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LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement

Prepared for:
Cork County Council



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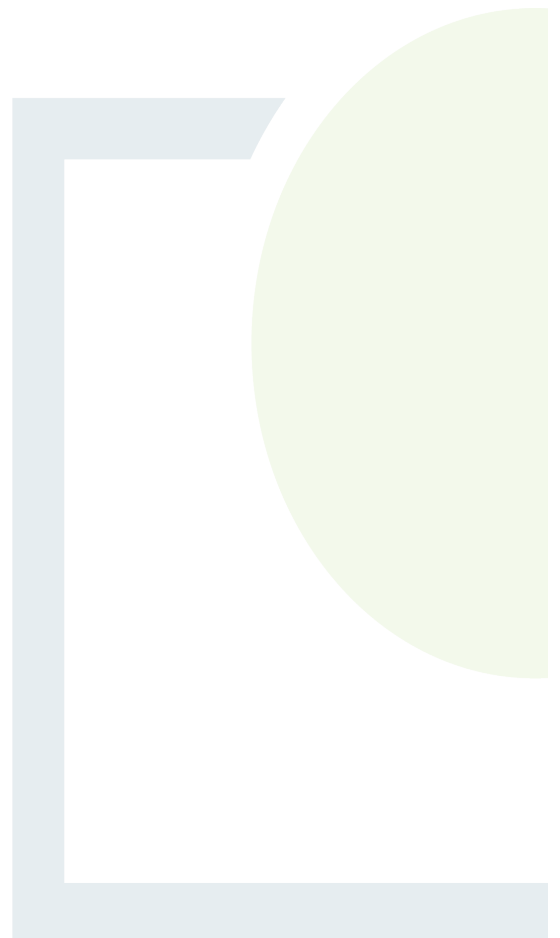
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Abstract: Fehily Timoney and Company is pleased to submit this Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement for the Cork County Council Local Authority Climate Action Plan to Cork County Council for publication alongside the Plan. This Statement provided information on the decision in accordance with Article 16 of S.I. No. 435/2004 - European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (as amended).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background.....	1
1.2	Legislative Context	1
2.	HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS WERE INTEGRATED INTO LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2024 - 2029	3
2.1	SEA Scoping	3
2.2	Environmental Assessment and Mitigation	6
2.2.1	Mitigation through consideration of alternatives	6
2.2.2	Mitigation through integration of environmental considerations into the LACAP	6
2.2.3	Mitigation through consideration of development management standards/environmental protection objectives contained in the CDP	15
2.3	Appropriate Assessment	16
2.4	Consultation on SEA Environmental Report.....	16
2.5	SEA and Plan Modifications.....	30
3.	CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES	35
3.1	Introduction.....	35
3.2	Approach to Developing Reasonable Alternatives.....	35
3.3	Identification and Description of Reasonable Alternatives.....	36
3.4	Evaluation of Reasonable Alternatives and Reasons for Choosing the Preferred Plan	38
4.	SEA CONCLUSION	39
5.	SEA MONITORING	40

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 3-1: 'Why? What? Where? When?' Model for framing alternatives - Adapted from Figure 4.3 Developing and Assessing Alternatives in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Process (EPA, 2015).....	36

LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>
Table 2-1: Summary Detail on Scoping Consultation Submissions Received from Environmental Authorities.....	4
Table 2-2: Proposed Environmental Mitigation Measures - Additional text included in Plan actions relating to environmental protection related obligations and environmental enhancement opportunities.....	7
Table 2-3: Proposed Environmental Mitigation Measures - Environmental Governance Principles included in the plan	15
Table 2-4: Responses to Consultation Submissions	17
Table 2-5: Plan Action Modifications	30
Table 3-1: Reasonable Alternatives to the LACAP.....	37
Table 5-1: SEA Monitoring Programme.....	41



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Cork County Council (CCC) have adopted the Cork County Council Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) 2024 - 2029. This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement for the LACAP. This SEA Statement provides information on the following:

1. How Environmental Considerations were integrated into the LACAP.
2. How the SEA Environmental Report and consultation submissions and observations on it have been taken into account during the preparation of the LACAP.
3. The reasons for choosing the LACAP as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered.
4. The measures decided concerning monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the LACAP.

The EPA in their Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statements and Monitoring (2023) succinctly summarize the role SEA Statements have under the SEA process, as follows: *'SEA Statements have the potential to play a central role in summarising the effectiveness of the SEA process. They can capture how environmental considerations have shaped the plan/programme (e.g., through policy wordings, revisited zonings and other measures) and how the process has contributed to making the plan or programme more sustainable'*.

1.2 Legislative Context

SEA is required under the EU Council Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (the SEA Directive)¹. The SEA Directive requires that an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The overarching objective of the SEA Directive is *'to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans.... with a view to promoting sustainable development'*²

SEA is described within the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government's (2004) Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities on the Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) as the *'formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme'*.

¹ Transposing Irish Regulations: S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011). S.I. No. 436 of 2004 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011).

² Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment – Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2004)



Article 16 of S.I. No. 435/2004 - European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (as amended) requires that a competent authority provide information on the decision to approve a Plan that has been subject to SEA. Article 16(2)(b) requires that a statement is produced summarised, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme subject to SEA.



2. HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS WERE INTEGRATED INTO LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2024 - 2029

2.1 SEA Scoping

The first stage of the SEA process was to carry out SEA Screening to determine the requirement for SEA of the LACAP. It was determined the LACAP was a statutory Plan and had the potential to give rise to likely significant environmental effects and therefore SEA is required for the Plan.

The second stage of the SEA process was carrying out SEA Scoping. The purpose of SEA Scoping is to establish the spatial and temporal scope of the SEA and a decision-making framework that can be used to evaluate impacts of the LACAP. A SEA Scoping Report was produced to document the scoping process. The SEA Scoping Report outlined information on the emerging LACAP, including the need for the LACAP, its temporal and geographical area and overall objectives. It facilitated scoping the Environmental Components and understanding the environmental issues to be considered under the SEA process.

A copy of this report was made available to the statutory Environmental Authorities. Environmental Authorities made scoping submissions on the SEA Scoping Report. The SEA Scoping Report was finalised in light of these submissions. The SEA Scoping Report, along with SEA scoping consultation submissions and consideration of these submissions by the SEA process, helped communicate and define the scope of the environmental issues which are to be dealt with by the SEA, the methods which will be used to address these issues, and the level of detail required to address these issues, as per the SEA Guidelines³. Summary detail on the scoping consultation submissions received from Environmental Authorities and how these were taken into account during the SEA process is presented in Table 2-1.

³ Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2004), Page 18: "It is recommended that at the end of the scoping procedure, the plan-making authority should prepare a brief scoping report of its conclusions as to what information is to be included in the environmental report, taking account of any recommendations from the environmental authorities."



