shallow peat with open water, reed swamp and fen habitats with alkaline emission factors. Birch woodland is expected to develop on the drier mounds and along peripheral headlands.

3.9 Current ecological rating

(Following NRA (2009) Evaluation Criteria)

The majority of this site is deemed to be of **Local Importance (lower value)** due to the dominance of bare peat that was previously managed for industrial peat production. A number of semi-natural habitats have established on the site including pioneer open habitats, pioneer open habitats and scrub, wetlands and scrub that may act as a refuge and as ecological corridors for wildlife and are therefore deemed to be of **Local Importance (higher value)**.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation to date

Consultation seeks to engage an audience of relevant stakeholders at both a national and local level. National stakeholders have been identified from varied bog restoration and rehabilitation efforts undertaken by Bord na Móna over the past 40 years, with particular emphasis on engagement with stakeholders during their Biodiversity Action Plan programme, since 2010. National Stakeholders includes relevant government departments and agencies, relevant semi-state bodies, NGOs and other environmentally-focused groups with a national remit.

There has been ongoing consultation about rehabilitation, biodiversity and other general issues over the years about Mountdillon bog group, including Cloontuskert Bog, with various stakeholders in relation to:

- General consultation with range of stakeholders at annual Bord na Móna Biodiversity Action Plan review days 2010-2018.
- Feehan, J. (2004) A Long-Lived Wilderness; the future of the north midlands peatland network UCD/NWWPC.
- Lauder, A. & O'Toole L. (2017). Concept development for a landscape-scale Wetland Wilderness Park in the Mid Shannon Region. A report funded by the Heritage Council's Heritage Grant Scheme.
- Foss, P.J., Crushell, P. & Gallagher, M.C. (2017). Counties Longford and Roscommon Wetland Study. Report prepared for Longford and Roscommon County Councils.
- Archaeological Liaison Committee (National Museum of Ireland & Dept of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht).
- Midlands & East Regional WFD Operational Committee (River Basin Management Plans).
- Sub-committee on Shannon Flooding Work Programme and Measures (OPW, Waterways Ireland, ESB, LA's, Fisheries Ireland, NPWs etc.).
- Ongoing engagement in relation to a community biodiversity project (tree-planting) on land adjacent to Cloontuskert Housing Estate.

To inform the current Plan, both national and local stakeholders, including neighbours whose land adjoins Cloontuskert Bog, and local representatives of national bodies (such as Regional National Parks and Wildlife Service staff) and relevant offices in County Councils (such as the Heritage or Environmental Offices) have been contacted. Any identified local interest groups have been sought and informed of the opportunity to engage with this rehabilitation plan, and when identified, invited to submit their comments or observations in relation to the proposed rehabilitation at Cloontuskert Bog or the programme in general (see Appendix XI).

All correspondence received will be acknowledged and reviewed and evaluated against the rehabilitation work proposed.

4.2 Issues raised by Consultees

To date, a number of issues have been raised by consultees during the consultation process for both the current and previous drafts of the rehabilitation plan for Cloontuskert Bog – these are summarised below. A number of general submissions in respect of previous PCAS consultation are also referenced where applicable.

4.2.1 Consultation

During the initial commencement of PCAS, a number of consultees including: the Irish Farmers Association (IFA), the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA) and Trinity College Dublin have raised concerns regarding the duration and scope of consultation period. Stakeholders suggested that the consultation period should be extended to allow all potential stakeholders to make submissions where required.

4.2.2 Assessments of rehabilitation

Queries on pre-rehabilitation assessments were raised by NPWS and the National Museum of Ireland relating to the finalisation of several bog rehab plans in 2021 in relation to Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment. Further queries regarding AIA were made in a submission by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage – National Monuments Service with specific reference to Cloontuskert Bog.

4.2.3 Restoration scope

Restoration/rehabilitation of marginal habitats was raised by the Irish Peatland Conservation Council (IPCC) and Butterfly Conservation Ireland (BCI) relating to the finalisation of several bog rehab plans in 2021 and 2022 as worthy of consideration within the rehabilitation measures to support carbon sequestration and biodiversity objectives.

4.2.4 Monitoring

Further details on monitoring of ecological metrics, and how and where reporting on this monitoring would take place, was raised by the IPCC, University College Dublin and Trinity College researchers in their respective submissions relating to the finalisation of several bog rehab plans in 2021. Uisce Éireann (formerly Irish Water) reiterated the requirement of a strong monitoring program with respect to water quality during and post rehabilitation.

4.2.5 Flooding, drainage or other impacts on adjacent land.

The Irish Farmers Association (IFA), The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, individual local residents and ICMSA queried likely impacts relating to the finalisation of several bog rehabilitation plans in 2021 and 2022. They raised concerns based on the proposed re-wetting in relation to flooding on adjoining lands and, specifically, with regards to the maintenance of drains. In previous submissions, the IFA also raised the issue of Health and Safety in relation to raising water levels as well as possible impacts on land and property prices.

4.2.6 Amenity

Since the beginning of consultation by BnM relating to Peatlands Climate Action Scheme funded, several consultees including various politicians, have requested information regarding the development of amenities on BnM bogs. Further queries regarding the walkways and accessibility onto the bog post rehabilitation was made in a submission by a local homeowner.

4.2.7 Water Quality

A number of consultees have contacted BnM to express their concerns regarding the potential impact of PCAS related activities on water quality within waterbodies that are hydrologically connected to BnM bogs. Uisce

Éireann have expressed their support for PCAS in general but have also requested information regarding the potential hydrological repercussions of PCAS.

4.2.8 Future management

In submissions made on earlier PCAS plans the Irish Farmers Association (IFA) expressed concerns regarding the future ownership of the BnM bogs subject to rehabilitation. They expressed a desire for contingency planning for potential future ownership of designated bogs so as to ensure no negative impacts arise on adjacent properties from any new ownership.

4.2.9 Other issues

Other issues (raised by IPCC) during the finalisation of several bog rehab plans in 2021, 2022 and in 2023 included after use of the bog and turf cutting on the margins of the bog (outside of the area owned by BnM). The IPCC have also requested information regarding the resilience of rehabilitation measures to climate change induced climatic alterations.

In the early stages of PCAS archaeological end of life survey of all the bogs were requested by National Museum of Ireland and National Monuments Unit. The National Museum of Ireland also requested that due diligence be taken during works to protect any archaeologically significant findings or areas. They also reiterated the importance of peatlands for the preservation of archaeology and requested they be consulted as part of any EIA undertaken.

For a complete summary of submissions received and replies for Cloontuskert Bog, see Appendix XI.

4.3 Bord na Móna response to issues raised during consultation

4.3.1 Consultation

BnM are carrying out consultation as part of the process of developing the rehabilitation plan for Cloontuskert Bog. This is ongoing with a dedicated Community Liaison Officer communicating with affected and interested parties. A website has been developed to make information available. This will be continually updated. Some PCAS Bogs have been used as demonstration sites so that interested stakeholders can come to organised visits and observe the measures on the ground.

4.3.2 Assessments of rehabilitation

Appropriate Assessment screening will be undertaken on all the bogs as part of PCAS. This was undertaken by external consultants for Cloontuskert Bog.

Implementation of rehabilitation measures including machine access across the bog will be carried out in conjunction with BnM Ecology Department. Seasonal and other restrictions will be put in place to mitigate against any impacts on biodiversity.

An Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) has been undertaken on Cloontuskert Bog (Appendix XII). The aim for known archaeology on these bogs is to accomplish preservation in situ and we are taking steps to identify and avoid all known archaeology. BnM aim to achieve this through including all known archaeology in the planning process of rehabilitation works and implementing an exclusion or buffer zone around these features. These measures should sufficiently protect any archaeology in these areas, during any ground works in the final plan. It is anticipated that any archaeology will benefit from the ultimate remit of the rehabilitation, in that water tables

will be raised thereby preserving in-situ. There is also an identified procedure for managing reports of stray finds that may arise during rehabilitation works.

4.3.3 Restoration scope

As part of PCAS, all restoration/rehabilitation options have been developed to support climate action and biodiversity objectives. Other issues such as existing amenity, social impacts, industrial history, archaeology were not part of the direct scope of PCAS but were considered when developing the rehabilitation plan. After-use of the bog is outside the scope of PCAS. Rehabilitation will lead to the development of a stable diverse re-wetted cutaway landscape that will have added benefits for amenity in the future.

As part of PCAS, one of the objectives for the rehabilitation of bogs is to promote the development of a naturally functioning peatland system. BnM would envisage benefits to biodiversity on these bogs as a result of rehabilitation. The most intensive peatland re-wetting will be applied to bare peat areas. Where there are diverse habitats already present, less intensive, targeted drain-blocking will be applied. While the overall objective is to make the bog wetter and increase the footprint of wet peatland habitats, there will still be a mosaic of habitats present, including a transition from wet to drier areas of peat, in areas that cannot be re-wetted.

The local environmental conditions of Cloontuskert Bog means that deep peat measures and wetland measures combined with some dry cutaway and additional works measures are the most suitable rehabilitation approach for this site to optimise benefits for desirable climate-based emissions reductions. Cloontuskert Bog is predominantly a deep, bare peat bog. At present, there is limited development of pioneer cutaway habitats within the main PCAS area of the bog, with the majority of the site dominated by bare peat. Some pioneering vegetation occurs within the southwest on shallower peat. The majority of area proposed for rehabilitation is expected to develop as deep peat habitat. A key expected habitat is raised bog type vegetation on deeper residual peat. Peatland habitats within the site will improve in overall condition. Cloontuskert Bog has a gravity-based drainage system.

4.3.4 Monitoring

As part of the PCAS, a monitoring and verification plan has been developed to support climate action and biodiversity objectives. This will include stratified monitoring of bog condition, habitats and biodiversity at several different scales. It is proposed to monitor the improvement of some biodiversity ecosystem services. The appearance of key species such as *Sphagnum* moss will be monitored during walk-over surveys and general monitoring visits. It is not proposed to carry out any additional monitoring of biodiversity ecosystem services at this site. Biodiversity monitoring for PCAS planned for a stratified approach with different targeted monitoring at different sites based on the site characteristics.

It is the expectation of BnM that rehabilitation measures should positively impact the water quality in receiving water bodies through enhancing the water attenuation across rehabilitated sites. The robust water monitoring programme implemented as part of PCAS will be used to assess water quality leaving rehabilitated sites at designated points.

An overview of the Water Quality Monitoring plan is provided to relevant stakeholders, including that water flow and dissolved organic carbon (DOC) is being monitored.

BnM also informed the relevant stakeholders that decommissioning of silt ponds will only be carried out when the EPA are satisfied that adequate stabilisation of the bog has been achieved and silt ponds are no longer required. This decommissioning will be determined by water quality results and EPA approval.

Rehabilitation of bogs in the same catchment is likely to result in beneficial impacts on water quality in the catchment. This will be captured by the results from EPA monitoring stations in the vicinity of the bogs.

4.3.5 Flooding, drainage or other impacts on adjacent land.

It is the intention of BnM that the re-wetting of the bogs will be carried out in such a manner that does not impact on third party lands. Where it is deemed that blocking of a shared drain would cause any adjoining lands to be adversely affected, this will be avoided, and alterations made to the rehabilitation plan. In general, drains around the margins of the bog will not be blocked.

External consultants have been appointed to carry a hydrological assessment to identify any potential impacts to neighbouring lands and to mitigate against any such impacts. There is no potential for direct impacts on arterial drainage downstream.

The rehabilitation measures proposed at Cloontuskert Bog will generally result in increased water attenuation across the site and reduce the speed of drainage from the existing peat fields through a mixture of techniques including drain blocking, cell bunding and re-profiling. This will arrest active drainage systems and enable the return of the peatland to its natural, water retention functionality. It is intended that these measures will not significantly alter the existing topographical catchments and that the spine of the drainage networks, those which the upstream catchments drain through, will be retained by BnM.

BnM community liaison officer will meet with a concerned landowner in possession of land adjoining Cloontuskert Bog, regarding the perceived potential of increased flood risk arising due to PCAS activities.

4.3.6 Amenity

Creating amenity developments such as walking tracks is not included within the scope of PCAS. However, PCAS rehabilitation will enable and support potential amenity future amenity developments, and this was reiterated to a local homeowner expressing concern about the future accessibility onto the bog following rewetting.

4.3.7 Water Quality

It is the expectation of BnM that PCAS rehabilitation should positively impact the water quality of surrounding water bodies through enhancing water attenuation across rehabilitated sites. The robust water quality monitoring programme implemented as part of the of PCAS will be used to assess the water quality leaving rehabilitated sites at designated points.

4.3.8 Future management

BnM will continue to manage their land bank into the future. As peat production has now ceased on BnM lands and rehabilitation measures will be carried out, a regular drainage maintenance programme will not be required or carried out as would have been the case in the past. However, if issues arise with the BnM internal drainage system that affects upstream or downstream landowners, then these issues will be addressed by BnM.

BnM considers issues regarding estate security, fire risk, invasive species and water pollution of utmost importance. BnM intends to maintain security and manage fire risk over the entirety of the estate. In this regard, PCAS activities, should have no detrimental impact on these issues. Regarding water pollution, BnM is regulated by the EPA and as such adheres to the strict water pollution measures laid out by the same.

4.3.9 *Other issues*

Other issues, including after-use and management issues outside the boundary of Cloontuskert Bog, are acknowledged but are specifically outside the scope of this rehabilitation plan.

As part of the consultation process, The National Museum of Ireland (NMI) and the National Monuments Service (NMS) were included in the stakeholder consultation process. The Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) was in preparation at the time of the submission of the rehabilitation packages to NPWS, it was subsequently provided. The NMS acknowledged that AIA desk-based process and associated outputs designed to ensure any known archaeology was identified and protected during the implementation process, and the Project Archaeologist's recommendations regarding buffering and ongoing vigilance and reporting of any stray finds to NMS. NMS requested that the AIA be supplemented with walking field surveys and that monitoring of rehabilitation measures was undertaken when the work commences.

Security: It is the intention of BnM to keep secure the estate and ensure that any anti-social behaviour that occurs within the estate is reported and dealt with by the appropriate authorities.

A number of local landowners expressed a variety of concerns, within submissions on Cloontuskert Bog (see above). These queries were addressed through contact with the BnM land liaison officer.

4.3.10 *Concluding statement*

- No specific issues were raised during consultation that required significant changes to the substance of the rehabilitation plan.
- Marginal drains will not be blocked to avoid impacts on adjacent lands or lands under the ownership of third parties or turf-banks. This does not change the overall rehabilitation goals and outcomes and can be integrated with the other rehabilitation measures to allow cutaway re-wetting.
- Turbary rights, if present, will remain unaffected.
- BnM intend to continue management of this site into the future and issues such as security and trespass will be addressed on an ongoing basis in association with other stakeholders.
- BnM intends to maintain a "No Shooting" policy on Cloontuskert Bog.

5. REHABILITATION GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The rehabilitation goals and outcomes outline what Bord na Móna want to achieve by implementing the rehabilitation. These include:

- Meeting conditions of IPC Licence.
- Stabilisation or reduction in water quality parameters of water discharging from the site (e.g. suspended solids).
- Reducing pressure on receiving waterbodies that have been classified as *At Risk* from peatlands and from peat extraction, via stabilization or improving water-quality from this bog, and therefore, reducing pressures.
- Optimising hydrological conditions for **climate action benefits as part of PCAS**.
- Optimising hydrological conditions for the development of *Sphagnum*-rich regenerating wet deep peat vegetation communities on deep residual peat, or reed swamp and fen on shallow more alkaline peat along marginal areas.
- The main goal and outcome of this plan is the successful rehabilitation (environmental stabilisation) of peatlands used for industrial peat production at the bog in a manner that is acceptable to both external stakeholders and to Bord na Móna and which optimise climate action and other ecosystem service benefits.

The rehabilitation goals and outcomes take account of the following issues.

- It will take some time for stable naturally functioning habitats to fully develop at Cloontuskert Bog. This will happen over a longer timeframe than the implementation of this rehabilitation plan.
- Rewetting residual peat will initially maintain and enhance the carbon storage capacity of the bog. There is scientific consensus that restoration of hydrology in damaged bog can improve carbon storage, water storage and attenuation and help support biodiversity both on the site and in the catchment (See Section 3.8). This will reduce carbon emissions from the site from a larger carbon source to a smaller carbon source. In time, the site has the capacity to develop in part as a carbon sink. PCAS is expected to deliver significant contributions to Ireland's climate action.
- It is not expected that the cutover bog in the former production area has the potential to develop active raised bog (ARB) analogous to the priority EU Habitats Directive Annex I habitat within the foreseeable future (c.50 years). A large part of the bog contains residual deep peat and has potential to develop *Sphagnum*-rich habitats in this timeframe. Nevertheless, rewetting across the entire bog, as part of the Scheme, will improve the habitat condition of the whole bog. Other peatland habitats will develop in a wider mosaic that reflects underlying conditions.
- Rehabilitating former industrial peat production bog will also in the longer-term support other ecosystem services such as the development of new habitats to support biodiversity and local attenuation of water flows from the bog.
- A large wetland has already developed on the eastern part of the bog in the low-lying land along the margin.
- WFD status in receiving water bodies can be affected by peatlands and peat extraction but is also affected by other sources such as agriculture. In addition, receiving water bodies that are assessed as *At Risk* from peatlands and from peat extraction are likely to have several contributory sources of impacts (private peat extraction and Bord na Móna). Reducing pressures due to former peat extraction activities at

Cloontuskert Bog will contribute to stabilising or improving water quality status of receiving water bodies in general. Ultimately, improving the WFD status of the receiving water body will depend on reducing pressure from a range of different sources, including peatlands in general (private and Bord na Móna).

- Rewetting in general will benefit the future preservation of most known and unknown archaeological features. An Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) is to be carried out under the PCAS scheme.
- Bord na Móna are also planning rehabilitation measures in some adjacent bogs (e.g. Erenagh to the north and Moher to the south) in 2025. There are expected to be cumulative water quality and other ecosystem service benefits to receiving water bodies from rehabilitation of more than one bog in the same catchment.

6. SCOPE OF REHABILITATION

The principal scope of this enhanced rehabilitation plan is to rehabilitate the bog. This is defined by:

- The area of Cloontuskert Bog within the PCAS rehabilitation footprint.
- EPA IPC Licence - Ref. P0504-01. As part of Condition 10.2 of this licence, a rehabilitation plan must be prepared for permanent rehabilitation of the boglands within the licensed area.
- The Scheme is designed to exceed the stabilisation requirements as defined by the IPC Licence. This scheme is designed to enhance the ecosystem services of Cloontuskert Bog, in particular, optimising **climate action benefits**. The proposed interventions will mean that environmental stabilization is achieved (meaning IPC obligations are met) and, in addition, significant other ecosystem service benefits particularly for climate action will be accrued.
- Much of the site has residual deep peat remaining, with some areas of shallow peat. The local environmental conditions of Cloontuskert Bog mean that a combination of dry cutaway measures and wetland creation are the most suitable rehabilitation approach for shallow peat areas, with a large portion of the bog on deep peat areas being subject to deep peat measures.
- Bord na Móna have defined the key goal and outcome of rehabilitation at Cloontuskert as **environmental stabilisation** of the site via **optimising climate action benefits, where possible**. The rewetting of residual deep peat will be optimised, **setting the site on a trajectory towards the development of peat-forming communities on residual deep peat, where possible**. While the shallow peat in the cutaway will be optimised **towards the development of wetlands/Reed Swamp and fen**.
- Rehabilitation of Cloontuskert Bog will support multiple national strategies of climate action, biodiversity action and other key environmental strategies such as the Water Framework Directive.
- The time frame for the delivery of the planned rehabilitation will be undertaken according to available resources and appropriate constraints.

