

Senior Engineer  
Cork County Council  
Traffic and Transportation,  
Planning and Development Directorate  
Floor 11,  
County Hall  
Cork

25<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Our Ref: 210603.1

**Re. SEA Screening for the Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan (TREP)**

Dear Mr O'Sullivan,

We acknowledge your notice, dated 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021, in relation to the Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan (the 'Plan') and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening.

The EPA is one of the statutory environmental authorities under the SEA Regulations. In our role as a SEA environmental authority, we focus on promoting the full and transparent integration of the findings of the Environmental Assessment into the Plan and advocating that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are addressed as relevant and appropriate to the plan. Our functions as an SEA environmental authority do not include approving or enforcing SEAs or plans.

Where we provide specific comments on plans and programmes, our comments will focus on the EPA's remit and areas of expertise (in particular water, air, climate change, waste, resource efficiency, noise, radon and the inter-relationships between these and other relevant topics e.g. biodiversity), as appropriate and relevant to the particular Plan.

**Proposed SEA Determination**

We note your proposed determination regarding the need for SEA of the Plan.

***Infrastructure Planning***

In proposing the Plan, and any related amendments of the Plan and in implementing the Plan, adequate and appropriate infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Plan.

### **Sustainable Development**

In considering the Plan, Cork County Council should ensure that the Plan is consistent with other key relevant higher-level plans and programmes. Cork County Council should also recognise the need to align with national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as incorporating any relevant recommendations in sectoral, regional and local climate adaptation plans. The relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy should be considered, as appropriate.

### ***Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) WebTool***

This new tool was launched recently by the EPA. It is a new decision support tool to assist SEA and planning processes in Ireland. It is available at [www.enviromap.ie](http://www.enviromap.ie). The tool brings together over 100 datasets and allows users to create plan-specific environmental sensitivity maps. These maps can help planners examine environmental considerations, anticipate potential land-use conflicts, and help identify suitable development locations while also protecting the environment.

### **State of the Environment Report – Ireland’s Environment 2020**

In preparing the Plan and associated SEA screening, the recommendations, key issues and challenges described in our [State of the Environment Report Ireland’s Environment – An Integrated Assessment 2020](#) (EPA, 2020) should be considered, as relevant and appropriate to the Plan. This should also be taken into account, in preparing the Plan.

### **Available Guidance & Resources**

Our website contains various SEA resources and guidance, including:

- SEA process guidance and checklists
- Inventory of spatial datasets relevant to SEA
- topic specific SEA guidance (including *Good practice note on Cumulative Effects Assessment* (EPA, 2020), *Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring* (EPA, 2020), *Integrating climatic factors into SEA* (EPA, 2019), *Developing and Assessing Alternatives in SEA* (EPA, 2015), and *Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2012))

You can access these resources at: [www.epa.ie/monitoringassessment/assessment/sea/](http://www.epa.ie/monitoringassessment/assessment/sea/)

### ***EPA SEA WebGIS Tool***

Our SEA WebGIS Tool has been updated recently and is now publicly available at <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/SEA>. It allows public authorities to produce an indicative report on key aspects of the environment in a specific geographic area. It is intended to assist public authorities in SEA screening and scoping exercises.

### ***EPA WFD Application***

Our WFD Application provides access to water quality and catchment data from the national WFD monitoring programme and is available through EPA Maps. It is also publicly available data can be accessed via the [www.catchments.ie](http://www.catchments.ie) website.

### ***EPA AA GeoTool***

Our AA GeoTool application has been developed in partnership with the NPWS. It allows users to select a location, specify a search area and gather available information for each European Site within the area. It is available at: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/AAGeoTool>

### **Future amendments to the Plan**

Where changes to the Plan are made prior to finalisation, or where modifications to the Plan are proposed following its adoption, these should be screened for potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations (S.I. No. 435 of 2004).

### **Appropriate Assessment**

You should ensure that the Plan complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive where relevant. Where Appropriate Assessment is required, the key findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the Plan.

### **Environmental Authorities**

Under the SEA Regulations (SI 435, as amended), prior to making your SEA determination you should consult with:

- Environmental Protection Agency;
- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (formerly Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (functions transferred from Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government/ Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government to Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht by S.I. 192 of 2011);
- Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications; and
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

### **SEA Determination**

As soon as practicable after making your determination as to whether SEA is required or not, you should make a copy of your decision, including, as appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection in your offices and on your website. You should also send a copy of your determination to the relevant environmental authorities consulted.

If you have any queries or need further information in relation to this submission, please contact me directly. I would be grateful if you could send an email confirming receipt of this submission to: [sea@epa.ie](mailto:sea@epa.ie).

Yours sincerely,



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Cian O'Mahony  
SEA Section  
Office of Evidence and Assessment