Table 2-1: Summary Detail on Scoping Consultation Submissions Received from Environmental Authorities

Environmental Authority	Summary on the Scoping Consultation Submission	How was this submission taken into account during the SEA?
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	An overview on how climate resilience could be promoted in agriculture setting was provided (e.g., maintaining a fodder reserve, measures to promote biodiversity and carbon sequestration, measures to improve soil structure and function). An overview on invasive species risk associated with climate change and the need for appropriate need to promote resilience was provided.	The content of this submission served to inform the focus of the environmental assessment of agriculture related action defined in the LACAP. It informed the nature and focus of mitigation measures defined for related climate mitigation and adaptation action defined in the LACAP. A number of Environmental Governance principles defined in the LACAP specifically reflect the recommendations contained in this submission.
EPA	<p>An overview of the nature of climate change challenges was provided. The EPA acknowledged the nature, focus and goals of the emerging LACAP was made. It was advised the SEA should seek to maximize climate action co-benefits for air quality, human health, biodiversity, water quality and other interrelated areas (i.e. win-win solutions).</p> <p>Other measures advised on which were relevant to the SEA included: the need to consider the Plan influence on Greenhouse Gas (GHG emissions) the need to manage climate change influenced invasive species spread, the need to have regard to the receiving water quality and air quality environment during the plan-making process.</p> <p>In relation to the SEA specifically, commentary was provided on the approach to mitigation, and on how the plan should consider impacts on air and water quality, water resource, soils/geology, landscape and material assets.</p> <p>The EPA recommended integrating the environmental mitigation defined under the SEA into the Plan, and advised on other interrelated plans and programmes to consider during plan-making and SEA processes.</p>	<p>The recommendation to ensure climate action defined in the Plan created co-benefits underpinned the SEA process and the defined mitigation measures. Where relevant, mitigation measures ultimately defined serve to holistically maximize environmental benefits. The promotion of climate action co-benefits is embedded into the Environmental Governance Principle framework defined for the Plan.</p> <p>Appropriate regard was had to the need to consider the climate change influenced invasive species spread. This was considered when shaping defined climate action and also within the Environmental Governance principle framework defined under the Plan.</p> <p>The receiving water and air quality environmental were appropriately considered and evaluated during the SEA process, in light of the EPA's commentary on baseline water quality and air quality data and information.</p> <p>The nature, focus and level of mitigation measures defined in the SEA Environmental Report were informed by the EPA's commentary. All mitigation measures defined were integrated into the Plan itself. The wording of climate action defined in the Plan was shaped having regard to relevant environmental considerations. A set of Environmental Governance Principles were included in the Plan.</p>
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications	Background information on the Geological Survey of Ireland was provided initially in this submission. An overview of county-level geoheritage and groundwater assets and databases was provided. Information was provided on geological, geotechnical, geothermal, natural resources, geochemistry and geophysical data sources. Specific advice on geological/hydrogeological considerations that needed to be taken into account during the making of the	Appropriate regard was had to these baseline geological and hydrogeological data sources and considerations during the preparation of the SEA Environmental Report for the LACAP.



Environmental Authority	Summary on the Scoping Consultation Submission	How was this submission taken into account during the SEA?
	<p>Plan was provided, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Proposed developments need to consider any potential impact on specific groundwater abstractions and on groundwater resources in general.2. Geohazards should be considered during the Plan-making and development processes.3. Sustainable development of our natural resources should be an integral part of all development plans from a national to regional to local level to ensure that the materials required for our society are available when required.	



2.2 Environmental Assessment and Mitigation

Taking into account the scope detailed in the SEA Scoping Report which was produced for the initial draft version on the LACAP, the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the LACAP were identified, evaluated and described in a SEA Environmental Report.

This report defined mitigation measures to prevent adverse environmental effects due to the implementation of the LACAP. The following forms of mitigation have been adopted to ameliorate the negative environments of the LACAP and maximise potential positive effects of the plan:

- Mitigation through consideration of alternatives.
- Mitigation through integration of environmental considerations into the LACAP.
- Mitigation through consideration of development management standards/environmental protection objectives contained in the CDP.

2.2.1 Mitigation through consideration of alternatives

A number of alternatives were considered at an early stage in the process. The environmental effects of these alternatives were evaluated during the SEA process. Detail on how Plan alternatives and their environmental effects were considered during plan-making is provided in Section 3.

2.2.2 Mitigation through integration of environmental considerations into the LACAP

The plan making process was carried out in parallel with the SEA and AA processes. Regular communication and interaction took place between the environmental assessment team and the plan making team. Environmental considerations that came to light during the SEA and AA processes, including consultation processes, were regularly communicated to the plan making team during the plan making process. As necessary, environmental mitigation measures to ameliorate the potential negative environmental effects of implementing the LACAP were developed and then integrated into the LACAP. Much of the environmental mitigation was embedded in the plan early on in the process as a result of this. This process was carried out in an iterative manner to ensure optimal plan making and environmental outcomes. Environmental considerations were also integrated into the plan so as to facilitate maximizing identified positive environmental effects of the LACAP.

Mitigation measures were suggested that maximize the co-benefits of climate action for other environmental components such local air quality, human health, biodiversity, water quality and other interrelated areas (i.e., win-win solutions).

Additional text clarifying environmental protection related obligations and environmental enhancement opportunities has been attached to a variety of defined actions in the plan. This text has been shaped to ensure that environmental considerations are appropriately taken into account during plan implementation. This text has also been shaped to ensure plan implementation generates the minimum level of negative environmental effects and the maximum level of positive environmental effects. These text additions are presented in Table 2-2.

Several environmental governance principles were established to ensure plan implementation generates the minimum level of negative environmental effects and the maximum level of positive environmental effects. These environmental governance principles shall underpin and guide plan implementation and shall apply to and be integrated into all actions/activities which result due to the implementation of the plan. These principles are defined in Table 2-3. The principles were incorporated into the plan itself.



These environmental mitigation measures were integrated into the LACAP and will prevent negative effects and maximize positive effects associated with the LACAP.