6.1 Key constraints

- **Bog conditions.** Rehabilitation outcomes of sites are constrained by the environmental characteristics of these particular areas. For example, there is potential for raised bog restoration at some sites where there has not been significant industrial peat extraction, and the peat body is largely intact (deep peat sites that are drained). At other sites, most of the peat mass has been removed, the environmental characteristics of these areas have therefore changed radically (peat depths, hydrology, water chemistry, substrate type, nutrient status, etc.) and there will therefore be different habitat outcomes (wetlands, fen, heathland, grassland and Birch woodland).
- Part of Cloontuskert is residual deep peat and is likely to develop more typical bog vegetation communities in time. A large wetland in a low-lying basin has already developed. Low-lying areas of cutaway with shallow peat will develop wetland habitats (fen, wetland, reed swamp). Dry cutaway habitats (birch woodland, scrub and heath) are the most likely habitats to develop in more elevated areas such as headlands and ridges.
- **Surrounding landscape and neighbours.** Another key constraint is the interaction between the Bord na Móna sites and the surrounding landscape. Care has to be taken that no active rehabilitation management is carried out that could negatively and knowingly impact on surrounding land. This includes any hydrological management on neighbouring farmland. It is anticipated that the work proposed here (blocking drains and rewetting cutaway peatlands) will not have any flooding impacts on adjacent land.

- **Archaeology.** The discovery of monuments or archaeological objects during peatland rehabilitation may potentially constrain the rehabilitation measures proposed for a particular area. The rehabilitation will optimise hydrological conditions for the protection of exposed archaeological structures, their retention in situ and preservation into the future. Any newly discovered archaeology may require rehabilitation measures to be reviewed and adapted. An Archaeological Impact Assessment (Appendix XII) will be carried out to mitigate against any impact on archaeology that may be found at Cloontuskert Bog. Should any previously unknown archaeological material be uncovered during the rehabilitation works, it will be avoided and reported to the Bord na Móna Archaeological Liaison Officer and the National Museum of Ireland.
- **Public Rights of Way.** There are known rights of way at Cloontuskert Bog. Where a public right of way or similar burden exists on Bord na Móna property, consideration will be given to ensuring that these remain intact where possible. In some instances, depending upon previous land uses and management, alternative solutions may be required. These will be explored in consultation with local communities and statutory bodies during the consultation work associated with the decommissioning and rehabilitation work described here.
- **Housing Estate.** A housing estate was built by Bord na Móna during the 1950's in the northeastern corner of the site. This estate has been mapped as constrained land.
- **Agricultural grassland** occurs around the margins of the bog and has been mapped as constrained land.

6.2 Key Assumptions

- It is assumed that Bord na Móna will have all resources required to deliver this project.
- It is expected that weather conditions will be within normal limits over the rehabilitation plan timeframe. Long periods of wet weather have the capacity to significantly affect ground conditions and constrain drain blocking and other ground activities.

6.3 Key Exclusions

The scope of this rehabilitation plan does not cover:

- The other sub-sections of Moher Bog. These are dealt with by a separate rehabilitation plan.
- The longer-term development of stable naturally functioning habitats at Cloontuskert Bog. The plan covers the short-term rehabilitation **actions** and **an additional monitoring and after-care programme** to monitor the rehabilitation and to respond to any needs.
- This plan is not intended to be an after-use or future land-use plan for Cloontuskert Bog.
- The longer-term management of this site, potentially as a nature conservation site, or for amenity, or for other uses in the future.

7. CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL REHABILITATION

This section outlines what criteria will be used to indicate successful rehabilitation and what critical success factors are needed to achieve successful rehabilitation. All criteria used to indicate successful rehabilitation will be measured to validate the achievement of the rehabilitation goals and outcomes and validate the completion of the rehabilitation.

The key objective of this enhanced rehabilitation plan is **environmental stabilisation** and the stabilisation of any emissions from the site that related to the former industrial peat extraction activities.

Rehabilitation is generally defined by Bord na Móna as:

- stabilisation of bare peat areas via targeted active management (e.g. drain-blocking/rewetting) slowing movement of water across the site and encouraging natural colonisation; and
- mitigation of key emissions (e.g. potential run-off of suspended solids).

In addition, Bord na Móna wish to optimise climate action and other ecosystem service benefits via enhanced rehabilitation measures.

7.1 Criteria for successful rehabilitation to meet EPA IPC licence conditions:

- Rewetting of residual peat in the former area of industrial peat production to offset potential silt run off and to encourage and accelerate development of vegetation cover via natural colonisation and reducing the area of bare exposed peat. See Table 7.1 for a summary of the criteria for successful rehabilitation and associated monitoring. The target will be the delivery of measures, and this will be measured by an aerial survey after rehabilitation is completed.
- That there is a stabilizing/improving concentration of suspended solids and ammonia in discharges from Bord na Móna sites, associated with the measures undertaken to stabilize the peat surface by the blocking of the internal drainage system and the maximized rewetting of the peat surface. This will be demonstrated by developing a stable or downward trajectory of water quality indicators (suspended solids and ammonia) towards what would be typical of a rewetted cutaway bog. This will be measured via water quality monitoring (suspended solids and ammonia) for at least 2 years after the rehabilitation has been completed.
- Receiving water bodies have been classified under the River Basin Management Plan and this classification includes waters that are *At Risk* from peatlands and peat extraction. The success criteria will be that the *At Risk* classification will see improvements in the associated pressures from this peatland or if remaining *At Risk*, that there is an improving trajectory in the pressure from this peatland.

With regard to predicting and estimating likely trends that might materialize or could be considered as a target, monitoring of surface water ammonia emissions from Longfordpass bog in Littleton over 3 years, post cessation of peat extraction with ongoing rehabilitation, were considered. These are indicating a downward trend in Ammonia concentrations (Figure 7.1).

Similarly monitoring of surface water ammonia emissions from a Corlea bog in Mountdillon over the past 4 yrs. post cessation of peat extraction with ongoing rehabilitation, indicate downward trends.

As the monthly monitoring program at Cloontuskert Bog continues in 2025 and during the rehabilitation works planned for 2025, further trending will be produced to verify any ongoing trends.

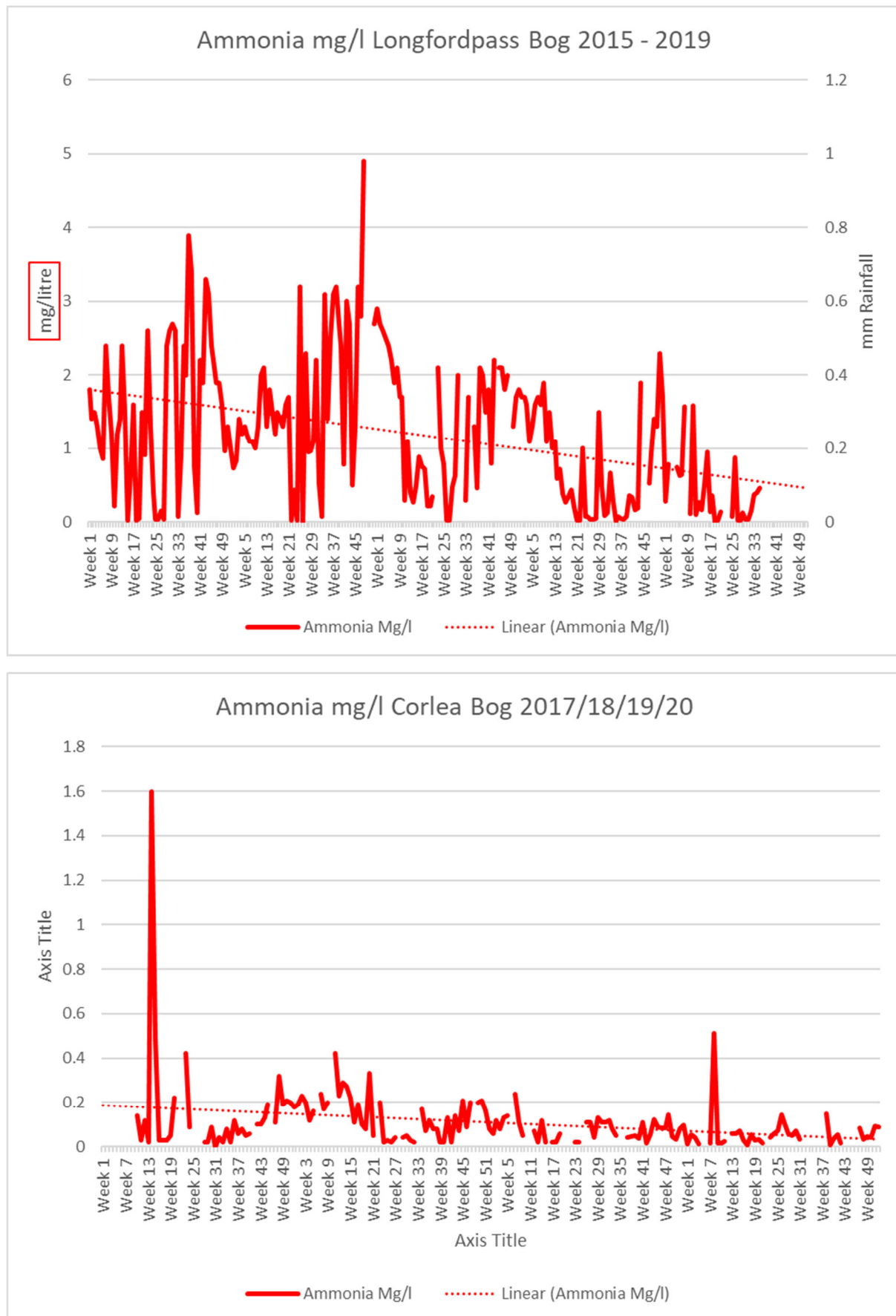


Figure 7.1. Ammonia levels over the period 2015-2019 at Longfordpass and the period 2017-2020 at Corlea.

Additional criteria for successful rehabilitation to optimise climate action and other ecosystem service benefits:

- Optimising the extent of suitable hydrological conditions to optimise climate action and other ecosystem service benefits (optimising and maximising residual peat rewetting). This will be measured by an aerial survey after rehabilitation has been completed.
- Accelerating the trajectory of the bog towards becoming a reduced carbon source/carbon sink. This will be measured through habitat mapping and the development of cutaway bog condition assessment. This cutaway bog condition assessment will include assessment of environmental and ecological indicators such as vegetation cover, vegetation communities, presence of key species, *Sphagnum* cover, bare peat cover and water levels (similar to ecotope mapping). Baseline monitoring will be carried after rehabilitation is completed (during the scheme). It is proposed that sites can be monitored against this baseline in the future.
- Reduction in carbon emissions. This will be estimated via a combination of habitat condition assessment and application of appropriate carbon emission factors derived from other sites. Baseline monitoring (habitat condition) will be carried after rehabilitation is completed (during the scheme). It is proposed that sites can be monitored against this baseline in the future.
- Setting the site on a trajectory towards establishment of a mosaic of compatible habitats including *Sphagnum*-rich regenerating wet deep peat vegetation communities, wetland, fen, reed swamp, Heather-dominated bog vegetation, scrub, poor fen, and birch woodland, where conditions are suitable. Some of these habitats have already in part established as pioneer vegetation and scrub. It will take some time for stable naturally functioning habitats to fully develop at Cloontuskert Bog. This will be demonstrated and measured via aerial photography, habitat mapping and cutaway/habitat condition assessment. Baseline monitoring will be carried after rehabilitation is completed (during the scheme). It is proposed that sites can be monitored against this baseline in the future.
- Improvement in biodiversity and ecosystem services. This will be demonstrated by metrics outlined in Section 9.1 that can be used to measure changes in ecosystem services (e.g. water quality parameters, development of pioneer habitats, breeding bird monitoring). This will be measured by collecting a range of scientific data that can then quickly be adapted and into metrics that can be used to measure changes in various ecosystem services. Baseline monitoring will be carried after rehabilitation is completed (during the scheme). It is proposed that sites can be monitored against this baseline in the future.

Table 7-1 Summary of Success criteria, targets, how various success criteria will be measured and expected timeframes.

Criteria type	Criteria	Target	Measured by	Expected Timeframe
IPC validation	Rewetting in the former area of industrial peat production	Delivery of rehabilitation measures Reduction in bare peat.	Aerial photography after rehabilitation has been completed – to demonstrate measures (drain-blocking) Establishment of a baseline for future monitoring of bare peat, vegetation establishment and habitat condition.	2025-2027
IPC validation	Key water quality parameters Ammonia, Phosphorous, Suspended solids, pH and conductivity	Reduction or stabilisation of key water quality parameters associated with this bog	Water quality monitoring for a period after rehabilitation has been completed	2025-2027
IPC validation	Reducing pressure from peat production on the local water body catchment (WFD)	Where this section of the water body, that this bog drains to, has not been identified as under pressure from peat extraction, that the intervening EPA monitoring programme associated with its Programme of Measures for this water body, confirms that its classification remains at not being at risk from peat extraction associated with activities at this bog.	EPA WFD monitoring programme	WFD schedule
Climate action verification	Optimising the extent of suitable hydrological conditions to optimise climate action	Optimal extent of suitable hydrological conditions	Aerial photography and Habitat mapping to map extent of suitable hydrological conditions. Baseline monitoring to be carried out during the scheme when rehabilitation is complete. Sites can be re-monitored in the future and	2025-2027

Criteria type	Criteria	Target	Measured by	Expected Timeframe
			compared against this baseline.	
Climate action verification	Reduction in carbon emissions.	Reduction in carbon emissions	Carbon emissions – estimated using a bog condition assessment and appropriate carbon emission factors.	2025-2027
Climate action verification	Setting the site on a trajectory towards establishment of a mosaic of compatible habitats	Establishment of compatible cutaway habitats	Habitat map, Cutaway bog condition map Baseline monitoring to be carried out during the scheme when rehabilitation is complete. Sites can be re-monitored in the future and compared against this baseline.	2025-2027

Meeting climate action verification criteria and monitoring of these criteria after the scheme has been completed is dependent on support from the Climate Action Fund or other sources of funding. Note that monitoring and verification of the overall scheme will be stratified – not all these criteria will be measured at each individual site. Baseline monitoring to be carried out during the scheme when rehabilitation is complete. Sites can be re-monitored in the future and compared against this baseline.

7.2. Critical success factors needed to achieve successful rehabilitation as outlined in the plan

The achievement of successful rehabilitation as outlined in the plan requires:

- **Funding to pay for resources required to deliver the planned rehabilitation (Bord na Móna and external).** Bord na Móna maintains a provision on its balance sheet to pay for these future costs. Bord na Móna is fully committed to meeting its obligations relating to rehabilitation and decommissioning under the Integrated Pollution Control Licence. It is expected that additional costs of enhanced rehabilitation will be supported by Government through the Climate Action Fund and Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan.
- **Bord na Móna to have sufficient resources (staff and training) to deliver the planned rehabilitation with required associated skills and competencies.**
- **Bord na Móna to have sufficient resources (suitable machinery) and staff to maintain this machinery.**
- **Weather conditions to be within normal limits over the rehabilitation plan timeframe.** Long periods of wet weather have the capacity to significantly affect ground conditions and constrain the delivery of rehabilitation. The potential impact of wet weather on ground conditions can be reduced by appropriate planning and management. Bord na Móna have significant experience of managing these issues through 70 years of working in these peatland environments.

- **Rehabilitation measures to be effective.** The rehabilitation measures proposed in this plan are based on 40 years of Bord na Móna experience of peatland management and best practice applied internationally in peatland management. Measures proposed in this plan have already been shown to be effective at other sites. Bord na Móna will apply a flexible and adaptable approach to the more innovative rehabilitation measures proposed in this plan. If measures are not initially effective, Bord na Móna will review any requirement for additional practical rehabilitation.
- **Natural colonisation of vegetation to develop semi-natural habitats at a rate within the normal limits.** The development of naturally functioning semi-natural habitats on degraded bog takes time. It may take 30-50 years for active raised bog vegetation to re-develop on suitable cutaway that was previously bare peat. However, Bord na Móna experience has demonstrated the effectiveness of these type of measures for rewetting bog and creating carbon sinks (Renou-Wilson *et al.* 2018).
- Rehabilitation measures have been designed to accelerate and work with natural colonisation and other natural processes. Bord na Móna experience of rehabilitation has shown that rewetting improves conditions for natural colonisation and that natural colonisation is accelerated where the environmental conditions are most suitable. Rehabilitation measures have been designed to modify the conditions of areas within sites where conditions are less suitable for natural colonisation (modifying hydrology, topography, nutrient status or availability of potential seed sources).
- **Monitoring to be robust and effective.** Rehabilitation Monitoring will be established to validate the success of rehabilitation as required by Condition 10 of the IPC Licence and to verify the benefits of the proposed enhanced measures to optimise climate action. This will focus on collecting a range of scientific data that can then quickly be adapted into metrics that can be used to measure changes in various ecosystem services.

8. REHABILITATION ACTIONS AND TIME FRAME

Peatland rehabilitation requires detailed planning and the use of data from desktop surveys and field surveys. This data in association with topographical and hydrological modelling will be important in planning the future peatland landscapes and planning the use of the most appropriate rehabilitation methodologies to maximise climate action benefits. Hydrological modelling indicates those areas that are likely to rewet when drains are blocked, based on the current topography, and areas where water levels may have to be modified, where needed. Enhanced rehabilitation measures will look to optimise hydrological conditions for rewetting peat in other areas. This planning is also essential for matching the most sustainable rehabilitation methodology to the most suitable cutaway environment to maximise the benefits of the resource outlay (maximising cost/benefit).

A number of illustrative figures have been produced to inform Rehab Planning and Design, including Aerial Photography, Peat Depths, LiDAR Surface Maps, and Depression Analysis modelling; these are included in the accompanying Mapbook as the drawings referenced below:

BNM-DR-26-01-RP-22: Aerial Imagery 2020

BNM-DR-26-01-RP-04: Peat Depths

BNM-DR-26-01-RP-03: LiDAR Map

BNM-DR-26-01-RP-09: Depression Analysis

The rehabilitation actions themselves will be a combination of PCAS measures to rewet peat. The distribution of these measures is provisionally outlined in drawing titled *BNM-DR-26-01-RP-05: Enhanced Rehabilitation Measures* in the accompanying Mapbook (note that the actual distribution of these measures may be subject to change in response to stakeholder consultation and refinement of the enhanced rehabilitation measures.)

The measures for Cloontuskert Bog will include (see Table 8.1):

- Re-assessment of the pumping regime and decommissioning the pump, if it has no significant external impact. Cloontuskert Bog has a combination of a pumped and gravity drainage regime. There is one pump that is operational, which will be decommissioned as part of the PCAS works. Initial hydrological modelling indicates that a part of the eastern side of the site will remain as wetland and develop a mosaic of wetland habitats with some permanent deeper water. Hydrological management will look to optimise summer water levels to maximise the development of wetland vegetation (by looking to set water depths at < 0.5 m, where possible. It is inevitable that some sections will naturally have deeper water due to the topography at this site). Water-levels will be adjusted at outfalls and by adjusting piped drainage. More sustainable permanent gravity drainage solutions will be examined. Some targeted bunding may be required. It is expected that a natural seasonal regime of water fluctuation will develop, with water-levels fluctuating in association with levels in the nearby River Shannon.
- Intensive drain blocking around the existing wetlands or standing water to create/promote the spread of wetland habitats.
- Rewetting some areas of the bog through regular field drain blocking to create three peat barriers every 100 m along each field drain.
- Re-alignment of piped drainage and creating high level swales to manage water levels and water flows through the site.
- Blocking drains in targeted existing pioneering vegetation mosaics, to accelerate rewetting, and/or manage water levels.

- The creation of berms across some sections of the bog to control/retain water levels. This measure seeks to retain shallow (< 10 cm) water conditions across multiple fields.
- Targeted fertiliser applications to accelerate vegetation establishment on areas of **bare peat** on headlands and high fields, and within certain areas of dry cutaway. Areas where vegetation has established do not need fertiliser application.
- Deep Peat measures including field re-profiling, on deeper peat; intensive drain blocking (max 7/100 m) and modifying outfalls, and management of water levels with overflow pipes and blocking of internal outfalls.
- Peat field re-profiling to reduce the camber of the fields and cell-bunding between high fields to manage/optmise water levels for revegetation.
- Some small bog remnants around the margins of the bog will be targeted for drain-blocking.
- The existing silt ponds will be retained and maintained during the rehabilitation phase. During the monitoring and verification phase the silt ponds will be continually inspected and maintained, where appropriate. When it is deemed that the silt ponds are not required, as the bog has been successfully stabilised and there is no silt run-off, the condition of the silt ponds will be reviewed. The silt ponds will either be de-watered (water levels lowered to a level where the silt pond will naturally develop as a small wetland feature), left in situ, or infilled (where discharges do not require silt control).
- Inoculation of *Sphagnum* will be considered in the future as part of the Peatlands and People LIFE Project.

Table 8.1: Types of and areas for enhanced rehabilitation measures at Cloontuskert Bog.

Type*	Rehab Code	Enhanced Rehabilitation Measure	Extent (Ha)
Dry Cutaway	DCT1	Blocking outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes	13.5
	DCT2	Regular drain blocking (3/100m), modifying outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes and targeted fertiliser treatment.	18.4
Wetland	WLT2	Turn off or reduce pumping to rewet cutaway, blocking outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes and targeted blocking of outfalls within a site.	33.3
	WLT4	More intensive drain blocking (max 7/100 m), modifying outfalls and managing overflows, transplanting Reeds and other rhizomes.	33.2
Deep Peat	DPT2	More intensive drain blocking (max 7/100 m) and modifying outfalls and managing overflows	76.2
	DPT3	More intensive drain blocking (max 7/100 m), + field reprofiling + blocking outfalls and managing overflows.	8.5
Marginal land	MLT1	No work required.	13.0
Additional Work	AW2	Targeted Drain Blocking	4.2
Silt ponds	Silt pond	Silt ponds.	0.3

Type*	Rehab Code	Enhanced Rehabilitation Measure	Extent (Ha)
Constraint	Constraint	Other Constraints (rights of way, access routes, housing estate, agricultural land).	18.7
Total			219.3

* Note that the types of rehab and areas of rehab may change in response to stakeholder consultation and refinement of the enhanced rehabilitation measures.

8.1 Completed and ongoing

- A small part of the site is already re-vegetating, with significant cover of pioneer vegetation developing a mosaic of typical cutaway peatland and wetland habitats. Natural re-colonisation of the cutaway so far has been quite effective. Bare peat areas within the cutaway parts of the site are reducing as vegetation develops and consolidates.
- A large wetland has already developed at Cloontuskert.

8.2 Short-term planning actions (0-1 years)

- Seek formal approval of the enhanced plan, noting the alternative standard plan should funding from the Scheme not materialise from the EPA.
- Agree an *ex ante* budget of eligible costs (based on the approved enhanced plan) with the Scheme regulator.
- Develop a detailed site plan with engineering drawings outlining how the various rehabilitation methodologies (The Scheme PCAS) will be applied to Cloontuskert Bog. This will take account of peat depths, topography, drainage, and hydrological modelling. (See map for an indicative view of the application of different rehabilitation methodologies).
- A drainage management assessment of the proposed enhanced rehabilitation measures will be carried out and any issues identified resolved and the rehabilitation plan adapted.
- A review of known archaeology and an archaeological impact appraisal assessment (AIA), of the proposed rehabilitation will be carried out. The results of this assessment will be incorporated into the rehabilitation plan to minimise known archaeological disturbance, where possible.
- A review of issues that may constrain rehabilitation such as known rights of way and existing land agreements is to be carried out.
- A review of remaining milled peat stocks is to be carried out.
- An ecological appraisal of the potential impacts of the planned rehabilitation on the presence of sensitive ground-nesting bird breeding species (e.g. breeding waders) is to be carried out. The scheduling of rehabilitation operations will be adapted, where required.
- Ensure all activities comply with the environmental protection requirements of the IPC Licence.
- Carry out Appropriate Assessment of the Rehabilitation Plan.
- Track implementation and enforcement of the relevant IPC Licence conditions, the mitigation measures (AA) and other environmental control measures during the implementation of the rehabilitation plan.

8.3 Short-term practical actions (0-2 years)

- Carry out proposed measures as per the detailed site plan. This will include a combination of bunding and drain blocking on deep peat, and fertiliser application targeting bare peat areas of headlands, high fields and other areas (where required) in addition to wetland creation and management prescriptions. All rehabilitation will be carried out with regard to best practice environmental control measures (Appendix IV).
- Monitor the success of rehabilitation measures in relation to developing suitable hydrological conditions.
- Carry out the proposed monitoring, as outlined.
- While natural colonisation has commenced since peat production ceased, Phase 2 actions will be carried out in targeted areas to accelerate re-vegetation and colonisation of target species. Phase 2 actions may include seeding of targeted vegetation.
- The remaining peat stock on the bog will be subject to decommissioning as part of the rehabilitation measures. In summary, the remaining stockpiles will be reduced in height and reprofiled, with the material deposited into the adjoining pile field drains that will have been previously subject to drain blocking. This process is described fully in Appendix XIV.
- Silt ponds will be monitored during this period and there will be continued maintenance and cleaning to prevent potential run-off of suspended solids from the site during the rehabilitation phase.
- Submit an ex-post report to the Scheme regulator to verify the eligible measures to be carried out in year 1 of the Scheme, and an ex ante estimate for year 2 of the Scheme; and so on for each year of the Scheme.

8.4 Long-term (>3 years)

- Evaluate success of short-term rehabilitation measures outlined above and remediate where necessary.
- Delivery of a monitoring, aftercare and maintenance programme (See section 10.2 below).
- Decommissioning of silt-ponds will be assessed and carried out, where required.
- Reporting to the EPA will continue until the IPC Licence is surrendered.

8.5 Timeframe

- **2025:** Short-term planning actions.
- **2025-2026:** Short-term practical actions.
- **2026-2027:** Long term practical actions. Evaluate success of short-term rehabilitation measures outlined above and remediate where necessary.
- **2028:** Decommission silt-ponds, if necessary.

8.6 Budget and costing

Bord na Móna appreciates the Minister's intention to support Bord na Móna in developing a package of measures, 'the Scheme', for enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration of cutaway peatlands referred to as, the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme'. However, only the additional costs associated with the additional and enhanced rehabilitation, i.e., measures which go beyond the existing standard mandatory decommissioning and rehabilitation requirements arising from Condition 10 will be eligible for support.

The enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration of the peatlands funded by the Scheme will deliver benefits across climate action (GHG mitigation through reduced carbon emissions and acceleration towards carbon sequestration), enrich the State's natural capital, increase eco-system services, strengthen biodiversity, improve water quality and storage attenuation as well as developing the amenity potential of the peatlands.

Bord na Móna maintains a provision on its balance sheet to pay for the future costs of standard rehabilitation and decommissioning. This is updated every year - for more information see the Bord na Móna Annual Report (Bord na Móna, 2024). Bord na Móna is fully committed to meeting its obligations relating to rehabilitation and decommissioning under the Integrated Pollution Control Licence.

At this time, a 'standard' rehabilitation provision (sufficient to discharge the requirement of Condition 10 in the licence) has been allocated to the site based on the area of different cutaway types across the site (See Appendix I).

9. AFTERCARE AND MAINTENANCE

9.1 Programme for monitoring, aftercare and maintenance

This programme for monitoring, aftercare and maintenance has been designed to meet the Conditions of the IPC Licence. This is defined as:

- There will be **initial quarterly monitoring assessments** of the site to determine the general status of the site, the condition of the silt ponds, assess the condition of the rehabilitation work, monitoring of any potential impacts on neighbours land, general land security, boundary management, dumping and littering.
- The number of these site visits will reduce after 2 years to bi-annually and then after 5 years to annual visits.
- These monitoring visits will also consider any requirements for further practical rehabilitation measures.
- The **baseline condition of the site will be established** post-rehabilitation implementation by using an aerial survey to take an up-to-date aerial photo, when rehabilitation is completed. This will be used to verify completion of rehabilitation measures. The extent of bare peat will be assessed using this baseline data, and habitat maps will be updated, if needed. It is proposed that sites can be monitored against this baseline in the future.
- **Water quality monitoring** at the bog will be established. The main objective of this water quality monitoring will be to establish a baseline and then monitor the impact of peatland rehabilitation on water quality from the bog.
- In order to assist in monitoring surface water quality from this bog, it is planned to increase the existing licence monitoring requirements to sampling for the same parameters to every month during the scheduled activities and for a period up to two years post rehabilitation, depending on the period required to confirm that the main two parameters, suspended solids and ammonia are remaining compliant with the licence emission and trigger limit values and there is an improving trajectory in these two parameters i.e. reduction in concentration.
- Enhanced water quality monitoring will aim to include up to 70% of a bogs drainage catchments.
- Monitoring results will be maintained, trended and reported on each year as part of the requirement to report on Condition 10.1 of the IPC Licence on Bog Rehabilitation in the Annual Environmental Report, which will be available in April each year at www.epa.ie.
- The parameters to be included (as per condition 6.2 of the IPC Licence) include monthly monitoring for pH, Suspended Solids, Total Solids, Total Phosphorus, Total Ammonia, Colour, and COD and DOC.
- This monthly sampling regime on a selected number of silt ponds will be carried out over a two-year cycle. The original (licence) requirement was for a quarterly sampling regime, but this has been increased to a monthly regime to appropriately track the changing water chemistry that will occur as part of this enhanced rehabilitation. In addition, DOC will be included as a parameter to try and identify any changes in carbon in the surface water.
- If, after two years, key criteria for successful rehabilitation are being achieved and key targets are being met, then the water quality monitoring will be reviewed, with consideration of potential ongoing research on site. The water quality data, the aerial surveys and the habitat mapping will be collated and will be submitted to the EPA as part of the final validation report.
- If, after two years, key criteria for successful rehabilitation have **not** been achieved and key targets have **not** been met, then the rehabilitation measures and status of the site will be evaluated and enhanced, where required. This evaluation may indicate no requirement for additional enhancement of

rehabilitation measures but may demonstrate that more time is required before key criteria for rehabilitation has been achieved. Monitoring of water quality will then also continue for another period to be defined.

- Where other uses are proposed for the site that are compatible the provision of biodiversity and ecosystem services, these will be assessed by Bord na Móna in consultation with interested parties. Other after-uses can be proposed for licensed areas and must go through the required assessment process and planning procedures.

Additional monitoring measures are also proposed to monitor ecosystem service benefits that have been derived by enhanced rehabilitation. These proposed monitoring measures will be funded by the proposed Climate Action Fund Scheme or additional other funding. Monitoring of climate action and other ecosystem service benefits will be designed to take account of the requirements of monitoring benefits of the overall Scheme and will be stratified; that is not all monitoring will be carried out in each site. These are defined as:

- Vegetation and habitat monitoring after rehabilitation is completed using a cutaway bog condition assessment. This assessment will include assessment of on environmental and ecological indicators such as vegetation cover, vegetation communities, presence of key species, *Sphagnum* cover, bare peat cover and water levels. It is proposed that sites can be monitored against this baseline in the future.
- The condition of the bog can be assessed using the condition assessment and suitable Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission factors can be assigned to different habitats. GHG emission factors have been determined for various peatland habitats in Ireland (Wilson *et al.*, 2015) and are constantly being refined with more and more research. BnM is actively supporting research into GHG fluxes in different rehabilitated peatland habitats. This means that potential GHG emissions can be estimated from the site, as the site continues along its trajectory towards a naturally functioning peatland ecosystem.

9.2 Rehabilitation plan validation and licence surrender – report as required under condition 10.4

IPC Licence Condition 10.4. *A final validation report to include a certificate of completion for the Rehabilitation Plan, for all or part of the site as necessary, shall be submitted to the Agency within six months of execution of the plan. The licensee shall carry out such tests, investigations or submit certification, as requested by the Agency, to confirm that there is no continuing risk to the environment.*

Reporting to the EPA will continue until the IPC Licence is surrendered. The bog will be included in the full licence surrender process as per the Guidance to Licensees on Surrender, Cessation and Closure of Licensed Sites EPA, 2012, when:

- The planned rehabilitation has been completed.
- The key criteria for successful rehabilitation have been achieved and key targets have been met.
- Water quality monitoring demonstrates that water quality of discharge is stabilising or improving; and
- The site has been environmentally stabilised.

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ADDENDUM 1- APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT REPORT FINDINGS

Bord na Móna operates under IPC Licence issued and administered by the EPA to extract peat within the Mount Dillon bog group (Ref. P0504-01). As part of Condition 10.2 of this license, a rehabilitation plan must be prepared for permanent rehabilitation of the boglands within the licensed area. Cloontuskert Bog, Co. Roscommon.

This addendum outlines the findings of the Appropriate Assessment reporting carried out in respect of proposed PCAS activities at Cloontuskert Bog.

An Appropriate Assessment Report⁷ was commissioned by Bord na Móna to inform whether the proposed PCAS activities at Cloontuskert Bog had the potential to result in Likely Significant Effects on European Sites.

The concluding statement of this report reads as follows:

‘It is concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, in view of best scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information and in light of the conservation objectives of the relevant European Sites, that the proposed Decommissioning and Rehabilitation at Cloontuskert Bog, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Site’.

Therefore, following screening, Appropriate Assessment is not required for the project as it is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European Site(s) and as it can be concluded, on the basis of objective information, that the project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is not likely to have a significant effect on any European Site(s).

⁷ MKO (2025). Bloomhill East Bog Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan 2025, Screening for Appropriate Assessment.

APPENDIX I: A STANDARD PEATLAND REHABILITATION PLAN TO MEET CONDITIONS OF THE IPC LICENCE

In the event that the Scheme (PCAS) is not supported by additional funding, Bord na Móna is still obligated to carry out peatland rehabilitation to meet the conditions of the IPC Licence. Under its EPA licences and following cessation of peat extraction, BnM is mandated to ‘decommission’ its operations by removing materials ‘that may result in environmental pollution’ and establish that ‘rehabilitation’ measures have environmentally stabilised peat production areas.

This proposed standard peatland rehabilitation plan is outlined here to **estimate potential costs**. Bord na Móna will still be expected to cover the costs that would have accrued from standard decommissioning and rehabilitation activities, as part of its original obligations. The existing costs associated with both the removal of potentially polluting materials and the environmental stabilisation of the peatlands resides with Bord na Móna. However, the expenditure necessary to deliver the additional and enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration and the benefits that flow from these measures and interventions/improvements will be eligible for funding by government through the Climate Action Fund and Ireland’s National Recovery and Resilience Plan.

The same process as outlined in Section 2 will be followed.

Scope of rehabilitation

The principal scope of this rehabilitation plan is to rehabilitate the bog. This is defined by:

- The area of Cloontuskert Bog.
- EPA IPC Licence - Ref. P0504-01. As part of Condition 10.2 of this licence, a rehabilitation plan must be prepared for permanent rehabilitation of the boglands within the licensed area. Cloontuskert Bog is part of the Mount Dillon (Lough Ree) Bog Group.
- The current condition of Cloontuskert Bog.
- The key objective of rehabilitation, as defined by this licence, is **environmental stabilisation** of the bog.
- To minimise potential impacts on neighbouring land. Boundary drains around Cloontuskert Bog will be left unblocked as blocking boundary drains could affect adjacent land.
- Land-use.

Rehabilitation goals and outcomes

The key rehabilitation goal and outcome for Cloontuskert Bog is environmental stabilisation of the site via wetland creation. This is defined as:

- Carrying out drain blocking to rewet peat and slow runoff.
- Stabilising potential emissions from the site (e.g. suspended solids).
- Environmental stabilisation.

The outcome is setting the site on a trajectory towards establishment of natural habitats.

Criteria for successful rehabilitation:

- Rewetting of residual peat and shallow cutaway in the former area of industrial peat production to offset potential silt run off and to encourage development of vegetation cover via natural colonisation and reducing the area of bare exposed peat.
- That there is a stabilising/improving concentration of suspended solids and ammonia associated with the measures undertaken to stabilise the peat surface by the blocking of the internal drainage system and the maximised rewetting of the peat surface. This will be demonstrated by developing a stable or downward trajectory of water quality indicators (suspended solids and ammonia) towards what would be typical of a rewetted cutaway bog. This will be measured via water quality monitoring (suspended solids and ammonia).
- Receiving water bodies have been classified under the River Basin Management Plan and this classification includes waters that are *At Risk* from peatlands and peat extraction. The success criteria will be that the *At Risk* classification will see improvements in the associated pressures from this peatland or if remaining *At Risk*, that there is an improving trajectory in the pressure from this peatland.

Rehabilitation targets

- Demonstrating the delivery of the rehabilitation through site visits and through updated aerial photography (indicating presence of peat blockages and rewetting). This will be demonstrated by a post rehab aerial survey.
- Stabilising potential emissions from the site (e.g. suspended solids). The key target will be developing a stable or downward trajectory of water quality indicators (suspended solids and ammonia) towards what would be typical of a rewetted cutaway bog. This will be demonstrated by water quality monitoring results.

Rehabilitation measures:

- Blocking field drains in drier sections of the former industrial production area using a dozer to create regular peat blockages (three blockages per 100 m) along each field drain.
- Re-alignment of piped drainage; and management of water levels to create/enhance existing wetlands.
- No measures are planned for the majority of surrounding marginal peatland habitats.
- Silt ponds will continue to be maintained during the rehabilitation and decommissioning phase.
- Evaluate success of short-term rehabilitation measures and enhance where necessary.
- Decommissioning of silt-ponds will be assessed and carried out, where required.

Timeframe:

- 2025. 1st phase of rehabilitation. Field drain blocking.
- 2026. 2nd phase. Further realignment of piped drainage and other rewetting measures dependent on success of 1st phase rewetting, as determined by ongoing monitoring of water levels and re-vegetation.
- Other enhancement measures such as fertiliser treatment will be carried out, if needed. These will be determined by ongoing monitoring.
- 2027-2028. Evaluate success of short-term rehabilitation measures outlined above and remediate where necessary.

- 2027-2028. Decommission silt-ponds, if necessary.

Table AP-1. Rehabilitation measures and target area.

Type	Code	Description	Area (Ha)
Dry cutaway	DCT1	Blocking outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes	31.9
Deep peat	DPT1	Regular drain blocking (3/100 m) + blocking outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes	84.7
Wetland	WLT1	Turn off or reduce pumping to rewet cutaway + blocking outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes	66.6
Marginal Land	MLT1	No work required	13
Additional Works	AW1	Targeted drain blocking	4.2
Other	Silt Pond	Silt ponds	0.3
Other	Constraint	Rights of Ways, Agricultural land	18.7
Total			219.4

See Drawing number *BNM-DR-26-01-RP-20: Standard Rehabilitation Measures* included in the accompanying Mapbook which illustrates the standard rehab measures to be applied.