Table 2-2: Proposed Environmental Mitigation Measures - Additional text included in Plan actions relating to environmental protection related obligations and environmental enhancement opportunities

LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
4.3.1.1.1	Assess demand sources, e.g buildings, equipment, etc to identify opportunities to eliminate demands	Assess electricity demand sources, e.g buildings, equipment, etc to identify opportunities to eliminate demands
4.3.1.1.2	Upgrade lighting to LED where financially viable	Upgrade lighting to LED where financially viable, while ensuring the lumen levels and spectral range are maintained or reduced/controlled to avoid effects to biodiversity.
4.3.1.1.3	Investigate opportunities for renewable energy sources to identify projects for annual implementation programme	Investigate opportunities for renewable energy sources to identify projects for annual implementation programme, having due regard to planning and environmental protection considerations.
4.3.1.1.4	Replace equipment with more efficient alternatives when available and financially viable	Replace equipment with more efficient alternatives when available and financially viable whilst ensuring WEEE generated as a result of this action is appropriately managed.
4.3.1.2.1	Assess demand sources to identify opportunities to eliminate demands	Assess heating demand sources to identify opportunities to eliminate demands
4.3.1.2.2	Assess opportunities to replace oil/gas burners usage with renewable alternatives to identify projects for annual implementation programme	Assess opportunities to replace oil/gas burners usage with renewable alternatives to identify projects for annual implementation programme; having due regard to planning and environmental protection considerations.
4.3.1.2.3	Assess opportunities to upgrade building insulation to identify projects for annual implementation programme	Assess opportunities to upgrade building insulation to identify projects for annual implementation programme; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately conserve protected structures.
4.3.1.2.4	Assess opportunities to upgrade building air tightness to identify projects for annual implementation programme	Assess opportunities to upgrade building air tightness to identify projects for annual implementation programme; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately conserve protected structures and features.
4.3.1.3.1	Assess demand sources to identify opportunities to eliminate demands	Assess transport demand sources to identify opportunities to eliminate demands
4.3.1.3.2	Assess opportunities to replace vehicles with EV where alternatives available and financially viable consumption to identify projects for annual implementation programme	Assess opportunities to replace vehicles with EV where alternatives available and financially viable consumption to identify projects for annual implementation programme, whilst ensuring energy/fuel used to power electric vehicles is sustainably sourced, and appropriate end-of-life management practices are in place for Electric Vehicles.
4.3.1.3.3	Assess opportunities to utilise low emission fuels where available and financially viable to identify opportunities consumption to identify projects for annual implementation programme	Assess opportunities to utilise low emission fuels where available and financially viable to identify opportunities consumption to identify projects for annual implementation programme, whilst ensuring energy/fuel used to power low emission vehicles is sustainably sourced.



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
4.3.1.4.2	Replace equipment with more efficient when available and financially viable	Replace equipment with more efficient alternatives when available and financially viable whilst ensuring WEEE generated as a result of this action is appropriately managed.
4.2.1.6.2	Any additional or replacement of existing assets needs to take into account the 2030 and 2050 carbon reduction targets.	Any additional or replacement of existing assets needs to take into account the need for sustainability and the 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.
4.4.1.1.2	Trial the EU funded HYBES project 'living lab' in the decarbonisation zone.	Trial the EU funded HYBES project 'living lab' in the decarbonisation zone; having appropriate regard to environmental sensitivities such as sensitive human receptors, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately conserve protected structures.
4.4.1.3.1	Support the delivery of Local Climate Action projects funded through the new Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP). The CCAP will operate under the following themes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home(Community)/Energy • Travel • Food and Waste • Shopping and Recycling • Local Climate and Environmental Action. 	Support the delivery of Local Climate Action projects funded through the new Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP). The CCAP will operate under the following themes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home(Community)/Energy • Travel • Food and Waste • Shopping and Recycling • Local Climate and Environmental Action. Promote the need to consider environmental protection requirements during such energy projects.
4.4.1.8.2	Continue the implementation of 'safe routes to school' and neighbourhood greenways to further enhance localised active-travel infrastructure.	Continue the implementation of 'safe routes to school' and neighbourhood greenways to further enhance localised active-travel infrastructure; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality.
4.4.1.8.3	Continue promotion and support for the Active Travel Green Flags.	Continue promotion and support for the Active Travel Green Flags; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality.
4.4.1.8.5	Continue to encourage the development of bottom-up sustainable transport initiatives and engage with communities on new initiatives, where appropriate.	Continue to encourage the development of bottom-up sustainable transport initiatives and engage with communities on new initiatives, where appropriate; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality.
4.5.1.2.2	Work with stakeholders to carry out a county wide survey to identify and map wetlands; protect and restore wetlands in Local Authority control; and to support landowners and others to protect and restore wetlands.	Work with stakeholders to carry out a county wide survey to identify and map wetlands; protect and restore wetlands in Local Authority control; and to support landowners and others to protect and restore wetlands, in accordance with relevant environmental protection requirements, including water quality, habitat and protected species related requirements.
4.5.1.2.6	Identify opportunities to preserve, enhance and develop ecological connections between areas of high biodiversity value.	Identify opportunities to preserve, enhance and develop ecological connections between areas of high biodiversity value, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality.
4.5.1.3.1	Promote biodiversity net gain in all new public and private developments: Require the submission of a green infrastructure statement for all development.	Promote biodiversity net gain in all new public and private developments: Require the submission of a green infrastructure statement for all development, ensuring environmental protection requirements are appropriately considered during the planning of green infrastructure.



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
	Continue to integrate ecological expertise within the development management process including at pre-planning and planning application stages.	Continue to integrate ecological expertise within the development management process including at pre-planning and planning application stages.
4.5.1.3.2	Continue to integrate ecological expertise and biodiversity protections through placemaking measures in the development and management of public projects including housing, transport infrastructure and public realm projects etc.	Continue to integrate ecological expertise and biodiversity protections through placemaking measures in the development and management of public projects including housing, transport infrastructure and public realm projects etc.; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.
4.5.1.4.2	Undertake review of existing council-owned housing estates to support residents in identifying areas suitable for retrofitting of biodiversity protective measures in accordance with best practice (e.g. tree planting, wildflower meadows, pollinator zones etc.).	Undertake review of existing council-owned housing estates to support residents in identifying areas suitable for biodiversity protective measures in accordance with best practice (e.g. native tree planting, wildflower meadows, pollinator zones etc.).
4.5.1.4.3	Identify a range of potential pilots to demonstrate sustainable measures including nature-based SuDS; and pilot a biodiversity- and climate-led design for Council-led social housing developments with measures such as green roofs, green walls, wetland & pond SuDS, green carparking, nest boxes in facades, grasslands, and wildlife friendly shrubs and trees in open space.	Identify a range of potential pilots to demonstrate sustainable measures including nature-based SuDS; and pilot a biodiversity- and climate-led design for Council-led social housing developments with measures such as green roofs, green walls, wetland & pond SuDS, green carparking, nest boxes in facades, grasslands, and wildlife friendly native shrubs and trees in open space; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality etc.
4.5.2.1.3	Work with partners LAWPRO, Uisce Eireann, etc. to identify the impacts of critical and vulnerable receptors in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan and Water Framework Directive and assist in the improvement of river water quality and restoration projects.	Work with partners LAWPRO, Uisce Eireann, etc. to identify the impacts of critical and vulnerable receptors in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan and Water Framework Directive and assist in the improvement of river water quality and restoration projects, whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements during such projects.
4.5.2.1.4	Utilise natural flood management where feasible and financially viable.	Utilise natural flood management where feasible and financially viable; having due regard to the need to promote environmental sensitivities at these locations, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.
4.5.2.3.1	With partners, undertake a Coastal Vulnerability Assessment of the Cork coastline to assess the impact of sea level rise to shoreline change of the Cork Coastline, to inform integrated coastal zone management and identify areas with particular requirements, and to address coastal erosion and implement coastal flooding prioritising ecosystem-based adaptation actions.	With partners, undertake a Coastal Vulnerability Assessment of the Cork coastline to assess the impact of sea level rise to shoreline change of the Cork Coastline, to inform integrated coastal zone management and identify areas with particular requirements, and to address coastal erosion and implement coastal flooding prioritising ecosystem-based adaptation actions; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites and biodiversity.