Monitoring, after-care and maintenance

- There will be initial quarterly monitoring assessments of the site to determine the general status of the site, the condition of the silt-ponds, assess the condition of the rehabilitation work, assess the progress of natural colonisation, monitoring of any potential impacts on neighbouring land and general land security. The number of site visits will reduce after 2 years to bi-annually. These site visits will assess the need to additional rehabilitation.
- Water quality monitoring will be established.
- Monitoring results will be maintained, trended and reported on each year as part of the requirement to report on Condition 10.1 of the IPC Licence on Bog Rehabilitation in the Annual Environmental Report, which will be available in April each year at www.epa.ie.
- The parameters to be included (as per condition 6.2 of the IPC Licence) include monthly monitoring for pH, Flow, Suspended Solids, Total Solids, Total Phosphorus, Total Ammonia, Colour, and COD.
- This sampling regime on a selected number of silt ponds will be carried out over a two-year cycle. The original (licence) requirement was for a quarterly sampling regime.
- Where other uses are proposed for the site, these will be assessed by Bord na Móna in consultation with interested parties. Other after-uses can be proposed for licensed areas and must go through the required assessment and planning procedures.

Validation and IPC Licence surrender

Reporting to the EPA will continue until the IPC Licence is surrendered. The bog will be included in the full licence surrender process as per the Guidance to Licensees on Surrender, Cessation and Closure of Licensed Sites (EPA, 2012) when:

- The planned rehabilitation has been completed;
- Water quality monitoring demonstrates that water quality of discharge is stabilising or improving; and
- The site has been environmentally stabilised.

APPENDIX II: BOG GROUP CONTEXT

The Mount Dillon Bog Group IPC Licenced area is made up of two sub-groups (Lough Ree- the Mount Dillon Energy Peat Group) and Mostrim) and the bog units within the group have been in industrial peat production for several decades. There are 28 defined bog units covering a total area of 11,322 ha. Of the 28 units, 23 mainly straddle the River Shannon within counties Roscommon and Longford, with five sites partially in County Westmeath to the east. Each bog area further comprises a range of habitats from bare milled peat former production areas to re-colonising cutaway to workshops areas and transport infrastructure. Industrial peat extraction from these sites mainly supplied ESB power stations at Lanesborough (LRP) or for horticultural peat products.

Industrial peat extraction in the Mount Dillon Bog Group finally ceased in 2021. Peat stockpiles which were harvested within the Bog Group continued to be delivered to Lough Ree Power Station until its closure in 2020. The removal of harvested peat stocks from the Mount Dillon Bog Group to supply other customers finally ceased in 2024. Intensive decommissioning and rehabilitation for the Mount Dillon Bog Group started in 2020/2021.

One bog site, Cloonmore, was never used for industrial peat production. Several bogs in the Mostrim group were drained but never fully developed and still retain typical high bog characteristics. These include Clonwhelan, Glenlough and a section of Mostrim. These sites have been zoned for biodiversity and a high bog drain blocking has been used to rewet the high bog and encourage restoration of the raised bog habitat. Several sites (Glenlough, Mostrim, Clonwhelan and Clynan) were assessed by consultants for NPWS as part of the review of the raised bog Natural Heritage Area network (NPWS 2014).

The rehabilitation plan for the Mount Dillon Bog Group encompasses all areas involved in industrial peat production including former industrial production areas and associated facilities. It also includes rehabilitation measures for those bogs that were initially drained but not fully developed.

A breakdown of the component bog areas for the Mount Dillon Bog Group IPC Licence Ref. P0-504-01 is outlined in Table Ap-2.

Industrial peat production history varies across the Mount Dillon bog group, so there is a wide range of peat depths at present. Bogs close to Lanesborough tend to have shallower peat depths or have been cutaway, while some bogs on the periphery of the group tend to have deeper peat. Several sites such as Mount Dillon and Derrycashel have been mostly cutaway to the fen peat layers or in some cases to expose the underlying gravel/sub-soil. Several bogs in the Mostrim group have only been partially developed or have had no industrial peat production, and have relatively deep peat depths.

Table Ap-2: Mount Dillon Bog Group names, area and indicative status (Mount Dillon Energy Peat sub-group)

Bog Name	Area (ha)	Stage of development	Land-Use and History	Peat Production Cessation	Rehab Plan Status
Begnagh	265	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Begnagh Bog in 1977 and ceased in 2020. Deep peat remains on much of the former production area. Begnagh is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Begnagh Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power Some areas of cutaway on site are developing pioneer cutaway vegetation communities. A greenway through Begnagh has been proposed as part of an amenity project with	2020	Finalised 2022 Rehab started in 2022

Bog Name	Area (ha)	Stage of development	Land-Use and History	Peat Production Cessation	Rehab Plan Status
			Faillte Ireland and Longford County Council (Midlands Trail Network).		
Clooneeny	358	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Clooneeny Bog in 1985 and ceased in 2020. Deep peat remains on much of the former production area. Clooneeny is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Clooneeny Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; horticultural peat and fuel peat for Lough Ree Power Most of the former production area on site is bare peat. Some areas of cutaway on site are developing pioneer cutaway vegetation communities.	2020	Finalised 2022 Rehab started in 2022
Cloonmore	102	N/A	Never developed for industrial peat production; scattered plots.	N/A	N/A
Cloontuskert	494	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Cloontuskert Bog in 1985 and ceased in 2020. Deep peat remains across the former production area. Cloontuskert is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Cloontuskert Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; horticultural peat and fuel peat for Lough Ree Power Restoration work has been carried out on a 38ha section of high bog within Cloontuskert Bog. Some of the former production area on site is developing pioneer cutaway vegetation communities, the remainder of the site is bare peat. A greenway through Cloontuskert has been proposed as part of an amenity project with Faillte Ireland and Roscommon County Council (Midlands Trail Network).	2020	Finalised 2024 Rehab to start in 2025
Cloontuskert Rail Link	28	Cloontuskert rail link is a link between sites.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Corlea	163	Cutaway Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Corlea Bog in 1960 and ceased in 2018. Long-term peat extraction has reduced peat depth on this bog. Corlea is considered a shallow peat cutaway bog.	The former production area at Corlea has already extensively colonised. Pioneer wetland and scrub development has occurred over much of the site. Some wetland and rehabilitation management was undertaken between 2016-2018. Part of site leased to local community development group to develop amenity walkway in association with Longford County Council. This greenway has been constructed.	2018	Finalised in 2023 Rehab started in 2023
Derraghan	289	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Derraghan Bog in the 1940's and ceased in 2020. Most of the former production area has shallow peat remaining. Some pockets of deep peat remain. Derraghan is considered a shallow peat cutover bog.	Derraghan Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power Much of the former production area at Derraghan has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer wetland and scrub vegetation communities.	2020	Plan Finalised 2021 Rehab commenced 2022
Derryadd	653	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Derryadd Bog in 1964 and ceased in 2019. Long-term peat extraction has reduced peat depth on this bog. Most of the former production area has shallow peat. Some pockets of deep peat remain. Derryadd is considered a shallow peat cutover bog.	Much of the former production area at Derryadd has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer wetland and scrub vegetation communities Derryadd Bog will form part of the footprint of the proposed Derryadd Wind Farm Project (in pre-planning).	2019	Draft 2024

Bog Name	Area (ha)	Stage of development	Land-Use and History	Peat Production Cessation	Rehab Plan Status
			An amenity walkway through part of Derryadd Bog is proposed for the Derryadd Wind Farm project		
Derryadd2	328	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Derryadd 2 Bog in 1960 and ceased in 2020. Long-term peat extraction has reduced peat depth on this bog. Most of the former production area has shallow peat remaining. Some pockets of deep peat remain. Derryadd 2 is considered a shallow peat cutover bog.	Much of the former production area at Derryadd 2 has been out of peat production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer wetland and scrub vegetation communities	2020	Finalised 2023 Rehab started 2023
Derryarogue	895	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Derryarogue Bog in 1952 and ceased in 2019. Long-term peat extraction has reduced peat depths on this bog. Most of the former production area has shallow peat remaining. Some pockets of deep peat remain. Derryarogue is considered a shallow peat cutover bog.	Much of the former production area at Derryarogue has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer wetland, cutaway and scrub vegetation communities. Derryarogue Bog will form part of the footprint of the proposed Derryadd Wind Farm project (in pre-planning). An amenity walkway through part of Derryarogue is proposed for the Derryadd Wind Farm project. Additional greenway through Derryarogue is in construction as part of an amenity project with Longford County Council. A further section of greenway has been proposed as part of an amenity project with Fáilte Ireland and Longford County Council (Midlands Trail Network).	2019	Derryarogue West Finalised in 2023 Rehab started in 2023 Derryarogue Draft 2024 (remainder of site)
Derrycashel	388	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Derrycashel Bog in 1951 and ceased in 2018. Long-term peat extraction has reduced peat depth on this bog. Most of the former production area has shallow peat remaining. Some pockets of deep peat remain. Derrycashel is considered a shallow peat cutover bog.	Derrycashel Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power Much of the former production area at Derryarogue has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer wetland and scrub vegetation communities. Some wetland and rehabilitation management was undertaken (c.60ha) between 2014-2015.	2018	Finalised 2021 Rehab started in 2021
Derrycolumb	454	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Derrycolumb Bog in the 1980's and ceased in 2019. Most of the former production area still has deep peat. Derrycolumb is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Derrycolumb Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power Much of the former production area at Derrycolumb has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer wetland and scrub vegetation communities. A greenway through Derrycolumb has been constructed as part of an amenity project with Longford County Council.	2018	Finalised 2021 Rehab started in 2021
Derrymoylin	356	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Derrymoylin Bog in 1985 and ceased in 2020. Long-term peat extraction has reduced peat depths on this bog.	Derrymoylin Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. Most of the former production area on site is bare peat.	2020	To be finalised 2024

Bog Name	Area (ha)	Stage of development	Land-Use and History	Peat Production Cessation	Rehab Plan Status
		Derrymoylin is considered a shallow peat cutover bog.	A greenway through Derrymoylin has been proposed as part of an amenity project with Fáilte Ireland and Roscommon County Council (Midlands Trail Network).		
Derryshannoge	452	Cutover Bog Industrial peat production commenced at Derryshannoge Bog in 1985 and ceased in 2020. Deep peat remains across most of the site. Derryshannoge is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Derryshannoge Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. Much of the former production area at Derryshannoge has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer cutaway and scrub vegetation communities.	2020	Finalised 2023 Rehab started in 2024
Edera	281	Cutover Bog Development for industrial peat production commenced at Edera Bog in 1990's. Active extraction from Edera began in 2003 and ceased in 2018. Edera is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Edera Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. The majority of Edera Bog former production area is bare peat.	2020	Finalised 2021 Rehab started in 2021
Erenagh	93	Cutover Bog Development for industrial peat production commenced at Erenagh Bog in 1970's. Erenagh is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Erenagh Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. Much of the former production area at Erenagh has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer cutaway and scrub vegetation communities.	2020	Draft 2024
Granaghan	212	Cutover Bog Development for industrial peat production commenced at Granaghan Bog in 1980's. Long-term peat extraction has reduced peat depth on this bog but deep peat remains on site. Granaghan is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Granaghan Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; horticultural peat and fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. The majority of Granaghan Bog former production area is bare peat.	2020	Finalised 2023 Rehab to start in 2024
Killashee	110	Cutover Bog Development for industrial peat production commenced at Killashee Bog in 1985. Killashee is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Killashee Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; horticultural peat and fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. The majority of Killashee Bog former production area is bare peat. Some areas have colonised with pioneer cutaway and scrub vegetation communities.	2020	Finalised 2023 Rehab started in 2024
Knappoge	313	Cutaway Bog Peat Production at Knappoge bog commenced in 1963, and finished in 2018. Peat depths on the former production area are generally shallow. There are some pockets of deeper peat. Knappoge is considered a shallow peat cutaway bog.	Knappoge Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. The majority of Knappoge Bog former production area is bare peat. Some areas have colonised with pioneer cutaway and scrub vegetation communities. A greenway through Knappogue has been constructed as part of an amenity project with Longford County Council.	2018	Finalised 2021 Rehab started in 2022

Bog Name	Area (ha)	Stage of development	Land-Use and History	Peat Production Cessation	Rehab Plan Status
			An additional section has been proposed as part of an amenity project with Fáilte Ireland and Longford County Council (Midlands Trail Network).		
Lough Bannow	739	Cutaway Bog Peat Production at Lough Bannow bog commenced in 1964 and finished in 2019. Peat depths on the former production area are generally shallow. There are some pockets of deeper peat. Lough Bannow is considered a shallow peat cutaway bog.	Much of the former production area at Lough Bannow has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer cutaway and scrub vegetation communities. A small (35ha) conifer plantation was established in 1980's. Lough Bannow will form part of the footprint of proposed Derryadd Wind Farm Project (in pre-planning). An amenity walkway through part of Lough Bannow is proposed for the Derryadd Wind Farm project	2019	Draft 2024
Cloontuskert	483	Cutover Bog Peat Production at Cloontuskert Bog commenced in the 1960'S, and finished in 2020. Peat depths on the former production area remain relatively deep. Cloontuskert is considered a deep peat cutover bog.	Cloontuskert Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including; fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. Much of the former production area at Cloontuskert has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer cutaway and scrub vegetation communities.	2020	Draft 2024 Rehab to start 2025
Mountdillon	592	Cutaway Bog Peat Production at Mountdillon bog commenced in the 1940's and finished in 2020. Peat depths on the former production largely shallow and the peat is considered cutaway. Some deep peat remains on the west of the site. Mountdillon is considered a shallow peat cutaway bog.	Mountdillon Bog formerly supplied a range of commercial functions including fuel peat for Lough Ree Power. Much of the former production area at Mountdillon has been out of production for some time. These areas have already extensively colonised with pioneer cutaway, wetland and scrub vegetation communities.	2020	Draft 2024 Rehab to start 2025

See Drawing number *BNM-DR-26-01-RP-24: Bog Group Map*, included in the accompanying Mapbook which illustrates the location of Cloontuskert Bog and the Mount Dillon Bog Group in context to the surrounding area.

APPENDIX III: ECOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT

The below ecological survey report was completed in 2012 by Bord na Móna ecologists. This report includes a description of the Cloontuskert bog as a subsection of the wider Moher Bog. Cloontuskert bog is being rehabilitated as a separate subsection. Details pertaining to Moher bog in the below report are not relevant to this rehabilitation plan.

Cloontuskert bog was resurveyed in October 2024 by Bord na Móna ecologists to confirm the presence and distribution of naturally occurring pioneer habitats, the area remaining as bare peat and to inform on the presence of protected species. This updated habitat and species data has been used to develop the current habitat map and rehabilitation plan.

Ecological Survey Report (Bord na Mona 2012) <i>Note: This report outlines an ecological survey of the bog. This report should not be taken as a management plan for the site as other land-uses may still be considered. Information within this report may inform the development of other land-uses and identify areas with particular biodiversity value.</i>			
Bog Name:	<u>Cloontuskert</u>	Area (ha):	486ha
Works Name:	Mount Dillon	County:	Roscommon
Recorder(s):	BnM Ecology Section	Survey/ monitoring Date(s):	22 nd August 2012
Habitats present (in order of dominance) The most common habitats present at this site include: • Bare peat (BP) (Codes refer BnM classification of pioneer habitats of production bog. See Appendix II). • Pioneer dry heath communities (dHeath) • Scrub (eBir, OBir and CBir). • Silt Ponds (Silt) with associated habitats such as scrub, Bracken, rank grassland (GS2), dry calcareous grassland (gCal) and typical pioneer communities of disturbed areas (disTuss). The most common habitats present around the margins at this site include: • Birch woodland (WN7) (Codes refer to Heritage Council habitat classification, Fossitt 2000), See Appendix II) • Scrub (WS1) (Gorse scrub and Birch scrub developing of dry high bog around margins) • Raised bog (PB1) • Cutover bog (PB4) (several small fragments) • Wet grassland (GS4).			
Description of site Cloontuskert Bog is located approximately 2.6km to the West of Lanesborough in County Roscommon. This site is located within three main blocks. Erenagh Bog is located immediately to the north of the site. The majority of the site consists of the industrial peat production area with a small area of cutover located in the southern section of the site. The peat was used as fuel peat in Lough Ree Power in Lanesborough. Cloontuskert Bog contains a single pump.			

A housing estate was built during the 1950's in the northeastern corner of the site. This estate is still managed by BnM although the individual houses are in private ownership. At the time of the ecological survey BnM were in the process of handing over the estate to the local residents.

Cloontuskert bog is relatively young in industrial peat production terms as it has only been in production since the late 1970's. As a result, there is in excess of 2.6m of peat in most sections of the site and this peat is "red" or "Sphagnum" peat and is acidic in nature.

An area of the site in the southeastern corner has been cutaway for a number of years. This area has become re-vegetated with pioneer poor fen habitats (pJeff, pEang, pTyp, pPhrag and pRos), small sections of open water have also developed in this area while the drier sections along the margins have developed Birch scrub (Moher).

Smaller areas of cutaway have developed across the site; these areas appear to be young and are mainly comprised of pioneer poor fen habitats.

Small rivers flow through the mid-section of the site (between Moher and Cloontuskert subsections), along the southern boundary and along the northeastern boundary of the site. These rivers are tributaries of the River Shannon and Lough Ree. Otter spraint were located beside the river that flows through the mid-section of the site.

Other habitats along the margins of the site include Birch woodland, wet grassland, dry heath and cutover bog (Moher).

Domestic turf cutting is extensive around some of the margins of the site (Moher).

Designated areas on site (cSAC, NHA, pNHA, SPA other)

The site does not overlap any site designated for nature conservation.

Lough Ree SAC (site code: 000440) and Lough Ree SPA (site code: 004064) are located less than 1km to the east of the site.

Corbo Bog SAC (site code: 002349) is located less than 1km to the south west of the site.

Adjacent habitats and land-use

Adjacent habitats include wet grassland (GS4), improved agricultural grassland (GA1), raised bog (PB1), scrub (WS1), Birch woodland (WD7), conifer plantation along with active and inactive cutover bog (PB4).

Watercourses (major water features on/off site)

- The Keelcurragh River flows along the southern boundary of the site. This river flows into Lough Ree.
- A tributary of the River Shannon flows through the mid-section of the site while another branch of this river flows alongside the northeastern corner of the site.
- The River Shannon is located approximately 1.5km to the east of the site.
- Lough Ree is located less than 1km to the south east of the site.

Peat type and sub-soils

The majority of Cloontuskert contains in excess of 2.6m of peat in the southern and northern sections of the site. There is no information available on peat depths in the middle section of the site. Sections of the site in the southern section and along the edges of the site are classed as cutaway and have re-vegetated with pioneer poor fen habitats (Moher).

The bog is under laid with a mix of gravel and marl.

Fauna biodiversity

Birds

Several bird species were noted on the site during the survey.

- Teal
- Mallard
- Kestrel (with juveniles hunting on the site)
- Snipe
- Skylark
- Other more common bird species include Chaffinch, Robin, Blackbird, Hooded Crow, Heron, Meadow Pipit, Swallow and Wood Pigeon.

Mammals

Signs of several mammal species were noted on the site during the survey.

- Otter
- Badger
- Fox
- Pine Marten
- Hare

References

Cross, J.R. 2006. The Potential Natural Vegetation of Ireland. Biology and Environment: Proceeding of the Royal Irish Academy, Vol. 106B, No. 2, 65-116 (2006).

European Commission (2013). Interpretation manual of European Union Habitats. European Commission DG Environment Nature ENV B.3.

Fossitt, J. (2000). A guide to habitats in Ireland. Kilkenny. The Heritage Council.

NRA (2009). Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes (Revision 2). National Roads Authority.

APPENDIX IV: ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL MEASURES TO BE APPLIED TO BOG REHABILITATION

- Bog restoration/rehabilitation measures will be restricted to within the footprint of the proposed rehabilitation area.
- The proposed rehabilitation will have due regard to noise limits and hours of operation (i.e. dusk and dawn) to minimise any potential disturbance on resident and local fauna that utilise the site and immediate environs.
- All plant and equipment for use will comply with the Construction Plant and Equipment Permissible Noise Levels Regulations (SI 359/1996).
- The proposed activities will be restricted to daylight hours and there will be no requirement for artificial lighting.
- Silt ponds will be inspected and maintained as per the IPC Licence.
- During periods of heavy precipitation and run-off, activities will be halted.
- Measures will be carried out using a suitably sized machine and, in all circumstances, excavation depths and volumes will be minimised where possible.
- All machines will be regularly checked and maintained prior to arrival at the site to prevent hydrocarbon leakage.
- Hoses and valves will be checked regularly for signs of wear and will be closed and securely locked when not in use.
- Fuelling and lubrication of equipment shall only be carried out in designated areas away from surface water drainage features and ecologically sensitive areas.
- Waste oils and hydraulic fluids will be collected in leak-proof containers and removed from the site for disposal or re-cycling.
- Vehicles will never be left unattended during refuelling.
- No direct discharges to waters will be made. No washings from vehicles, plant or equipment will be carried out on site.
- All plant refuelling will take place using mobile fuel bowzers. Only dedicated trained and competent personnel will carry out refuelling operations.
- Mobile storage such as fuel bowzers will be bunded to 110% capacity to prevent spills. Tanks for bowzers and generators shall be double skinned. When not in use, all valves and fuel trigger guns from fuel storage containers will be locked. All pumps using fuel or containing oil will be locally and securely bunded where there is the possibility of discharge to waters.
- Potential impacts caused by spillages etc. during rehabilitation will be reduced by keeping spill kits and other appropriate equipment on-site.
- Site activities will be carried out in accordance with 'best practice'. In order to ensure compliance and implementation of 'best practice', these measures will be communicated to relevant Bord na Móna staff and updated as required.

APPENDIX V: BIOSECURITY

The potential for importation or introduction of non-native plant species (such as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, etc.) during future rehabilitation management, such as drain-blocking using excavators, has the potential to result in the establishment of invasive species within the site. Section 49 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 prohibits the introduction and dispersal of invasive alien species (particularly plant species) listed on Part 1 (third column) of the 'Third Schedule'.

This section aims to reduce the risk from, and impacts of, invasive species and protecting biodiversity on lands under Bord na Móna ownership. Rehabilitation and decommissioning in the bog will have due regard to the relevant biosecurity measures outlined below:

- Records of problematic invasive species within the various bog units will be marked out with signs to highlight areas of infestation to personnel.
- All plant machinery will be restricted from disturbing known colonies of invasive species.
- All plant machinery will avoid unnecessary crossings to adjoining lands.
- Good site hygiene will be employed to prevent the introduction and spread of problematic invasive alien plant species (i.e. Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Himalayan Knotweed (*Persicaria wallichii*), etc.) by thoroughly washing vehicles prior to entering the area.

The biosecurity measures outlined above are in line with best practice guidelines issued by the National Roads Authority (NRA, 2010) – The Management of Noxious Weeds and Non-native Invasive Plant Species on National Roads and broadly based on the Environment Agency's (2013) – The Knotweed Code of Practice: Managing Japanese Knotweed on Development Sites (Version 3, amended in 2013).

In addition to the above, best practice measures around the prevention and spread of Crayfish plague⁸ will be adhered with throughout all rehabilitation measures and activities.

⁸ <https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/projects/invasive-species/crayfish-plague/>

APPENDIX VI: POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Bord na Móna Plc is a publicly owned company, originally established in 1934 to develop some of Ireland's extensive peat resources for the purposes of economic development and to support energy security. In the decades since its establishment the company has employed tens of thousands of people in its fuel, energy, and horticultural growing media businesses. For much of its history the company's support of important national policy aims has been enabled and encouraged in a variety of ways by Government.

Today, Bord na Móna is undertaking a number of highly significant actions in support of climate policy. These actions involve a radical transformation and decarbonisation of nearly the entire Bord na Móna business. This transformation will be driven by unlocking the full potential of our land and creating significant value for Ireland and the Midlands in particular.

Bord na Móna is an integral part of the economic, social, and environmental fabric of Ireland and Irish life. As a key employer in the Midlands, the company is conscious that its obligations go beyond purely commercial and environmental – there is also a social responsibility to employees and the communities served by Bord na Móna. It is the company's role and absolute priority to ensure that its long-term strategy delivers on all of these important areas in a robust and balanced way.

There are a wide range of policies, plans, legislation and land designations that inform the development of this Bord na Móna peatland rehabilitation plan. Bord na Móna have also developed and operate various policies and strategies that also inform the development of this rehabilitation plan.

1 EPA IPC Licence

Bord na Móna operates under IPC Licence issued and administered by the EPA to extract peat within the Mount Dillon bog group (Ref. PO-504-01). As part of Condition 10.2 of this licence, a rehabilitation plan must be prepared for permanent rehabilitation of the boglands within the licensed area. The bog is part of the Mount Dillon group. This regulatory requirement is the main driver of the development of this rehabilitation plan.

2 The Peatlands Climate Action Scheme (PCAS)

Bord na Móna (BnM) understand that it is the Minister's (DECC) intention to impose an obligation on Bord na Móna to develop a programme of measures, 'the Scheme', for the enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration of boglands previously used to supply peat for electricity generation within the State. The enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration of the peatlands funded by the Scheme (PCAS) will deliver benefits across climate action (GHG mitigation through reduced carbon emissions and acceleration towards carbon sequestration), enrich the State's natural capital, increase eco-system services, strengthen biodiversity, improve water quality and storage attenuation as well as developing the amenity potential of the peatlands.

It is envisaged that Bord na Móna carry out an enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration, under the Scheme (PCAS), and supported by the Climate Action Fund and Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan across a footprint of 33,000 ha. This scheme will significantly go beyond what is required to meet rehabilitation and decommissioning obligations under existing EPA IPC licence conditions. Interventions and measures supported by the Scheme will ensure that environmental stabilisation is achieved (meaning IPC obligations are met), and importantly, significant additional benefits, particularly relating to climate action and other ecosystem services, will also be delivered. However, only the additional costs associated with the additional

and enhanced rehabilitation, i.e., those activities which go beyond the existing decommissioning and rehabilitation requirements arising from Condition 10 will be eligible for support under the Scheme.

The proposed enhanced rehabilitation detailed in this document, are predicated on the understanding that the element of the activities, over and above the 'standard' rehabilitation necessary to comply with pre-existing Condition 10 IPC Licence requirements, will be deemed eligible costs by the Scheme regulator and funded by the Climate Action Fund and Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan.

For the avoidance of doubt, should the Scheme and the associated statutory obligation on Bord na Móna not materialise, Bord na Móna will not carry out the enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration measures described in this plan. Bord na Móna will instead plan to complete an adapted standard decommissioning and rehabilitation measures required under Condition 10 and outlined in Appendix I.

3 National Climate Policy

The National Policy Position establishes the fundamental national objective of achieving a transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. It sets out:

- the context for the objective;
- clarifies the level of GHG mitigation ambition envisaged; and
- establishes the process to pursue and achieve the overall objective.

The evolution of climate policy in Ireland will be an iterative process based on the adoption by government of a series of national plans over the period to 2050. GHG mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change are to be addressed in parallel national plans – respectively through the National Climate Action Plan. The plans will be continually updated, as well as being reviewed on a structured basis at appropriate intervals and, at a minimum, every five years. This will include early identification and ongoing updating of possible transition pathways to 2050 to inform sectoral strategic choices.

Bord na Móna is following a decarbonisation programme aimed at reducing the carbon emissions from its activities. Industrial peat production has now ceased, and several other decarbonisation measures are being implemented. The company aims to further develop renewable energy and resource recovery markets with a key objective of reducing the carbon intensity of all products. In addition, the carbon emission mitigation benefits associated with the post-peat extraction rehabilitated peatland following rewetting, revegetation and colonisation of significant areas with native woodland will make a significant contribution to achieving the State's carbon emission reduction targets.

4 National Peatlands Strategy

The National Peatlands Strategy (2015) contains a comprehensive list of actions, necessary to ensure that Ireland's peatlands are preserved, nurtured and become living assets within the communities that live beside them. It sets out a cross-governmental approach to managing issues that relate to peatlands, including compliance with EU environmental law, climate change, forestry, flood control, energy, nature conservation, planning, and agriculture. The Strategy has been developed in partnership between relevant Government Departments/State bodies and key stakeholders through the Peatlands Council.

The strategy recognises that Ireland's peatlands will continue to contribute to a wide variety of human needs and to be put to many uses. It aims to ensure that Ireland's peatlands are sustainably managed so that their benefits

can be enjoyed responsibly. It aims to inform appropriate regulatory systems to facilitate good decision making in support of responsible use. It also aims to inform the provision of appropriate incentives, financial supports and disincentives where required. The strategy attempts to strike an appropriate balance between different needs, including local stakeholders like turf-cutters and semi-state bodies such as Bord na Móna.

In line with a National Peatlands Strategy recommendation, a Peatlands Strategy Implementation Group (PSIG), was established, assisted in the finalisation of the Strategy, is overseeing subsequent implementation and will report to Government on an annual basis on the implementation of the actions and principles contained within the Strategy.

Bord na Móna is a key stakeholder in the National Peatlands Strategy and the Peatlands Strategy Implementation Group. The strategy recognises the potential for some Bord na Móna sites to be restored and to contribute to the national SAC and NHA network of protected raised bog sites. The strategy (agreed in 2015) also recognises the various different values of cutaway bog and developed six key principles (with Bord na Móna) for the after-use of cutaway bog.

- Bord na Móna will continue to assess and evaluate the potential of the company's land bank, using a land use review system. The assessment will help prepare a set of evidence-based management plans for the various areas of peatland. These plans will also inform its cutaway bog rehabilitation.
- The policy of Bord na Móna is not to open up any undrained new bogs for peat production.
- Lands identified by Bord na Móna as having high biodiversity value and/or priority habitats will be reserved for these purposes as the principal future land use.
- Generally, Bord na Móna cutaway bogs that flood naturally will be permitted to flood unless there is a clear environmental and/or economic case to maintain pumped drainage.
- In deciding on the most appropriate afteruse of cutaway peatlands, consideration shall be given to encouraging, where possible, the return to a natural functioning peatland ecosystem.
- This will require rewetting of the cutaway peatlands which may lead in time to the restoration of the peatland ecosystem.
- Environmentally, socially and economically viable options should be analysed to plan the future use of industrial cutaway peatlands, in conjunction with limiting factors as outlined in Bord na Móna's Strategic Framework for the Future Use of Peatlands.

The National Peatlands Strategy highlights the importance and value of developing peatland rehabilitation plans for Bord na Móna cutaway sites and implementing this peatland rehabilitation. Some of these principles have now been superseded by the company's decision to cease industrial peat extraction. The National Peatlands Strategy is currently being reviewed by Government.

5 National River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027 (Water Framework Directive)

The River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2024) is the key national plan for Ireland to achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). In broad terms, the objectives of the WFD are (1) to prevent the deterioration of water bodies and to protect, enhance and restore them with the aim of achieving at least good status and (2) to achieve compliance with the requirements for designated protected areas.

The NRBMP 2022-2027 outlined how peat extraction can be a potentially significant pressure on various water quality parameters. Peatland rehabilitation of Bord na Móna cutaway (in addition to other measures) was part of

the WFD (2022-2027) programme of measures. The NRBMP 2022-2027 takes account of the fact that Bord na Móna was in the process of phasing out the extraction of peat for energy production, that it set a target to rehabilitate 9,000 ha of cutaway bogs (covering 25 peatlands) by 2021 (in 2018) and will look to implement best-available mitigation measures to further reduce water quality impacts caused by peat extraction while the phasing-out process is taking place. This NRBMP 2022-2027 rehabilitation target was superseded by the acceleration of the Bord na Móna de-carbonisation programme and the Scheme (PCAS).

The development of site rehabilitation plans and the delivery of peatland rehabilitation by Bord na Móna was expected to have a positive impact on water quality and will help the NRBMP 2022-2027 deliver its objectives in relation to the Water Framework Directive and is one of the five key principal actions.

The NRBMP 2022-2027 (DHLGH 2024) describes how the number of waterbodies impacted by peat, industry and forestry have decreased by 10, 10 and 5 waterbodies, respectively since the second cycle. Impacts on water quality and river habitat arising from peat and peat extraction and associated drainage include the release of ammonium and fine-grained suspended sediments, and physical alteration of aquatic habitats. Drainage of peatlands also results in changes to the hydromorphological condition of rivers.

The NRBMP 2022-2027 (DHLGH 2024) outlines how maintaining and restoring Irish bogs will lead to a decrease in waterborne carbon leaching to levels comparable with intact bogs as well as reducing losses of peat silt and ammonia. Vegetation on the surface of the peat can also slow the flow of water over the land surface. Based on the EPA's most recent reports, peat extraction and drainage is impacting on 106 water bodies across the country, with peat the single pressure on 28 of these water bodies. However, compared to the data in the second-cycle plan, the number of water bodies impacted by peat has decreased.

The cessation of industrial peat extraction by Bord na Móna in 2021 was expected to have a significant positive impact on water quality of receiving water courses by reducing the impact of peat extraction as a key pressure on particular water courses. This is now being supported by the results and conclusions of the draft NRBMP 2022-2027.

6 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030

Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) sets the national biodiversity agenda for the period 2023-2030 and aims to deliver the transformative changes required to the ways in which we value and protect nature. The 4th NBAP has been developed with the support, advice and input of the interdepartmental Biodiversity Working Group and the independent Biodiversity Forum. Ireland's 2nd National Biodiversity Conference was held to gather insights and recommendations for the development of the NBAP and a public consultation process was held to provide further opportunities to engage with the Plan.

The 4th NBAP strives for a "whole of government, whole of society" approach to the governance and conservation of biodiversity. The aim is to ensure that every citizen, community, business, local authority, semi-state and state agency has an awareness of biodiversity and its importance, and of the implications of its loss, while also understanding how they can act to address the biodiversity emergency as part of a renewed national effort to "act for nature".

The delivery of rehabilitation via PCAS is expected to significantly contribute in the future to actions and targets of the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030, particularly in relation to peatland restoration, nature restoration and creation of new habitats such as wetlands and woodlands.

7 EU Nature Restoration Law

The EU Nature Restoration Law is a key element of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, which sets binding targets to restore degraded ecosystems, in particular those with the most potential to capture and store carbon and to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters. The regulation combines an overarching restoration objective for the long-term recovery of nature in the EU's land and sea areas with binding restoration targets for specific habitats and species. These measures should cover at least 20% of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030, and ultimately all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050.

This regulation has now been adapted and it is expected that all Member States will be required to produce a National Restoration Plan within two years of adoption. This will be led by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and will comprise a broad and deep public participation process, informed by robust ecological and socio-economic impact assessments. Bord na Móna are working with NPWS to identify bog restoration and other rewetted cutaway sites that can contribute towards Ireland's targets for the Nature Restoration Law.

8 National Conservation Designations

Bord na Móna operates in a wider landscape that also includes a network of European and National nature conservation sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), National Heritage Areas (NHAs, cNHAs) and National Nature Reserves). Bord na Móna will take account of this network of conservation objectives and their conservation objectives when developing these rehabilitation plans. It is expected that peatland rehabilitation will, in general, benefit the conservation objectives of this network of nature conservation sites.

9 National Raised Bog Special Area of Conservation Management Plan 2017-2022

The National Raised Bog Special Area of Conservation Management Plan 2017-2022 sets out a roadmap for the long-term management, restoration and conservation of protected raised bogs in Ireland. The Plan strikes an appropriate balance between the need to conserve and restore Ireland's raised bog network as part of Ireland's commitments towards the EU Habitats Directive, and the needs of stakeholders and gives recognition to the important role that communities have to play in the conservation and restoration of raised bogs. The National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) Management Plan 2017-2022 is part of the measures being implemented in response to the on-going infringement action against Ireland in relation to the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive, with regard to the regulation of turf cutting on the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). The then Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, also published a 'Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Area Network' in 2014.

Bord na Móna has played a key role in the development of the National Raised Bog Special Area of Conservation Management Plan 2017-2022 and the Review of the Raised Bog Natural Heritage Area Network. Several Bord na Móna sites were assessed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service as part of the above Plan and Review and there is an expectation that several Bord na Móna sites will be designated as SACs and NHAs in the future. This will reinforce the network of protected raised bog sites and replace in part sites that will be de-designated as they have been deemed to be significantly damaged and are deemed to have no raised bog restoration prospects. PCAS is expected to restore several sites that will contribute to The National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) Management Plan 2017-2022 targets in relation to the restoration of raised bog habitat.

Bord na Móna has also responded to the needs of the NRBMP and provided several sites to the government for the relocation of turf-cutters from SACs. This is part of a suite of ongoing bog conservation measures in the NRBMP to manage turf-cutting in protected sites. Bord na Móna and the National Parks and Wildlife Service continues to engage regarding the ongoing relocation of turf-cutters from protected raised bog sites.

10 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025

The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 outlines key objectives and actions to protect and support pollinating insects and the habitats they rely on. A Bord na Móna specific action in this plan includes the adoption of pollinator-friendly management within the Bord na Móna network of sites. One action to help achieve this objective is habitat rehabilitation and restoration, where possible, of pollinator-friendly habitats, including peatland habitats.

11 Land-Use Planning Policies

As Bord na Móna operates in many counties across Ireland, it is important to note the respective development plans in these counties. Many of the existing development plans recognise the potential that exists in the after-use of cutover/cutaway peatlands. Bord na Móna seeks to work with all of the relevant local authorities to ensure that the most appropriate after-uses are reflected in local planning policy. The following areas of consistent importance are of both direct and indirect relevance to Bord na Móna: heritage, tourism, biodiversity/conservation, landscape, renewable energy, and economy/enterprise.

12 National Archaeology Code of Practice

Bord na Móna operated under an agreed Code of Practice (COP) regarding archaeology with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the National Museum of Ireland which provided a framework to enable the Company to progress peat extraction whilst carrying out archaeological mitigation. (<https://www.archaeology.ie/sites/default/files/media/publications/cop-bord-na-mona-en.pdf>)

Under the Code, Bord na Móna, the Minister and Director worked together to ensure that appropriate archaeological survey and mitigation was carried out in advance of peat extraction.

As peat extraction ceased in 1999, the remaining elements of the COP that are still applicable include:

- Bord na Mona must ensure that any newly discovered monuments on Bord na Móna lands are reported in a timely manner to the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- Bord na Mona must ensure that any archaeological objects discovered on Bord na Móna lands are reported immediately to the Duty Officer of the National Museum of Ireland.
- Bord na Móna will adhere to the Archaeology Code of Practice relating to management of any archaeological finds that may arise during cutaway peatland rehabilitation and decommissioning.

Under the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme, an Archaeological Impact Assessments is prepared for each bog in advance, from a review of historical data and desk-based searches of:

- The IAWU Peatland Survey
- Bord na Móna Re-assessment survey 2009
- The Sites and Monuments Record that is maintained by the Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- The topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland.
- The Excavations database
- Previous assessments
- Field survey

The Draft AIA determines and advises on any known archaeology and its required protection, and determines what is required to be undertaken if archaeology is found during the rehabilitation.

13 Bord na Móna Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2021

Rehabilitation of industrial peatlands is a key objective of the Bord na Móna Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2021. This action plan outlines the main objectives and actions around biodiversity on Bord na Móna lands. The Bord na Móna Biodiversity Action Plan also outlines key International and European policy in relation to biodiversity. This includes the **United Nations Convention on Biodiversity 2011-2020 (CBD)** and **European Biodiversity Strategy to 2020**. Further details of these policies and Bord na Móna's responses can be found in the Bord na Móna Biodiversity Action Plan (Bord na Móna, 2016). Both policy documents highlight targets such as reducing pressure on biodiversity, promoting sustainability, habitat restoration and benefits of ecosystem services.

One example of a key CBD target is:

- *"Restore at least 15% of degraded areas through conservation and restoration activities."*

The EU's headline target for progress by 2020 is to:

- *"halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems in the EU by 2020, restore them as far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss."*

This rehabilitation plan is aligned to the CBD target and the EU Biodiversity Strategy target and will help Ireland meet its commitment to these international Biodiversity policies.