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
4.5.2.3.4	With stakeholders, identify climate adaptation measures for coastal infrastructure & associated defences, and utilize natural coastal management where feasible and financially viable.	With stakeholders, identify climate adaptation measures for coastal infrastructure & associated defences, and utilize natural coastal management where feasible and financially viable; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites and biodiversity.
4.5.3.1.1	Implement Heritage plan for all aspects of conservation, awareness and recording of all aspects of heritage (built, natural, cultural) ensuring cognisance is taken of climate change.	Implement Heritage plan for all aspects of conservation, awareness and recording of all aspects of heritage (built, natural, cultural) ensuring cognisance is taken of climate change and environmental protection considerations, including heritage conservation requirements.
4.5.3.1.2	Incorporate climate resilience through Built Heritage Investment scheme, Historic Structure Fund and any other relevant funds introduced.	Incorporate climate resilience through Built Heritage Investment scheme, Historic Structure Fund and any other relevant funds introduced, having due regard to environmental protection considerations, including heritage conservation requirements.
4.5.4.1.1	Support sectoral and national afforestation targets in mitigating climate change and the promotion of sustainable forest management initiatives.	Support sectoral and national afforestation targets in mitigating climate change and the promotion of sustainable forest management initiatives; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites, water quality and biodiversity.
4.5.4.1.2	Develop a Tree Strategy to provide a framework for the planning, protection, planting and management of trees and woodlands for which Cork County Council has responsibility for, ensuring a focus on native trees.	Develop a Tree Strategy to provide a framework for the planning, protection, planting and management of trees and woodlands for which Cork County Council has responsibility for, ensuring a focus on native trees and having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites and biodiversity.
4.5.4.1.5	Support the implementation of the National Peatlands Strategy.	Support the implementation of the National Peatlands Strategy, whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements during such projects.
4.5.4.1.6	Implementation of County Development Plan Policy which seeks to achieve a net gain in green infrastructure through the protection and enhancement of existing assets and the provision of new green infrastructure.	Implementation of County Development Plan Policy which seeks to achieve a net gain in green infrastructure through the protection and enhancement of existing assets and the provision of new green infrastructure; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.
4.5.5.1.1	Encourage the promotion of sustainable land use practices and nature-based solutions to water resource management and flooding which can enhance community resilience by providing natural flood defences, promoting climate adaptation.	Encourage the promotion of sustainable land use practices and nature-based solutions to water resource management and flooding which can enhance community resilience by providing natural flood defences, promoting climate adaptation, having due regard to environmental sensitivities, including Biodiversity, European sites, water quality and sensitive human receptors.
4.5.5.1.2	Promote future proofing in the design and planning of new development to fully consider the potential impacts of climate change and the need for measures to increase the resilience of development to any such impacts.	Promote future proofing in the design and planning of new development to fully consider the potential impacts of climate change and the need for measures to increase the resilience of development to any such impacts; having due regard to environmental sensitivities, including Biodiversity, European sites, water quality and sensitive human receptors.



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
4.6.1.1.7	Work with other stakeholders to promote and support Cork County as a sustainable tourism destination.	Work with other stakeholders to promote and support Cork County as a sustainable tourism destination; whilst having due regard for sensitivities including biodiversity and European sites.
4.6.1.1.10	Explore zero/low carbon models of transporting goods in Cork County e.g the use of cargo-bike hire schemes.	Explore zero/low carbon models of transporting goods in Cork County e.g the use of cargo-bike hire schemes, ensuring due regard is had to the sustainability and potential life-cycle impacts of other transport modes.
4.6.1.3.5	Provide information and raise awareness to Cork County enterprises and business groups to promote supports to undertake retrofits, energy efficiency and renewable energy installation on commercial buildings.	Provide information and raise awareness to Cork County enterprises and business groups to promote supports to undertake retrofits, energy efficiency and renewable energy installation on commercial buildings - whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements during such energy projects.
4.6.1.5.5	Work in partnership with farmers to improve practices and infrastructure.	Work in partnership with farmers to improve practices and infrastructure, whilst promoting the need for farming enterprises to consider relevant planning and environmental protection requirements.
4.7.1.2.1	Develop Active travel projects throughout the county which can deliver greatest behavioural change.	Develop Active travel projects throughout the county which can deliver greatest behavioural change, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality, and opportunities to promote nature based solutions.
4.7.1.2.2	Planned urban development road improvements to incorporate Active travel elements as appropriate	Planned urban development road improvements to incorporate Active travel elements as appropriate, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality, and opportunities to promote nature based solutions.
4.7.1.2.3	Continue the ongoing development of Greenways, such as Middleton - Youghal Greenway.	Continue the ongoing development of Greenways, such as Middleton - Youghal Greenway, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality, and opportunities to promote nature based solutions.
4.7.1.2.5	Work with relevant authorities in the development of "Safe route to schools".	Work with relevant authorities in the development of "Safe route to schools", having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality, and opportunities to promote nature based solutions.
4.7.1.3.2	Align population and employment growth through integration of land use and transport planning.	Align population and employment growth through integration of land use and transport planning, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.
4.7.1.4.1	Work with the relevant stakeholders in the development of the proposed National EV charging network within County Cork.	Work with the relevant stakeholders in the development of the proposed National EV charging network within County Cork, whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements and disability access during such projects.
4.7.1.4.2	Engage with ESB to identify areas where the electricity network infrastructure can support EV charging	Engage with ESB to identify areas where the electricity network infrastructure can support EV charging, whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements during supported infrastructure projects.
4.7.1.4.4	Promote the use of e-vehicles through the provision of e-vehicle charge point requirements in planning applications.	Promote the use of e-vehicles through the provision of e-vehicle charge point requirements in planning applications whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements and disability access during such projects.



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
4.7.1.4.5	Promote the use of low emission fuels.	Promote the use of sustainably sourced low emission fuels.
4.9.1.1.5	Work with stakeholders to expand the use of Regulation 28 end of waste criteria	Work with stakeholders to expand the use of Regulation 28 end of waste criteria in compliance with the provisions of the Waste Management Act.
4.9.1.1.6	Promote and support the operation of Regulation 27 By product regulation to reduce waste disposal.	Promote and support the operation of Regulation 27 By product regulation to reduce waste disposal in compliance with the provisions of the Waste Management Act.
4.9.1.3.1	Manage Closed landfills to minimise emissions	Manage Closed landfills to minimise emissions, whilst promoting compliance with environmental protection requirements associated with closed landfill sites.
4.9.1.3.2	Work with stakeholders to remediate and manage historic landfills	Work with stakeholders to remediate and manage historic landfills, whilst promoting compliance with environmental protection requirements associated with closed landfill sites.
4.9.1.3.3	Work with stakeholders to reduce emissions from treatment of leachate	Work with stakeholders to reduce emissions from treatment of leachate, having due regard to planning and environmental protection considerations.
4.9.1.4.1	Promote civic amenity sites as alternative to kerbside collection for proper disposal of waste	Promote civic amenity sites as alternative to kerbside collection for proper disposal of waste - having due regard to planning and environmental protection/nuisance considerations in relation to such sites.
4.9.1.4.2	Promote bring banks for disposal of glass containers and food cans	Promote bring banks for disposal of glass containers and food cans - having due regard to planning and environmental protection/nuisance considerations in relation to such sites.
4.8.1.1.1	Support sustainable offshore wind energy projects at appropriate locations and scales & the development of associated infrastructure at ports to facilitate these developments in accordance with the CDP.	Support sustainable offshore wind energy projects at appropriate locations and scales & the development of associated infrastructure at ports to facilitate these developments in accordance with the CDP - whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements at the outset of and during such projects.
4.8.1.1.2	Promote renewable energy generation, storage, and distribution infrastructure in accordance with the CDP within the county.	Promote renewable energy generation, storage, and distribution infrastructure in accordance with the CDP within the county - whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements at the outset of and during such projects.
4.8.1.2.1	Explore opportunities for establishing district heating to serve council assets including social housing in the county.	Explore opportunities for establishing district heating to serve council assets including social housing in the county, ensuring appropriate regard is had to planning and environmental protection considerations.
4.8.1.2.2	Support stakeholders who wish to develop district heating systems.	Support stakeholders who wish to develop district heating systems, whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements at the outset of and during such projects.
4.8.1.3.1	Support and implement national policy on EV charging at nondomestic locations.	Support and implement national policy on EV charging at nondomestic locations, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.
4.8.1.3.2	Engage with ESB to identify locations where electricity network infrastructure can support EV charging facilities.	Engage with ESB to identify locations where electricity network infrastructure can support EV charging facilities, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
4.8.1.3.3	Develop and implement a policy for EV Charging as part of a wider Taking in Charge policy.	Develop and implement a policy for EV Charging as part of a wider Taking in Charge policy, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.
4.8.3.1.1	Promote the retention and reuse of existing building stock as a first preference.	Promote the retention and reuse of existing building stock as a first preference - having due regard for environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity; protected species, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures, during any retrofitting works
4.8.3.1.2	Support provision of information on grant aid for homes and businesses	Support provision of information on grant aid for homes and businesses - whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements during such projects.
4.8.3.1.3	Encourage energy efficiency improvements for buildings. Advise and educate businesses, residents on energy efficiency	Encourage energy efficiency improvements for buildings. Advise and educate businesses, residents on energy efficiency - whilst promoting the need for projects to conform with relevant planning policy environmental protection criteria.
4.8.3.3.1	Support provision of information on grant aid for onsite renewable generation	Support provision of information on grant aid for onsite renewable generation - whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements during such projects.
4.8.3.3.2	Encourage onsite renewable generation installation	Encourage onsite renewable generation installation - whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements during such projects.
4.8.4.1.1	Develop a design ethos that considers climate action in the development of new buildings by Cork County Council or on its behalf. This approach will consider a range of design options including, but not restricted to the use of low carbon materials, building fabric insulation, green roofs, solar photovoltaics, and rainwater harvesting, taking account of government policy, design standards and guidelines.	Develop a design ethos that considers climate action in the development of new buildings by Cork County Council or on its behalf. This approach will consider a range of design options including, but not restricted to the use of low carbon materials, building fabric insulation, green roofs, solar photovoltaics, and rainwater harvesting, taking account of government policy, design standards and guidelines. Climate action co-benefits and environmental protection requirements shall be appropriately promoted be supported by the design ethos.
4.8.4.1.2	Prepare and implement an annual funding program for deep energy retrofitting of existing Council housing stock	Prepare and implement an annual funding program for deep energy retrofitting of existing Council housing stock, having due regard for environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity; protected species, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures, during any retrofitting works
4.8.4.1.3	Phase out all fossil fuel-based heating systems by 2030	Phase out all fossil fuel-based heating systems by 2030, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species associated with such buildings, European sites and biodiversity.
4.8.4.1.4	Refurbish all newly acquired and vacant houses to a minimum B2 energy rating, with all fossil fuel heating sources removed	Refurbish all newly acquired and vacant houses to a minimum B2 energy rating, with all fossil fuel heating sources removed, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as protected species associated with such buildings, European sites and biodiversity.
4.8.4.1.6	Run a pilot rainwater harvesting retrofit project in an existing Council housing estate in the Decarbonisation Zone.	Run a pilot rainwater harvesting retrofit project in an existing Council housing estate in the Decarbonisation Zone, while ensuring projects have appropriate regard to local environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity and European sites.