14 Bord na Móna Commitments

Bord na Móna made the commitment in 2009 not to develop any new peatland sites for industrial peat production. The company has continued to work with different stakeholders.

In line with Bord na Móna's accelerated decarbonisation programme, the company made a further commitment to a significantly larger rehabilitation target. This was reflected in our plans to rehabilitate a further 20,000 hectares of cutaway and cutover bog to wetland and woodland mosaics by 2025. In addition, we planned to restore a further 1,000 hectares of raised bog habitat by 2025. These initial targets have been achieved.

The company announced the cessation of industrial peat production in 2021 and that it would rehabilitate a target of 33,000 ha between 2021-2026 . Rehabilitation measures will continue to be carried out with the focus on rewetting and rehabilitation of cutover and cutaway areas in line with national policies (such as the National Peatland Strategy, the National Biodiversity Action Plan, The Nature Restoration Law, the Climate Action Plan, the Water Framework Directive, etc.) and rehabilitation guidelines set down by the Environmental Protection Agency. Bord na Móna has now transitioned to a Climate Solutions company with a key commercial and development focus being the delivery of renewable energy to support Ireland's Climate Action Plan. In general, Bord na Móna will seek to balance and optimise commercial, social, and environmental value of its bogs, and develop integrated land-uses, while taking account of the need for sustainability and their biodiversity value.

These commitments outline the importance of peatland rehabilitation to Bord na Móna. The company will continue to demonstrate environmental responsibility and continue to deliver on these commitments in relation to peatland rehabilitation and in relation to the future management of these lands to maximise their benefits, particularly their ecosystem service benefits, along with the sustainable development of a portion of the land bank for other uses, such as renewable energy.

APPENDIX VII: DECOMMISSIONING

1. Condition 10 Decommissioning

Decommissioning is a requirement of the applicable Integrated Pollution Control Licence issued by the Environmental Protection Agency. This condition 10.1 requires the following:

10.1 Following termination of use or involvement of all or part of the site in the licensed activity, the licensee shall:

10.1.1 Decommission, render safe or remove for disposal/recovery, any soil, subsoils, buildings, plant or equipment, or any waste, materials or substances or other matter contained therein or thereon, that may result in environmental pollution.

The main success criteria pertaining to successfully complying with this condition is ensuring that no environmental liability remains from this infrastructure and material and that the bog can be deemed suitable for surrender of the licence under section 95 of the EPA Acts. This is achieved by Bord na Móna identifying and quantifying any mechanical and infrastructural resources that were installed in the bog to enable the development and production operation at the site. This list is then refined to identify any items that would be deemed as possibly resulting in environmental pollution, should they not be removed.

Typically, these items/infrastructures would be any remaining, unconsolidated plant, equipment and attachments, waste materials, unused raw materials such as land drainage pipes, remaining peat stockpiles, stock pile covering, pumps, septic tanks and fuel tanks.

In relation to this bog, the list and tasks would be as follows:

Item	Description	Cloontuskert Decommissioning Plan
1	Clean-up of remaining or unconsolidated waste or materials located in Bogs, Yards, Buildings and Offices	Clean-up of Bog
2	Cleaning Silt Ponds	Cleaning Silt Ponds
3	Decommissioning Peat Stockpiles	Peat Stockpile Management
4	Decommissioning or Removal of Buildings and Compounds	Decommissioning or Removal of Buildings and Compounds
5	Decommissioning Fuel Tanks and associated facilities	Where relevant
6	Decommissioning and Removal of Bog Pump Sites	Where relevant
7	Decommissioning or Removal of Septic Tanks	Where relevant

In addition, condition 7 of the licence requires these now defined waste items to be disposed of or recovered as follows:

7.1 Disposal or recovery of waste shall take place only as specified in *Schedule 2(i) Hazardous Wastes for Disposal/Recovery* and *Schedule 2(ii) Other Wastes for Disposal/Recovery* of this licence and in accordance with the appropriate National and European legislation and protocols. No other waste shall be disposed of/recovered either on-site or off-site without prior notice to, and prior written agreement of, the Agency.

7.2 Waste sent off-site for recovery or disposal shall only be conveyed to a waste contractor, as agreed by the Agency, and only transported from the site of the activity to the site of recovery/disposal in a manner which will not adversely affect the environment.

7.3 A full record, which shall be open to inspection by authorized persons of the Agency at all times, shall be kept by the licensee on matters relating to the waste management operations and practices at this site. This record shall as a minimum contain details of the following:

7.3.1 The names of the agent and transporter of the waste.

7.3.2 The name of the persons responsible for the ultimate disposal/recovery of the waste.

7.3.3 The ultimate destination of the waste.

7.3.4 Written confirmation of the acceptance and disposal/recovery of any hazardous waste consignments sent off-site.

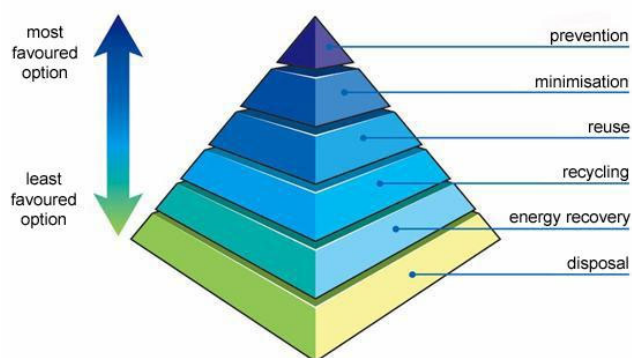
7.3.5 The tonnages and EWC Code for the waste materials listed in *Schedule 2(i) Hazardous Wastes for Disposal/Recovery* and *Schedule 2(ii) Other Wastes for Disposal/Recovery* sent off-site for disposal/recovery.

7.3.6 Details of any rejected consignments.

A copy of this Waste Management record shall be submitted to the Agency as part of the AER for the site.

As required by the licence, these waste items will be removed for recycling or disposal, using external contractors with the required waste collection permits, approved under 7.2, with waste records maintained as required under 7.3.

Where possible, Bord na Móna will utilize the appropriate waste hierarchy to identify waste that can be reused or recycled ahead of disposal.



The validation of the success of condition 10.1 is carried out through an Independent Closure Audit (ICA), followed by an EPA Exit Audit (EA) and the eventual partial or full surrender of the licence.

2. Enhanced Decommissioning.

The remaining infrastructure does not constitute a risk to the environment and would not be a requirement of condition 10 of the licence. The removal of these are deemed as enhanced measures. These may enhance the future after use of the bog for amenity value, security against access for illegal and unsocial activities and general State and community benefit. In relation to this bog, this would include the infrastructure defined below:

Item	Enhanced Decommissioning Type	Cloontuskert Decommissioning Plan
1	Removal of Railway Lines	Removal of Railway Lines
2	Decommissioning Bridges and Underpasses	Where Applicable
3	Decommissioning Railway Level Crossing	Where Applicable
4	Restricting Access (bogs and silt ponds)	Restricting Access to Bog
5	Removal of High Voltage Power Lines	Where Applicable

APPENDIX VIII: GLOSSARY

Cutaway Bog: A Bord na Móna site generally becomes cutaway when it is economically unviable to continue industrial peat extraction or when the majority of peat has been removed.

Deep peat cutover bog. Deep peat cutover bog is defined as former raised bogs that have been in industrial peat production, where production has ceased but the residual peat depth is typically in excess of 2m. *Sphagnum* mosses are key species of raised bogs and the majority of the peat mass is formed from these mosses. *Sphagnum* species and other raised bog species are a key part of raised bog habitat function and prefer more acidic, nutrient poor, water-logged conditions. Typical raised bog *Sphagnum* mosses and other bog species do not thrive with the more typical alkaline water chemistry of cutaway bog but do grow well in these more acidic conditions where peat has been rewetted. There is potential to re-develop *Sphagnum*-rich plant communities in these conditions if the peat can be rewetted. This brings the opportunity of re-developing *Sphagnum*-rich vegetation communities that are considered Carbon sinks or peat-forming habitats and restoring the carbon sequestration function of these sites.

Dry cutaway bog: Cutaway bog is categorised as dry cutaway where it is not practical or feasible to rewet these areas completely. It is inevitable that some areas of cutaway will remain relatively dry due to the heterogenous topography of the cutaway, as well as requirements for continued drainage on site for identified after-uses, or off site in relation to neighbouring lands or other infrastructure. Ridges and mounds of glacial deposits can become exposed during peat extraction and form a heterogenous topographical mosaic separated by basins. Dry cutaway may have very thin or no residual peat where ridges and mounds have been exposed. The exposed sub-soils are a mix of glacial gravels, muds and tills that can be quite free-draining. Dry cutaway may also have deeper residual peat, but in a location (i.e. at the margin) where the peat cannot be rewetted due to boundary constraints. Dry cutaway may also develop in situations where there a relatively steep slope that inhibits rewetting. The majority of dry cutaway will develop towards grassland, heath, scrub and dry woodland habitats.

Enhanced decommissioning: This is defined as decommissioning carried out under the Scheme, which is proposed to be externally funded.

Enhanced rehabilitation: This is defined as rehabilitation carried out under Scheme, which is proposed to be externally funded. It is proposed by Government that Bord na Móna be obligated to carry out enhanced decommissioning, rehabilitation and restoration on peatlands. This Scheme will significantly go beyond what is required to meet rehabilitation and decommissioning obligations under existing EPA IPC licence conditions. Interventions and activities supported by the Scheme will ensure that environmental stabilisation is achieved (meaning IPC obligations are met), and importantly, significant additional benefits, particularly relating to climate action and other ecosystem services, will also be delivered. However, only the costs associated with the additional, enhanced and accelerated measures, i.e., those interventions which go beyond the existing decommissioning and rehabilitation requirements arising from Condition 10 will be eligible for support under the Scheme.

Environmental stabilisation: The key objective of peatland rehabilitation is environmental stabilisation. This means developing habitats and vegetation back onto the bare peat, slowing water movement across the bog, minimising effects to downstream waterbodies and meeting the conditions of the IPC Licence. This is achieved by a combination of rewetting, where possible, and natural colonisation of the former cutaway, with or without intervention. Habitats will develop that reflect the underlying environmental conditions. Other after-use development may also serve to act as environmental stabilisation.

Marginal land. Marginal land is defined as land around the margin of the industrial peat production area. This margin generally contains a range of habitats including scrub, birch woodland, cutover bog and raised bog remnants. It has a variety of land-uses including turf-cutting (private turbary). The Scheme will consider potential rehabilitation and restoration actions (e.g. drain blocking) within marginal land zones, where appropriate.

Rehabilitation: Rehabilitation is defined in general by Bord na Móna as environmental stabilisation of the former cutaway. This is generally achieved via rewetting, where possible, and natural colonisation of the former cutaway, with or without intervention. It is not possible to restore raised bog habitats on BnM cutaway in general in the short-term. In general, most of the peat mass has been removed from many BnM cutaway sites and the environmental characteristics of these areas have therefore changed radically (peat depths, hydrology, water chemistry, substrate type, nutrient status. This means there will therefore be different habitat outcomes (wetlands, fen, heathland, grassland and Birch woodland). Other after-use development may also serve to act as rehabilitation.

Restoration: Ecological restoration is defined as the process of re-establishing to the extent possible the structure, function and integrity of indigenous ecosystems and the sustaining habitats they provide” (SER, 2004). Defined in this way, restoration encompasses the repair of ecosystems (Whisenant, 1999) and the **improvement of ecological conditions in damaged wildlands** through the **reinstatement of ecological processes**. In general, Bord na Móna cutaway peatlands cannot be restored back to raised bog in a reasonable timeframe as their environmental conditions has changed so radically (with the removal of the acrotelm – the living layer and much of the peat mass). However, they can be returned to a **trajectory** towards a naturally functioning peatland system (Renou-Wilson, 2012). **Raised bog restoration** is an objective of some BnM sites where there is residual natural raised bog vegetation and where the majority of the peat is still intact.

Standard rehabilitation: This is defined as rehabilitation that is designed to meet the conditions of the EPA IPC Licence. The key objective of rehabilitation is environmental stabilisation. This is achieved by a combination of rewetting, where possible, and natural colonisation of the former cutaway, with or without intervention. Other after-use development may also serve to act as rehabilitation.

Standard decommissioning: This is defined as decommissioning that is designed to meet the conditions of the EPA IPC Licence. This is defined as to render safe or remove for disposal/recovery, any soil, subsoils, buildings, plant or equipment, or any waste, materials or substances or other matter contained therein or thereon, that may result in environmental pollution.

Wetland cutaway bog. Wetland cutaway bog is defined as former raised bogs that have been in industrial peat production, where production has ceased and the majority of peat has been cutaway, and where this cutaway has the potential to be rewetted. A significant number of Bord na Móna sites have pumped drainage and these sites are likely to develop a mosaic of wetland habitats when pumping is reduced or stopped. The water chemistry of wetland cutaway frequently is strongly influenced by the more alkaline sub-soils that have been exposed during peat production. This means that pioneer vegetation is more typical of fen and wetland, rather than raised bog. Wetland cutaway will have a broad range of hydrological conditions depending on the local topography. In some cases, these wetlands may form deep water (> 0.5 m) whilst other areas may have the water table at or just below the surface of the ground.

APPENDIX IX: EXTRACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Minimisation, treatment, recovery and disposal)

Objective:

The objective of this generic plan is to comply with the requirements of regulation 5 of the Waste Management (Management of Waste from Extractive Industries) Regulations, and to prevent or reduce waste production and its harmfulness.

Scope:

This plan covers IPPC Licence's Ref P0504-01, Mountdillon Group of Bogs located in Co. Longford.

1.0 Extractive Waste:

Waste classified as extractive waste from peat extraction operations arise from three operations associated with this activity.

1.1 Silt Pond excavations and maintenance.

All peat extraction activities in the Mountdillon bog group are serviced by silt lagoons/ponds. During the excavation of these silt ponds, pre IPPC Licensing in 1999 and since licensing, the excavated material is stored adjacent to the silt pond, where it either remains in situ or levelled out. As required by condition 6.6, these silt lagoons are cleaned twice per annum or more often if inspections dictate. These silt cleanings are also deposited on the same location, adjacent to the silt pond, where they may be levelled periodically to allow room for subsequent cleanings. These mounds of silt pond excavation material and cleanings are generally no higher than 2-3 metres.

1.2 Power Station screenings:

Lough Ree Power Station screens the peat from the bogs prior to processing. This screening removes oversized peat, stones and bog timbers. Schedule 3 (ii) of the IPPC licence permits disposal of these peat screenings back to the bog, where it is levelled and graded into the surrounding peat landscape. These locations have been agreed with the Agency as per condition 7.4 of the IPPC Licence, and as per the attached locations.

1.3 Bog Timbers:

During peat extraction operations, bog timbers often arise in the bog surface and are required to be cleared. These timbers consist of bog pine, oak and some yew. Some of these timbers, such as the oak and yew are removed for use in the wood craft industry, with the remaining bog pine stockpiled in locations at the opposite end of each bog, where it generally becomes a habitat for flora and fauna. These piles of timber are generally no higher than 1-2 metres.

2.0 P0504-01 IPPC Licence Extractive Waste Conditions

2.1 Condition 7.5 Extractive Waste Management

The licensee shall draw up a Waste Management Plan (to be known as an Extractive Waste Management Plan) for the minimisation, treatment, recovery and disposal of extractive waste. This Plan shall meet the requirements of regulation 5 of the Waste Management (Management of Waste from the Extractive Industries) Regulations, 2009. The Plan shall be submitted for agreement by the Agency by the 31st of December 2012. The Plan shall be reviewed at least once every five years thereafter in a manner agreeable to the Agency and amended in the event of substantial changes to the operation of a waste facility or to the waste deposited. Any amendments shall be notified to the Agency.

All extractive waste shall be managed in accordance with the Extractive Waste Management Plan. A report on the implementation of the Extractive Waste Management Plan shall be provided in the AER.

2.2 Condition 7.6 Waste Facility

- (i) No new waste facility may be developed or an existing waste facility modified unless agreed by the Agency.
- (ii) The licensee shall ensure that all existing waste facilities are managed and maintained to ensure their physical stability and to prevent pollution or contamination of soil, air, surface water or groundwater.
- (iii) The licensee shall ensure that all new waste facilities are constructed, managed and maintained to ensure their physical stability and to prevent pollution or contamination of soil, air, surface water or groundwater.
- (iv) Operational measures shall be continuously employed to prevent damage to waste facilities from personnel, plant or equipment.
- (v) The licensee shall establish and maintain a system for regular monitoring and inspection of waste facilities.

(vi) All records of monitoring and inspection of waste facilities, as required under the licence, shall be maintained on-site in order to ensure the appropriate handover of information in the event of a change of operator or relevant personnel.

2.3 Condition 7.7 Excavation Voids

7.7.1 Unless otherwise agreed by the Agency, only extractive waste shall be placed in excavation voids.

7.7.2 When placing extractive waste into excavation voids for rehabilitation and construction purposes, the licensee shall, in accordance with regulation 10 of the Waste Management (Management of Waste from the Extractive Industries) Regulations, 2009, and the Extractive Waste Management Plan:

- Secure the stability of the waste
- Put in place measures to prevent pollution of soil, surface water and ground water.
- Carry out monitoring of the extractive waste and excavation void.

Condition 7.5. Extractive Waste Management Plan. 5 (1)

3.0 Minimisation.

3.1 Silt pond excavation material and cleanings.

IPPC Licence conditions require all production areas to be serviced by an appropriately designed silt pond based on storage volume and retention time. Condition 6.6 requires all ponds to be cleaned bi-annually and more often if inspections dictate, so the only opportunity for minimisation of same is through Standard Operating Procedures. These are required under condition 2.2.2 (i) regarding minimisation of suspended solids, and are in-place to minimise the generation of silt, which in turn will minimise the generation of silt pond waste.

3.2 Power Station Screenings.

These screenings cannot be minimised as they are a consequence of peat production, stones, timbers and oversize peat materials are naturally occurring on the bog, and are required to be removed prior to processing.

3.3 Bog Timbers.

Bog timbers are also naturally occurring materials within a bog and are required to be removed prior for production. The volume of these bog timbers varies from bog to bog and as such their minimisation is not controllable or quantifiable.

4.0 Treatment

4.1 Silt pond excavation material and cleanings.

The silt pond excavation material and silt cleanings do not require any treatment for its end use which will be either backfilling these silt pond voids as per condition 7.7.1 above as part of the Bog Rehabilitation Plan, or reincorporated into the surrounding peatlands.

4.2 Power Station Screenings.

The factory screenings are permitted to be returned to the bog as they were naturally occurring materials from the bog, and as such do not require any treatment to serve this purpose.

4.3 Bog Timbers

As per 1.3 above, these timbers are stockpiled at two locations in each bog, as per the attached list of sites and become habitats for various flora and fauna.

5.0 Recovery

5.1 Silt pond excavation material and cleanings.

Condition 2.2.2 (vi) requires the reuse of silt pond waste to be examined. This was undertaken in 2006, the outcome of which was that this waste peat silt material, as a fuel, was contaminated with sub-soils, rendering it unsuitable for combustion. In addition, volumes are small compared to overall peat production volumes.

5.2 Power Station Screenings.

Given the nature of these screenings as outlined in 1.2 above, there is no further use identified and they are permitted to be disposed of back to the bog.

5.3 Bog Timbers

Investigations into processing these materials into smaller fractions for potential heating purposes did not yield any viable results. In addition, these older stockpiles are now classified as habitats and as such would not be considered for reuse as a fuel.