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
4.8.4.2.1	Advance installation of underground infrastructure for EV Charging in new social housing estates	Advance installation of underground infrastructure for EV Charging in new social housing estates, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.
4.8.4.2.4	Undertake a review of existing estates to identify potential locations for installation of communal EV charging points and bike parking.	Undertake a review of existing estates to identify potential locations for installation of communal EV charging points and bike parking, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.
4.8.5.1.2	Work with communities to adopt local adaptation measures that reduce local weather impacts considering intensity, duration, and frequency.	Work with communities to adopt local adaptation measures that reduce local weather impacts considering intensity, duration, and frequency, having due regard to the need to promote nature based solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems, and environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.
4.8.5.2.1	Develop & implement SUDS & nature-based approaches to manage surface water and protect rivers from pollutants in road water run-off and slow the addition of water volume to mitigate flooding for development projects	Develop & implement SUDS & nature-based approaches to manage surface water and protect rivers from pollutants in road water run-off and slow the addition of water volume to mitigate flooding for development projects. Ensure due regard is given environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology, during any supported development projects.
4.8.5.2.2	Undertake rainwater management planning for all main towns. Assist Planning Policy Unit to develop a rainwater management plan for Urban settlements	Undertake rainwater management planning for all main towns. Assist Planning Policy Unit to develop a rainwater management plan for Urban settlements, having due regard to the need to promote nature based solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems, and environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.
4.8.5.2.3	Support the roll out of Flood Relief Schemes in the County, including those in partnership with the OPW, as identified through the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAMS) Programme and in the County Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.	Support the roll out of Flood Relief Schemes in the County, including those in partnership with the OPW, as identified through the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAMS) Programme and in the County Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - having due regard to the need to promote nature-based solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems, and environmental sensitivities at these locations, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.
4.8.5.3.1	Assess bridge infrastructure in line with predicted climate impacts.	Assess bridge infrastructure in line with predicted climate impacts, having due regard to the need to appropriately protect, conserve and enhance important habitats and species and European sites, and the conservation status of protected bridges.
4.8.5.3.2	Carry out road maintenance and rehabilitation of regional and local roads in accordance with the guidance document on the climate adaptation of regional and local roads	Carry out road maintenance and rehabilitation of regional and local roads in accordance with the guidance document on the climate adaptation of regional and local roads, having due regard to environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, riparian corridors and air quality.



Table 2-3: Proposed Environmental Mitigation Measures - Environmental Governance Principles included in the plan

Promote climate action projects that support and maximise environmental co-benefits, such as biodiversity protection and enhancement; improved air, water or soil quality; or enhanced recreation, amenity and cultural heritage value, to ensure win-win benefits are gained.
Support or facilitate climate action related projects and initiatives which seek to make improvements in soil structure, management and health by increasing soil organic carbon - which will create the environmental co-benefits of improving flood resilience by enhancing water holding capacity of soils and increasing the level of GHG sequestration associated with land use functions.
Ensure all development underpinned or supported by climate action is planned and implemented in a manner that appropriately considers the potential for environmental co-benefits, potential environmental impacts and environmental protection requirements.
Flood defence projects or related maintenance works supported by plan actions shall be carried out in a manner that promotes climate action-biodiversity related co-benefits, and shall have due regard for the protection and enhancement of rare, protected or important habitats and species.
Ensure climate action related projects are carried out in a manner that promotes climate action-cultural heritage co-benefits, and do not result in unauthorised physical damage to cultural, archaeological or architectural features, or unauthorised or inappropriate alteration of the context of sensitive cultural heritage features.
Ensure climate action related projects are carried out in a manner that promotes climate action water quality co-benefits, and align with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive and relevant River Basin Management Plan.
Promote climate action projects that support protected trees, hedgerows and other habitats such as wetlands, floodzones which contribute to green infrastructure.
Support opportunities to improve ecological connectivity of non-designated habitats and sites to improve overall ecosystem resilience and functioning while supporting climate action within the county.
Ensure all projects supported by the council have taken the necessary precautions to identify and manage invasives species, particularly with regard to Schedule III species. No climate action related development project that is likely to cause the spread of invasives species listed in Schedule III shall be supported.
Support opportunities to support peatland restoration, rehabilitation and maintenance while achieving climate targets through the implementation of the climate actions within the plan.

2.2.3 Mitigation through consideration of development management standards/environmental protection objectives contained in the CDP

In addition to the environmental mitigation measures integrated into the LACAP, the development management standards and environmental protection measures defined in the CDP will serve to mitigate the environmental effects of any development proposals supported by the LACAP. These development management standards/environmental protection measures have been defined for the express purpose of ensuring proper planning and sustainable development in the County. The CDP has been subject to its own SEA and AA. The LACAP has been prepared having appropriate regard to the policies and objectives contained in the County Development Plan.



2.3 Appropriate Assessment

The environmental assessment for the Plan undertaken was carried out in accordance with an Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment based methodology in accordance with EPA's guidance document entitled '*Final Report: Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment, Streamlining AA, SEA and EIA Processes. Best Practice Guidance.*' (2012).

The methodology employed facilitated the integration of SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes relating to biodiversity impact assessment to ensure the effective and streamlined assessment of biodiversity impacts. The plan-making, SEA and AA processes - including scoping, baseline evaluation, impact assessment and mitigation/monitoring measure development processes - were carried out concurrently to facilitate holistic and complete assessment of biodiversity impacts. The effective communication and integration of scientific knowledge and analysis between assessments took place. The SEA was suitably informed by the analysis and conclusions in AA.

2.4 Consultation on SEA Environmental Report

A draft version of the SEA Environmental Report accompanied a draft version of the LACAP on public display as part of the statutory public consultation required under Article 13 of S.I. No. 435/2004 - European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004. A draft version of the Natura Impact Report (NIR) produced under the AA process for the Draft LACAP also accompanied the Draft LACAP on public display. Environmental Authorities, relevant interested stakeholders and members of the public were notified of the Draft LACAP being placed on display and the opportunity to make consultation submissions in relation to the Draft LACAP. Members of public were made aware of the Draft LACAP and associated environmental reports through a notification published by the local authority on its website. Environmental Authorities and interested stakeholders were notified through notification correspondence.

Various parties made consultation submissions and observations on the Draft LACAP and associated environmental reports. Detail on submissions received relevant to SEA and AA issues and documentation, responses to these submissions, and any changes made to SEA Environmental Report (ER) and NIR documents on foot of these submissions, is provided in Table 2-4. Updates were made to the SEA and AA documentation where relevant following on from receipt and consideration of the consultation submissions.



Table 2-4: Responses to Consultation Submissions

Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
Sea Fisheries coordination DAFM	Ireland's seafood industry (fishing and aquaculture) is one of the key stakeholders operating in the marine area and plays a vital role in the sustainability of our coastal communities. Over 15,000 people are employed around our coast both directly and indirectly. Many of these communities have very limited alternative employment and economic activity options. It is therefore essential that the socio-economic reliance on the seafood sector is fully recognised and is factored into any Climate Change Action plan. Fishing and food security is as key a part of Government Policy. Food Vision 2030 recognises and values the role of primary food producers.	Noted.	None	None.
	The Seafood industry is experiencing a period of difficult change, arising from the ongoing consequences of the EU UK Trade and Co-operation agreement which are specific and impactful on Ireland's seafood sector. There is now ever-increasing demand on the marine space from Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE), Marine Spatial Planning, Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), and other environmental measures.	Noted.	None	None.
	Our coastal communities and maritime sectors will continue to play a significant role in contributing to our climate goals and will continue to be consulted and supported in the transition to carbon neutrality. The seafood industry, through both the Sectoral Adaptation Plan (Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan) and the annual Climate Action Plan (CAP23) continue to support initiatives to improve understanding of our marine area and ensure sustainable resource use, including through bio and circular economy initiatives. These plans require consideration in the SEA process.	The National Climate Action Plan (2023) and Sectoral Adaptation Plans were considered in the SEA Process. The relationship of the Plan with other relevant Plans and Programmes were defined in Appendix 1 of the SEA. Inter-plan cumulative effects were evaluated in Section 7 of the SEA ER.	None	None.



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	Also for consideration in the SEA process is the European Commission's Communication on the energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector as part of its Fisheries Policy Package. This proposes the establishment of an Energy Transition Partnership (ETP) to develop a roadmap for the energy transition of the sector towards climate neutrality by 2050. The roadmap will set out investment needs, sector initiatives and inform policy decisions to help achieve this transition. The ETP is a multi-stakeholder platform intended to promote co-operation, knowledge sharing and dialogue between private and public stakeholders in order to accelerate the energy transition in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. This Partnership will help to shape the development of future transitional actions for Ireland's seafood sector. Local authorities should include relevant steps to support a Just Transition for the sea fisheries and aquaculture sectors in their Climate Action Plans.	This commentary was noted. Local authorities in Ireland do not have a direct remit over the fisheries and aquaculture sector. The actions defined in the Plan were however mutually symbiotic and harmonious with the vision and measures defined in European Commission's Communication on the energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector. Insofar as the local authority's remit extended, the plan supported the protection and enhancement of the marine environment. The climate action defined in the plan has the potential to generate multiple climate action benefits, and co-benefits for the water and biodiversity environments and by extension the marine environment (i.e. biodiversity conservation and enhancement, coastal protection, water quality protection and improvements etc.).	Reference was made to the European Commission's Communication on the energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Section 3.4 - <i>In-combination effects with Other Plans and Programmes</i> , and Appendix 2 - <i>Relationship with other plans and programmes</i> , as appropriate.	Reference was made to the European Commission's Communication on the energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Section 7.3 - <i>Potential Cumulative Effect of the LACAP in combination with other Plans and Projects</i> , and Appendix 1 - <i>Relationship of the Plan with other relevant Plans and Programmes</i> , as appropriate.
Cian O'Mahony SEA Section Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring Environmental Protection Agency	The SEA should also assist in identifying ways to maximise the potential co-benefits of climate-related measures for air quality, human health, biodiversity, water quality and other interrelated areas (i.e. win-win solutions).	Noted and agreed. It was noted that the SEA Environmental Report (ER) defined Environmental Governance Principles and action amendment suggestions to ensure climate action co-benefit opportunities were maximized. Various defined mitigation measures serve to promote win-win solutions.	None.	None.
	We recommend that the findings of the SEA ER and NIS are fully reflected in the Plan, to ensure that the relevant recommendations are fully considered and integrated as appropriate.	Noted and agreed. Environmental mitigation measures in the form of Environmental Governance Principles and climate action amendment suggestions were fully integrated into the Plan itself.	None	None
	<p>Environmental Authorities Under the SEA Regulations, you should consult with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection Agency; • Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage; • Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications; • Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. 	<p>Noted. All listed Environmental Authorities have been consulted with as part of the SEA process.</p> <p>It was recommended the Council confirmed receipt of this submission with Cian O' Mahony, if this hadn't been done already.</p>	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>If you have any queries or need further information in relation to this submission, please contact me directly at c.omahony@epa.ie. I would be grateful if you could send an email confirming receipt of this submission to: sea@epa.ie.</p>			
	<p>Non-Technical Summary</p> <p>You should ensure that the Non-Technical Summary includes the relevant information as required under Schedule 2 of S.I No. 434 Of 2004, as amended.</p>	<p>It was assumed that SI No. 434 was a typo and SI No. 435 was what was intended to be addressed with this statement.</p> <p>The requirements of Schedule 2 of SI No 435 were noted and amendments to the NTS were made as appropriate.</p>	None	Updated the NTS to reflect the relevant information as required under Schedule 2 of SI No 435 of 2004 as amended.
	<p>Relationship with other plans and programmes</p> <p>We acknowledge that the Plan has been prepared taking account of the key National plans including the National Climate Action Plan 2023. We also acknowledge that the Plan sets out the key plans, programmes and policies considered in preparing the SEA.</p> <p>The Plan should include a commitment to remain aligned with high level plans and programmes, Guidelines, and legislation over its lifetime. The Climate Action Plan 2024 is currently being prepared and work will be commencing on the review of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies also. Any relevant updates of these plans/strategies should be integrated as appropriate into the Plan as relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>The Plan should include a commitment to consider any relevant updated actions, measures or recommendations that may arise in updates to the National Climate Action Plan (or the National Planning Framework) over the lifetime of the Plan.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed. It was noted that this was in reference to the LACAP and not the SEA ER or AA NIR documentation.</p> <p>It was recommended the Council included a commitment in the Plan to remain aligned with high level plans and programmes if this wasn't the case already.</p> <p>It was recommended the plan included a commitment in the Plan to consider and appropriately integrate relevant updates to the national Climate Action Plan and National Planning Framework over the lifetime of the Plan.</p>	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>Strategic Environmental Objectives</p> <p>We recommend that in considering strategic environmental objectives, they should where possible reflect the plan being prepared, rather than use more generic environmental objectives. This will help both in considering more specific monitoring and mitigation measures, when required.</p>	<p>Noted. The Strategic Environmental Objectives defined were very specifically defined to reflect the themes, goals, objectives and climate action contained in the plan and in light of the potential environmental effects associated with Plan implementation.</p>	None	None
	<p>Alternatives</p> <p>We note the alternatives considered in the SEA and acknowledge the preferred option selected.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	None	None.
	<p>Mitigation Measures</p> <p>Where the potential for likely significant effects has been identified, you should provide appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or minimise these. You should also ensure that the Plan includes clear commitments to implement the relevant mitigation measures.</p>	<p>The SEA produced recommended a suite of mitigation measures in response to climate actions considered to have potentially significant environmental effects.</p> <p>Environmental Governance Principles were defined for the purpose of underpinning and framing the defined climate actions. All activities and development supported by the defined climate actions shall be undertaken or influenced by the local authority, as appropriate, in accordance with these Environmental Governance Principles.</p> <p>Mitigation was also achieved by the integration of environmental considerations into the defined LACAP climate actions.</p> <p>These mitigation measures were wholly integrated into the LACAPs.</p> <p>Section 8 of the SEA ER provided full detail of these environmental mitigation measures.</p> <p>It was recommended the Plan provided a clear commitment to implement these mitigation measures, if this wasn't the case already.</p>	None	None.