6.0 Disposal

6.1 Silt pond excavation material and cleanings.

Schedule 3 (ii) permits the disposal of silt pond cleanings (Lagoon Sediments) to the bog and these locations, adjacent to the silt pond site, are presented in the attached spreadsheet, with associated grid coordinates.

6.2 Power Station Screenings.

Schedule 3 (ii) permits the disposal of screenings (Peat Screenings) to the bog at designated locations agreed under Condition 7.4, and these locations, are presented in the attached spreadsheet, with associated grid coordinates.

6.3 Bog Timbers

These naturally occurring bog timbers are stockpiled at locations in each bog, grid coordinates attached.

7.0 Extractive Waste Management Plan

5 (2a)(i)

The vast majority of peat extraction bogs were all designed and drained for production prior to the 1960's and as such the production fields layout cannot be altered. Under our Cleaner Reduction Procedures, various design changes have been implemented to the production machines and process to reduce lost peat which eventually is captured in the silt ponds and requires removal as waste peat silt. This along with training and ongoing research and development will continuously reduce waste peat and subsequently waste silt pond cleanings. Bog timbers are present naturally in various volumes and quantities in different bogs and as peat production involves stripping peat in layers, the exposure, generation and removal of these timbers is unavoidable. Work has been undertaken recently into project looking at grinding of these bog timbers in situ using a timber miller, and if this project becomes viable it will contribute to the reduction of bog timbers.

5 (2a)(ii)

Given the nature and expanse of peat bogs, the stockpiling and storage of these waste materials do not present a visual, storage or stability problem. As required under Condition 10 of the IPPC Licence, the silt pond excavations and screenings will be utilised to backfill the silt pond voids once the bogs have finished and stabilised in accordance with our Bog Rehabilitation Plan. Storage of these wastes in the interim, open to the elements does not present a change on the nature of these wastes that will threaten the environment or prevent their reuse during the bog rehabilitation process.

5 (2a)(iii)

Under Condition 10 of the IPPC Licence, all silt ponds will be decommissioned once the bog surface has stabilised, in agreement with the Agency. This will involve the removal of weirs and flow controls, returning the silt pond back to its original drain or removing the silt pond from the drainage system. Both of these activities will involve placing the silt pond extraction and cleaning material back into the excavation void.

5 (2a)(iv)

The peat bogs do not contain any topsoil, so this is not required.

5 (2a)(v)

Peat mineral resources do not undergo any treatment.

5 (2b)

These three extractive waste are all being reused and recovered back to their original extraction points and have not undergone any physical, chemical, or biological change.

5 (2c)(i, ii & iii)

These three extractive wastes, stored on the bog for reuse or recovery during the bog rehabilitation phase, do not require any management or monitoring during the operation of these bogs. Silt pond excavations and cleanings are stored adjacent to the silt pond and quickly revegetated and stabilise, the screenings are graded back into the bog at the agreed locations upon disposal and the bog timbers do not prevent any water or airborne danger to the environment.

5 (3)

The three extractive wastes arising from peat extraction operations at this site are classified wastes from mineral non-metalliferous excavation, with an EWC code of 0101 02. The materials are not classified as hazardous under Directive 91/689/EEC20, and do not contain substances or preparations classified as dangerous under Directives 67/548/EEC5 or 1999/45/EC6 above a certain threshold.

The peat excavations and cleanings are stored in locations and in a manner that they could not collapse, and are remote in their nature. The stockpiles are located adjacent to silt ponds that are cleaned regularly and as such these stockpiles are managed and levelled to facilitate further cleanings.

Therefore the material stored at these waste facilities would not be considered to be a Category A waste facility.

Classification in accordance Annex II.

Waste Material	Description	Classification	Chemical Process treatment	Deposition description	Transport System
Silt Pond Excavations and cleanings	Peat and mineral soils associated with peatlands. Stored for reuse during bog rehabilitation, with no displacement of overburden	01 01 02	None	Excavated from silt ponds by excavator and deposited adjacent to the silt pond.	Excavator
Peat Screenings	Stones, timbers and oversized peat particles, reincorporated into low areas, agreed with the Agency, and stabilized under normal natural bog conditions	01 01 02	None	Removed by screen at the factory and transported by tractor and trailer to the designated and agreed locations	Tractor and trailer.
Bog Timbers	Pine, Oak and Yew species, stored at locations in each bog. Not subject to any stability issues due to exposure to atmospheric/meteorological conditions.	01 01 02	None	Removed from the bog surface by excavator and transported by tractor and trailer to the agreed locations	Tractor and Trailer

Description of operations.

Silt pond excavations arise from the requirement to have silt ponds treating all peat extraction sites. Silt pond cleanings arise from the removal of peat silt from silt ponds as required under IPPC Licence. Bog timbers arise from preparation of the bogs surface for peat production. Estimated quantities of materials are below:

Closure plan. (Bog Rehabilitation Plan).

Condition 10.1 – 10.3 of the IPPC Licence requires the following:

- 10.1 Following termination of use or involvement of all or part of the site in the licensed activity, the licensee shall:
- 10.1.1 Decommission, render safe or remove for disposal/recovery, any soil, subsoils, buildings, plant or equipment, or any waste, materials or substances or other matter contained therein or thereon, that may result in environmental pollution.
- 10.1.2 Implement the agreed cutaway bog rehabilitation plan (refer Condition 10.2).

10.2 Cutaway Bog Rehabilitation Plan:

- 10.2.1 The licensee shall prepare, to the satisfaction of the Agency, a fully detailed and costed plan for permanent rehabilitation of the cutaway boglands within the licensed area. This plan shall be submitted to the Agency for agreement within eighteen months of the date of grant of this licence.

- 10.2.2 The plan shall be reviewed every two years and proposed amendments thereto notified to the Agency for agreement as part of the AER. No amendments may be implemented without the written agreement of the Agency.

10.3 The Rehabilitation Plan shall include as a minimum, the following:

- 10.3.1 A scope statement for the plan; to include outcome of consultations with relevant Agencies, Authorities and affected parties (to be identified by the licensee).
- 10.3.2 The criteria which define the successful rehabilitation of the activity or part thereof, which ensures minimum impact to the environment.
- 10.3.3 A programme to achieve the stated criteria.
- 10.3.4 Where relevant, a test programme to demonstrate the successful implementation of the rehabilitation plan.
- 10.3.5 A programme for aftercare and maintenance.

10.4 A final validation report to include a certificate of completion for the Rehabilitation Plan, for all or part of the site as necessary, shall be submitted to the Agency within six months of execution of the plan. The licensee shall carry out such tests, investigations or submit certification, as requested by the Agency, to confirm that there is no continuing risk to the environment. This plan including maps and ecological classifications are available on file at the Allen Clonsast IPPC Licence Coordinators office.

The location in relation to the silt pond excavations and cleanings are adjacent to the silt ponds, which are considered under the Shannon River Basin Management Plan in accordance with the requirements of Directive 2000/60/EC.

Screenings and bog timbers are all naturally occurring elements of peatland and their placement back to the bog in smaller concentrated designated waste facilities does not constitute a risk to the prevention of water compliance.

The lands under where these materials are deposited are peatlands and are un-effected by the placing of this material.

Review.

This plan will be reviewed every five years, the first review to take place in September 2017. This review will entail an inspection of these waste facilities to ensure their placing, management, maintenance and stability comply with the requirements of the Extractive Waste Management requirements and condition 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7 of the Mount Dillon IPPC Licence P0504-01.

APPENDIX X: MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE APPLICATION OF FERTILISER

- Any fertiliser used will be Rock Phosphate and will not be applied in the following conditions:
 1. The land is waterlogged;
 2. The land is flooded, or it is likely to flood;
 3. The land is frozen, or covered with snow;
 4. Heavy rain is forecast within 48 hours (forecasts will be checked from Met Éireann).
 5. The ground slopes steeply and there is a risk of water pollution, when factors such as surface run-off pathways, the presence of land drains, the absence of hedgerows to mitigate surface flow, soil condition and ground cover are taken into account.
- No fertiliser will be spread on land within 2 metres of a surface watercourse.
- Buffer zones in respect of waterbodies, as specified on <https://www.epa.ie/resources/faqs/environment--you/faq-listing/> will be adhered with at all times with regard to fertiliser application. Reproduced as follows:

Water body / Feature	Buffer zone
Any water supply source providing 100m ³ or more of water per day, or serving 500 or more people	200 metres (or as little as 30 metres where a local authority allows)
Any water supply source providing 10m ³ or more of water per day, or serving 50 or more people	100 metres (or as little as 30 metres where a local authority allows)
Any other water supply for human consumption	25 metres (or as little as 30 metres where a local authority allows)
Lake shoreline	20 metres
Exposed cavernous or karstified limestone features (such as swallow holes or collapse features)	15 metres
Any surface watercourse where the slope towards the watercourse exceeds 10%	10 metres
Any other surface waters	5 metres*

APPENDIX XI: CONSULTATION SUMMARIES

Table APX -1 Consultees contacted

Bog Name	Contact Organisation	Contact Name	Date of Issue	Format	Date Response Received	Response Format
Clontuskert	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Head of Ecological Advisory Unit - NPWS Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage NPWS	General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	National Monuments Service	General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Dept of Agriculture Food & the Marine	General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		

Clontuskert	Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment	General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email contact	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert		General email address	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Dept of Rural and Community Development	General email address	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Department of the Housing Local Government and Heritage	(Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage) Minister James Browne	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Minister of state for Agriculture with responsibility for Land use and Biodiversity	Senator Pippa Hackett Minister of State for Land Use and Biodiversity)	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	An Taisce	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Environmental Protection Agency	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Inland Fisheries Ireland	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Local Authority Waters Programme (West and Border Region)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Local Authority Waters Programme	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Local Authority Waters Programme	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Local Authority Waters Programme (Midlands and Eastern Region)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		

Clontuskert	Teagasc	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	The Heritage Council	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Waterways Ireland	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	An Forum Uisce (The Water Forum)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Coillte	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Water- Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Uisce Éireann (formerly Irish Water)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Office of Public Works (OPW)	General email	11/03/2025	Email	14/03/2025	Email
Clontuskert	CARO (Climate Action Regional Office) Eastern and Midlands	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Bat Conservation Ireland	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Birdwatch Ireland	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Butterfly Conservation Ireland	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Friends of the Irish Environment	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	ICMSA (Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	ICSA (Irish Cattle and Sheep Farmers Association)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Environmental Network (Agriculture and Land Use Policy and Advocacy Officer)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Farmers Association	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Farmers Association (Senior Policy Exec)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		

Clontuskert	Irish Farmers Association (Galway/Leitrim/Longford/Rosc/Sligo)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Farmers Association (Longford/Leitrim/Sligo/Roscom)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Peatlands Conservation Council (IPCC)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Raptor Study Group	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Rural Link	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Irish Wildlife Trust	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	National Association of Regional Game Councils	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	National Association of Regional Game Councils	Chairperson	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	NPWS Rangers North Midlands	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	NUIG Galway	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	PPN Roscommon Public Participation Network	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Outdoor Recreation NI	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Ranger Association Committee	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park Awareness Group	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Sustainable Water Action Network (SWAN)	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Trinity College Dublin	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Turf Cutters and Contractors Association	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	UCD / Irish Rural Link	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	University College Dublin	General email	11/03/2025	Email		

Clontuskert	Earthy Matters	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Waterways Ireland	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Waterways Ireland Org	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Woodlands of Ireland	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Prosperous Game and Conservation Club	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	University of Galway	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Clontuskert Community Development Group	General email	11/03/2025	Email/Phone	04/04/2025	Phone
Clontuskert	Roscommon Chief Executive	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Director of Services - Environment, Assets and Climate	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Director of Services - Planning	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Director of Services	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Heritage Officer	General email	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Athlone Municipal District	John Keogh (Vice Chairperson)	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Athlone Municipal District	ClIr Emer Kelly	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Athlone Municipal District	ClIr Domnick Connolly	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Athlone Municipal District	ClIr Laurence Fallon	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Athlone Municipal District	ClIr Tony Ward	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Athlone Municipal District	ClIr Gareth Scahill	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District	ClIr Paschal Fitzmaurice	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District	ClIr Anthony Waldron	11/03/2025	Email		

Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District	ClIr Nigel Dineen	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District	ClIr Larry Brennan	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District	ClIr Marty McDermott	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District	ClIr Valerie Byrne	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District	ClIr Sean Moylan	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District	ClIr Liam Callaghan	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District Boyle MD	ClIr Micheal Frain	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District Boyle MD	ClIr Tom Crosby	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Roscommon Municipal District Boyle MD	ClIr Leah Cull	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	TDs Roscommon / Galway	Michael Fitzmaurice TD	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	TDs Roscommon / Galway	Claire Kerrane TD	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	TDs Roscommon / Galway	Martin Daly TD	11/03/2025	Email		
Clontuskert	Local Landowner A			Phone	04/04/2025	Phone
Clontuskert	Local Landowner B			Phone	04/04/2025	Phone
Clontuskert	Local Landowner C			Phone	09/05/2025	Phone

Table APX -2 Response summary from Consultees contacted

Organisation	Summary of Response by Stakeholder	BnM Response
Office of Public Works (OPW)	The OPW stated that Cloontuskert Bog does 'not overlap with any OPW Arterial Drainage Scheme. In general, the OPW supports the BnM bog rehabilitation and rewetting as a Nature Based Catchment Management measure in managing flood flows in the Upper Shannon Catchment, the potential for reducing flood risk downstream and the many other environmental co-benefits from developing this project'.	BnM acknowledged the response and dialogue is ongoing.
Clontuskert Community Development Group	Discussion around agreeing access to some of the rehabilitation measures west of the community development. It was explained that the boundary drain would be left open. General discussion to inform the local community about the also and its benefits.	BnM staff spoke with this stakeholder to discuss the proposed rehabilitation plan and answer relevant questions. Consultation ongoing.
Local Landowner A	Queries around boundary fencing.	BnM community liaison officer spoke with this stakeholder to discuss and resolve their concerns.
Local Landowner B	Queries around boundary fencing.	BnM community liaison officer spoke with this stakeholder to discuss and resolve their concerns. Consultation ongoing.
Local Landowner C	Query around boundary drains in relation to the proposed rehabilitation.	BnM community liaison officer spoke with this stakeholder to discuss and resolve their concerns.

APPENDIX XII: ARCHAEOLOGY

Role of the Archaeological Liaison Officer

1. To communicate this Code of Practice and the *Archaeological Protection Procedures* (Appendix IV) to all personnel operating on the bog.
2. To ensure that all notices relating to the *Archaeological Protection Procedures* are posted and maintained at appropriate locations on the bog.
3. To report any stray finds, presented to the Liaison Officer from his/her group of bogs, to the Duty Officer of the National Museum of Ireland.
4. To provide for the appropriate protection of the stray find, whether in-situ or removed from the bog, as directed by the Duty Officer of the National Museum of Ireland.



Code of Practice

22

Code of Practice

5. To arrange for the delivery or collection of the stray find, as directed by the Duty Officer of the National Museum of Ireland.
6. To complete the Report of Discovery of Archaeological Object(s) in Bogs (Appendix V), as directed by the Duty Officer of the National Museum of Ireland.
7. To maintain a file of all stray finds and associated documentation and provide copies to the Project Archaeologist.
8. To provide assistance, where required, to the Department during archaeological surveys.
9. To provide assistance, where required, to Bord na Móna's Consultant Archaeologists, during investigation and mitigation of monuments.
10. To report to the Bord na Móna members on the Archaeology Management Liaison Committee any planned developments or new activities on cutaway peatland areas within his/her group of bogs.



Bord na Móna		Land & Habitats– Bog Operations	
		Archaeological Findings	
Document Approved By:	Revision Date:	Doc No:	Revision No:
EMD	13/08/2024	ENV017	2
	Control Location		Page
	Environment Department		1 of 5

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the arrangements in Bord na Móna for findings of Archaeological material (Stray Finds).

All objects, sites or monuments, no matter how fragmentary, are important elements of our heritage.

Procedure

1. Check whether there are any known archaeological monuments in your area.
2. Be vigilant at all times - objects or traces of structures can be found on the field surfaces, in the drain faces, on the bog margins or caught within the mechanics of machinery.
3. If an object is found leave it in place, if it is safe to do so, note its position and immediately contact your Archaeological Liaison Officer who will assess the situation and contact the Duty Officer of the National Museum of Ireland.
4. Resist the temptation to investigate the find spot as this may disturb fragile archaeological deposits.
5. If the object is already dislodged or is in imminent danger, remove it carefully, mark its find spot and report it immediately to your Archaeological Liaison Officer.
6. Objects made of wood, leather or textile, which are removed from peat should be kept in conditions similar to those in which they are found. This can be done by packing them in peat or, if waterlogged, placing them in a clean basin of water and sealing the container. Resist the temptation to clean or remove peat from the object.
7. If timbers or other materials, such as gravel or stones, which could be part of a manmade structure are noted on the bog, mark the location and report it immediately to your Archaeological Liaison Officer. If you suspect the find is of archaeological importance, resist the temptation to expose it any further as this could result in damage to the structure.
8. Report anything that looks unnatural in the bog – your Archaeological Liaison Officer will decide whether it should be referred to the appropriate authorities.

NOTE: Our archaeological heritage is a finite, non-renewable resource. Once a site is destroyed its information is lost forever and we have lost the chance to understand a little more about our past, where we have come from and perhaps the opportunity to learn for the future.

Your Archaeological Liaison Officer is Enda McDonagh.

2) Records

Revision Index			
Revision	Date	Description of change	Approved
1	13/19/2020	First release	EMcD
2	13/08/2024	Second release	EMcD



Archaeological Impact Assessment of Proposed Bog Decommissioning and Rehabilitation at Cloontuskert Bog, Co. Roscommon

Draft

Report For

Bord Na Móna Energy Ltd.

Author

Dr. Charles Mount

Bord Na Móna Project Archaeologist



Introduction

The EPA (2020) *Guidance on the process of preparing and implementing a bog rehabilitation plan* notes that the licensee should characterise the bog prior to embarking on detailed planning and implementation. This characterisation should detail how the land is classified in terms of statutory protections, e.g. as European sites, world heritage sites, RAMSAR sites, National Heritage Areas, national monuments, archaeological heritage, etc. This archaeological impact assessment report was prepared by Dr. Charles Mount for Bord na Móna Energy Ltd to fulfil this characterisation in relation to archaeological heritage. It represents the results of a desk-based assessment and field survey of the impact of proposed bog rehabilitation of c.219 hectares at Cloontuskert Bog, Co. Roscommon on the known archaeological heritage of the bog. The proposed rehabilitation actions will be a combination of measures to create wetlands and re-wet deep peat as outlined in the draft Methodology Paper for the proposed Bord na Móna Decommissioning, Rehabilitation and Restoration Scheme. These enhanced measures for Cloontuskert Bog will include (See Table 1 and Fig. 1):

- Re-assessment of the pumping regime and removing the pump if this desired and if it has no significant external impact. Cloontuskert Bog has a combination of a pumped and gravity drainage regime. There is one pump that is operational, which will be decommissioned as part of the PCAS works. Initial hydrological modelling indicates that a part of the eastern side of the site will remain as wetland and develop a mosaic of wetland habitats with some permanent deeper water. Hydrological management will look to optimise summer water levels to maximise the development of wetland vegetation (by looking to set water depths at < 0.5 m, where possible. It is inevitable that some sections will naturally have deeper water due to the topography at this site). Water-levels will be adjusted at outfalls and by adjusting piped drainage. More sustainable permanent gravity drainage solutions will be examined. Some targeted bunding may be required. It is expected that a natural seasonal regime of water fluctuation will develop, with water-levels fluctuating in association with levels in the nearby River Shannon. The pump is expected to be decommissioned and removed at Cloontuskert Bog.
- Intensive drain blocking around the existing wetlands or standing water to create/promote the spread of wetland habitats.
- Re-wetting some areas of the bog through regular field drain blocking to create three peat barriers every 100 m along each field drain.
- Re-alignment of piped drainage and creating high level swales to manage water levels and water flows through the site.
- Blocking drains in targeted existing pioneering vegetation mosaics, to accelerate re-wetting, and/or manage water levels.
- The creation of berms across some sections of the bog to control/retain water levels. This measure seeks to retain shallow (< 10 cm) water conditions across multiple fields.
- Targeted fertiliser applications to accelerate vegetation establishment on areas of bare peat on headlands and high fields, and within certain areas of dry cutaway. Areas where vegetation has established do not need fertiliser application.
- Deep Peat measures including field re-profiling, on deeper peat; intensive drain blocking (max 7/100 m) and modifying outfalls, and management of water levels with overflow pipes and blocking of internal outfalls.



- Peat field re-profiling to reduce the camber of the fields and cell-bunding between high fields to manage/optmise water levels for revegetation.
- Some small bog remnants around the margins of the bog will be targeted for drain-blocking.
- The existing silt ponds will be retained and maintained during the rehabilitation phase. During the monitoring and verification phase the silt ponds will be continually inspected and maintained, where appropriate. When it is deemed that the silt ponds are not required, as the bog has been successfully stabilised and there is no silt run-off, the condition of the silt ponds will be reviewed. The silt ponds will either be de-watered (water levels lowered to a level where the silt pond will naturally develop as a small wetland feature), left in situ, or infilled (where discharges do not require silt control).
- Inoculation of Sphagnum will be considered in the future as part of the Peatlands and People LIFE Project.

Type*	Rehab Code	Enhanced Rehabilitation Measure	Extent (Ha)
Dry Cutaway	DCT1	Blocking outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes	13.36
	DCT2	Regular drain blocking (3/100m), modifying outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes and targeted fertiliser treatment.	19.18
Wetland	WLT2	Turn off or reduce pumping to re-wet cutaway, blocking outfalls and managing water levels with overflow pipes and targeted blocking of outfalls within a site.	33.62
	WLT4	More intensive drain blocking (max 7/100 m), modifying outfalls and managing overflows, transplanting Reeds and other rhizomes.	33.57
Deep Peat	DPT2	More intensive drain blocking (max 7/100 m) and modifying outfalls and managing overflows	75.88
	DPT3	More intensive drain blocking (max 7/100 m), + field reprofiling + blocking outfalls and managing overflows.	8.32
Marginal land	MLT1	No work required.	12.07
Additional Work	AW2	Targeted Drain Blocking	4.23
Silt ponds	Silt pond	Silt ponds.	0.30
Constraint	Constraint	Other Constraints (rights of way, access routes, housing estate, agricultural land).	18.86
Total			219.39

Table 1. Types of and areas for enhanced rehabilitation measures at Cloontuskert Bog.



Cloontuskert Bog is located c.2km northwest of Lanesborough,, and west of the R371 road. The overall rehabilitation area occupies the townlands of Doughill, Cloontuskert, Ballyglass, Gortgallen, Killattimoriarty and Bogwood or Carrowntogher, on OS 6 inch sheets Roscommon Nos. 36-37.

Methodology

This is a desk-based archaeological assessment that includes a collation of existing written and graphic information to identify the likely archaeological potential of Cloontuskert Bog, followed by a field survey. The overall extent of the rehabilitation is indicated in Fig. 1. This area was examined using information from:

- The Peatland Survey 2007 & 2008
- The Sites and Monuments Record that is maintained by the Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- The topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland.
- The Excavations database
- Previous assessments
- Field survey

An impact assessment has been prepared, and recommendations have been made.

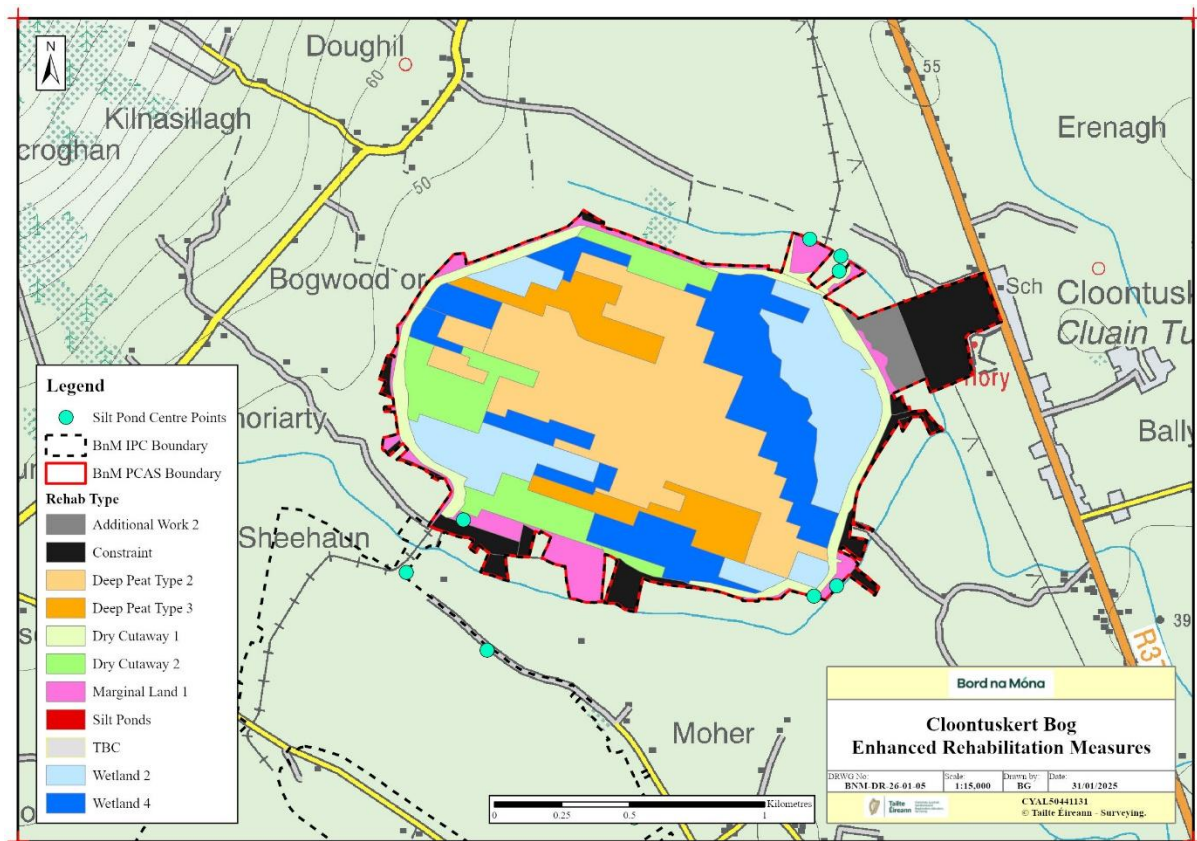


Fig. 1. Cloontuskert Bog, Co. Roscommon, proposed enhance rehabilitation measures.



Desktop assessment

Recorded Monuments

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for Co. Roscommon which was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 was examined as part of the assessment (DAHGI 1998). These records were published by the Minister in 1998 and include sites and monuments that were known in Cloontuskert Bog before that date. This review established that there are no RMPs within the rehabilitation area (see Fig. 1).

Sites and Monuments Record

The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which is maintained by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage was examined as part of the assessment on the 17th of February 2025. The SMR consists of records included in the RMP and sites and monuments notified to the Dept. since the publication of the RMP. This review established that there are no entries in the SMR in the proposed rehabilitation area (see Fig. 2).

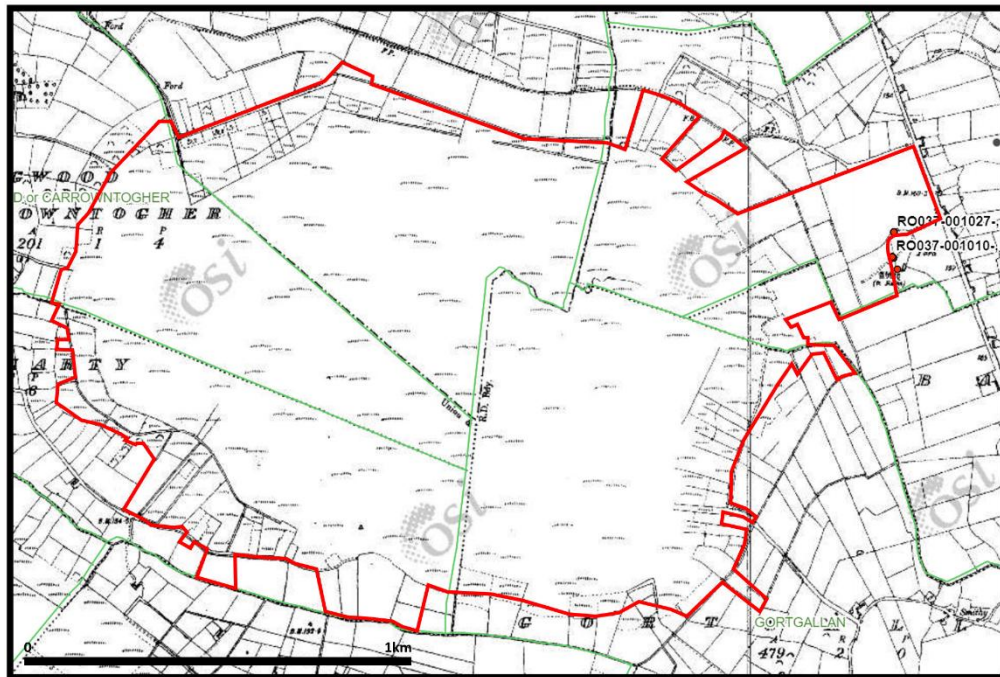


Fig. 1. Cloontuskert Bog, Co. Roscommon, detail of the Sites and Monuments Record with six inch map. The proposed rehabilitation area is outlined with the red line. There are Recorded Monuments in the rehabilitation area. Note RO017-001027 is indicated north of its actual location.

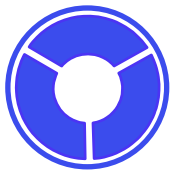


Fig. 2. Cloontuskert Bog, Co. Roscommon, detail of the Sites and Monuments Record with OS Discovery map. The proposed rehabilitation area is outlined with the red line. Note RO017-001027 is indicated north of its actual location.

Peatland survey

Cloontuskert Bog was surveyed by the DOEHLG & Bord na Móna Survey 2007 & 2008 (Rohan 2009, 133-4; License No. 09E0404). Nothing of archaeological significance was found during the field walking of Cloontuskert Bog.

Previous assessments

There have been no previous assessments of Cloontuskert Bog.

Reported finds

The DOEHLG & Bord na Móna Survey 2007 & 2008 (Rohan 2009) contains a complete list of the known archaeological objects from Cloontuskert Bog reported to the National Museum of Ireland up to 2009 and these are included in Table 2.

Townland	Museum No.	Description
Cloontuskert	1995:1486	Buckle
Cloontuskert	1948:5	Pair of leather shoes
Ballyglass	1946:355	Wooden tankard
Ballyglass	1915:35	Bronze spear butt
Ballyglass	1958:36	Polished stone axe
Ballyglass	IA/197/1947	Wooden tankard, wooden axe handle and dugout canoe

Table 2. List of archaeological finds from Cloontuskert Bog reported to the National Museum of Ireland.

Archaeological investigations

Reports of additional archaeological excavations and licensed monitoring in the study area listed in the excavations database at excavations.ie were examined as part of the assessment. There are no additional reports of archaeological investigation carried out in the rehabilitation area.



Field Survey

A field survey of Cloontuskert Bog will be completed in 2025. Cloontuskert Bog is considered to be suitable for a field survey as it:

- has wide drains at regular spaced intervals,
- appears from recent aerial photography not to be densely overgrown with vegetation.

Impact assessment

There are no sightings of archaeological material recorded in Cloontuskert Bog. There are several archaeological objects known from the bog that have been removed to the National Museum.

Recommendations

There are several archaeological objects known from the bog that have been removed to the National Museum. Should any previously unknown archaeological material be uncovered during the rehabilitation works, it should be avoided and reported to the Bord na Móna Archaeological Liaison Officer and the National Museum of Ireland.

Note this is a draft desktop report and will be revised with the results of the field survey carried out in 2025. As there will be a full field survey observing the surfaces and every second drain face, archaeological monitoring during rehabilitation works is not recommended.

Conclusion

There are no sightings of archaeological material recorded in Cloontuskert Bog. Should any previously unknown archaeological material be uncovered during the rehabilitation works, it should be avoided and reported to the Bord na Móna Archaeological Liaison Officer and the National Museum of Ireland.

Note this is a draft desktop report and will be revised with the results of the field survey carried out in 2025. As there will be a full field survey observing the surfaces and every second drain face, archaeological monitoring during rehabilitation works is not recommended.

References

DAHGI 1998. Recorded Monuments Protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994. County Roscommon.

EPA 2020. Guidance on the process of preparing and implementing a bog rehabilitation plan.

Rohan, N. 2009. 2007 & 2008 Peatland Survey. Blackwater, Derryfadda, Coolnagun & Mountdillon Group of bogs, Counties Offaly, Galway, Longford, Westmeath and Roscommon. Unpublished report Bord na Móna.

Dr. Charles Mount
18 February 2025

APPENDIX XIII: WATER QUALITY MONITORING RESULTS FOR CLOONTUSKERT BOG

[illegible]

PCAS SW Sampling Scheme				Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	Suspended Solids	
Boq Group	Licence No	Boq Name	SW Code-GIS	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	
Mountdillon	P0504-01	Cloontuskert	SW26	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	
		Monthly Rainfall (mm) Lanesborough (Cloonarda)	96.4	19	173.2	93.9	35.9	80.8	219.9	142.1	129.9	128.1	101.1	152	74.8	122.7	126	93.9	64.6	41.8	56.9	104.6	33	6	2
		Suspended solids ELV	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
PCAS SW Sampling Scheme				Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour	Colour
Boq Group	Licence No	Boq Name	SW Code-GIS	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	mg/l Pt Co	
Mountdillon	P0504-01	Cloontuskert	SW26	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	
		Monthly Rainfall (mm) Lanesborough (Cloonarda)	265	140	244	244	266	349	488	508	170	572	286	288	172	372	178	403	332	313	142	318	310		
		CD Trigger Level	96.4	19	173.2	93.9	35.9	80.8	219.9	142.1	129.9	128.1	101.1	152	74.8	122.7	126	93.9	64.6	41.8	56.9	104.6	33		
PCAS SW Sampling Scheme				COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	COD	
Boq Group	Licence No	Boq Name	SW Code-GIS	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	
Mountdillon	P0504-01	Cloontuskert	SW26	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	
		Monthly Rainfall (mm) Lanesborough (Cloonarda)	69	40	50	62	65	119	119	63	111	56	67	51	59	37	91	80	74	76			67	86	
		CD Trigger Level	96.4	19	173.2	93.9	35.9	80.8	219.9	142.1	129.9	128.1	101.1	152	74.8	122.7	126	93.9	64.6	41.8	56.9	104.6	33		
PCAS SW Sampling Scheme				pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	pH	
Boq Group	Licence No	Boq Name	SW Code-GIS	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	per Units	
Mountdillon	P0504-01	Cloontuskert	SW26	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	
		Monthly Rainfall (mm) Lanesborough (Cloonarda)	7.2	7.9	6.1	6.4	7.6	7.1	7.1	7.5	6.8	7.1	7.5	7.4	6.8	6.2	7	7.2	6.8	7.6			7.3	7.2	
		CD Trigger Level	96.4	19	173.2	93.9	35.9	80.8	219.9	142.1	129.9	128.1	101.1	152	74.8	122.7	126	93.9	64.6	41.8	56.9	104.6	33		
PCAS SW Sampling Scheme				TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	TSS	
Boq Group	Licence No	Boq Name	SW Code-GIS	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	
Mountdillon	P0504-01	Cloontuskert	SW26	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	
		Monthly Rainfall (mm) Lanesborough (Cloonarda)	0.05	0.05	0.05		0.05	0.22	0.1	0.1	0.11	0.07	0.08	0.06	0.08	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.16	0.08			0.08	0.05
		CD Trigger Level	96.4	19	173.2	93.9	35.9	80.8	219.9	142.1	129.9	128.1	101.1	152	74.8	122.7	126	93.9	64.6	41.8	56.9	104.6	33		
PCAS SW Sampling Scheme				Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	Ammonia as N	
Boq Group	Licence No	Boq Name	SW Code-GIS	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	
Mountdillon	P0504-01	Cloontuskert	SW26	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	
		Monthly Rainfall (mm) Lanesborough (Cloonarda)	0.011	0.188	0.487		0.293	0.03	0.163	0.066	0.081	0.082	0.049	0.088	0.075	0.258	0.263	0.212	0.065	0.394	0.051			0.043	0.313
		Ammonia Trigger Level	96.4	19	173.2	93.9	35.9	80.8	219.9	142.1	129.9	128.1	101.1	152	74.8	122.7	126	93.9	64.6	41.8	56.9	104.6	33		
PCAS SW Sampling Scheme				DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	DIC	
Boq Group	Licence No	Boq Name	SW Code-GIS	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	mg/l	
Mountdillon	P0504-01	Cloontuskert	SW26	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	1/1/23	
		Monthly Rainfall (mm) Lanesborough (Cloonarda)	23.3	15.7	19		21.6		27.6	42.8	20.2	42.6	23.1	24	19	19.2	13	23.3	29.2	26.8	26.9			27	32.7
		CD Trigger Level	96.4	19	173.2	93.9	35.9	80.8	219.9	142.1	129.9	128.1	101.1	152	74.8	122.7	126	93.9	64.6	41.8	56.9	104.6	33		

APPENDIX XIV: STOCKPILE DECOMMISSIONING PROCEDURE

Scope

All IPC licensed peatlands with residual peat stockpiles requiring decommissioning and rehabilitation, as required by Condition 10.

The aim of this Stockpile Decommissioning Procedure is to stabilise any remaining stockpiles by depositing the peat in the two drains located immediately adjacent to the stockpile field, enabling the re-shaping of the stockpile to facilitate stabilization and revegetation.

Condition 10:

10.1 Following termination of use or involvement of all or part of the site in the licensed activity, the licensee shall:

10.1.1 Decommission, render safe or remove for disposal/recovery, any soil, subsoils, buildings, plant or equipment, or any waste, materials or substances or other matter contained therein or thereon, that may result in environmental pollution.

Procedure:

1. Strip any remaining stockpile protection and remove using the poly wrapper for recycling.
2. Ensure the silt pond servicing this pile field catchment has been cleaned within the last six months as per condition 6.8, and visually inspected as per condition 6.7, prior to any pile decommissioning.
3. Where stockpiles occur within areas planned for rehabilitation, such planned rehabilitation measures (regular drain blocking) will be implemented in advance of any stockpile decommissioning, with priority given to the required adjacent stockpile field drains.
4. Once the rehabilitation measure above has been completed, proceed to reprofile the stockpile as per below.
5. Using suitable available excavator/dozer to make a safe ramp up onto the end of the pile.
6. Track up onto the pile and establish a safe level base.
7. Using the machine to reduce and reprofile the pile height and deposit into the adjoining pile field drains. The residual height to be determined based on stockpile size and area required to reprofile.
8. Work along the pile using this method until reaching the pile end.
9. Using a suitable machine, track the peat into the pile field drain along both sides of the pile, ensuring the final level is below the existing drain blocks and any damage to existing drain blocks avoided.
10. If required, use a suitable machine to track along the top of the reprofiled stockpile to level and flatten the profile to reduce the runoff gradient.
11. Fertiliser application and any grass seed mix should be applied to each stockpile following completion of the above steps, to accelerate the stabilisation.