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>Monitoring, Implementation & Reporting</p> <p>The Monitoring Programme should be flexible to take account of specific environmental issues and unforeseen adverse impacts should they arise. It should consider and deal with the possibility of cumulative effects. Monitoring of both positive and negative effects should be considered. The monitoring programme should set out the various data sources, monitoring frequencies and responsibilities.</p> <p>If the monitoring identifies adverse impacts during the implementation of the Plan, then you should ensure that suitable and effective remedial action is taken.</p> <p>Guidance on SEA-related monitoring is available on the EPA website at 06695-EPA-SEA-Statements-and-Monitoring-Report.pdf</p>	<p>The SEA Monitoring Programme established for the LACAP was contained in the SEA ER. This monitoring programme was developed in accordance with EPA guidelines entitled '<i>Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring</i>' (2020).</p> <p>The monitoring programme was multi-faceted, broad in scope and was designed to allow for a flexible and adaptive approach to SEA monitoring during Plan implementation.</p> <p>The monitoring programme was designed to inherently measure cumulative effects that may arise due to the implementation of the Plan.</p> <p>This plan considered both positive and negative effects, as per the following statement from the SEA text:</p> <p><i>'Where monitoring identifies that the implementation of the LACAP is having a significant negative environmental effect, an in-depth review of the LACAP should take place and the LACAP should be updated in a manner that satisfactorily mitigates these environmental effects (i.e., through the adoption of additional environmental mitigation measures.). Similarly, where monitoring indicates that potential positive environmental effects associated with LACAP implementation are not being adequately realized, the LACAP should be reviewed and updated in a manner that supports the realization of all potential positive environmental effects, having regard to the overall vision and high-level objectives of the plan.'</i></p> <p>It was noted however that additional opportunities exist in relation to monitoring the positive environmental effects of defined climate action – in connection with SEOs PHH1, L1, AQN2, TR1. The SEA monitoring programme was updated to ensure SEOs PHH1, L1, AQN2, TR1 accommodate the monitoring of positive effects arising due to plan implementation, where appropriate.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>The SEA monitoring programme was updated to ensure SEOs PHH1, L1, AQN2, TR1 accommodate the monitoring of positive effects arising due to plan implementation, where appropriate.</p> <p>Additional detail on monitoring programme data sources was provided.</p>



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
		<p>The monitoring programme included detail on the indicators, targets and data sources to be used to monitor and measure progress. Some additional detail on data sources were however provided to better guide the SEA monitoring to be carried out across plan implementation.</p> <p>A commitment to remedial action in the event SEA monitoring shows the implementation of the Plan is having adverse environmental effects were made in the SEA.</p>		
	<p>EPA State of the Environment Report</p> <p>Our State of Environment Report, Ireland’s Environment - An Integrated Assessment 2020 (SOER2020) identifies thirteen ‘Key Messages for Ireland’. Delivering Ireland’s long-term sustainable development and environmental objectives will involve many different stakeholders to address these key actions. The report recognises the need for full implementation of existing environmental legislation and review of governance/coordination on environmental protection across public bodies.</p> <p>The EPA are currently preparing the next iteration of the SOER report, which will be published in 2024. We recommend that a commitment is made in the Plan, to take account of any relevant recommendations in the SOER 2024 report, once published, in implementing the Plan over its lifetime.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>It was recommended the Council make a commitment to take account of any relevant recommendations in the SOER 2024 report, once published, in implementing the Plan over its lifetime.</p>	None	None
	<p>SEA Statement – “Information on the Decision”</p> <p>Once the Plan is adopted, you should prepare an SEA Statement that summarises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan; 	<p>Noted. An SEA statement has been produced and will be circulated to any environmental authority consulted during the SEA process.</p>	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the Environmental Report, submissions, observations and consultations have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan; The reasons for choosing the Plan adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and, The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan. <p>You should send a copy of the SEA Statement with the above information to any environmental authority consulted during the SEA process.</p>			
	<p>Future Amendments to the Plan</p> <p>You should screen any future amendments to the Plan for likely significant effects, using the same method of assessment applied in the “environmental assessment” of the Plan</p>	Noted.	None	None
Irish Green Building Council	EG1, EG3, EG5 and the focus on taking a more holistic approach to climate action and its co-benefits are positive.	This was noted. The Environmental Governance Principles defined in the Plan arose as a result of the SEA process to date.	None	None
Cork Environmental Forum (excerpts relevant to SEA and AA)	<p>The Plan lacks an explicit Objective to protect biodiversity.</p> <p>This should be rectified in the final Plan and be elevated to become the first set of actions. This shouldn't be deferred to await a new Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>	<p>In the context of the SEA and AA processes undertaken for the LACAP, the effects of the Plan on the receiving biodiversity environment and European sites were adequately identified, considered and evaluated. Potential adverse effects identified were adequately mitigated against.</p> <p>Multiple plan actions were shaped and re-focused under the SEA and AA processes so as to better promote biodiversity protection and enhancement during Plan delivery.</p>	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>We recommend adopting an Objective along the lines of the ‘nature positive’ (see below) global goal of: to halt and reverse nature loss [measured from a baseline of 2020], through increasing the health, abundance, diversity and resilience of species, populations and ecosystems so that nature is visibly and measurably on the path of recovery by the end of this Plan period (2029).</p> <p>Actions in this climate Plan against such a new Objective must steer effort towards the habitats that are best for nature recovery and for delivering a safer climate.</p> <p>This new Objective should include an explicit action that drives no loss or damage except in Habitats Regulations-like IROPI test situations in which there are no alternatives and for which there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) requiring a plan or project to proceed. https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/guidance-appropriate-assessment-planning-authorities</p> <p>Having set a IROPI like test to loss and damage, the Plan should then explicitly refer to the Mitigation Hierarchy: i.e. avoid harm as a priority, mitigate where this is not possible, and compensate as a last resort.</p>	<p>Several Environmental Governance Principles were defined to promote the potential positive environmental effects of Plan action and prevent the potential negative environmental effects of Plan action. These principles shall underpin the implementation of all Plan action. EG1, EG3, EG6, EG7, EG8, EG9 and EG10 were all supportive of biodiversity protection and enhancement.</p> <p>It was suggested Cork County Council considered this submission further with a view to improving the effectiveness of Plan implementation generally, having regard to the Plan vision and objectives.</p>		
	<p>We support this Objective but find the actions to achieve such almost completely lacking – there is not a single concrete action that will genuinely guarantee delivery of improved quality and connectivity in the Plan period. The final Plan must set actions against this objective to explicitly deliver the Objective.</p> <p>We would expect such actions to ensure that the loss of biodiversity is halted and also enable major scale habitat & species restoration. The County should commit to leading significant nature restoration projects in every Municipal District (say cross 500 Ha+ areas in each). These should be identified in Year 1 of the Plan with delivery arrangements in place by Year 2.</p>	<p>At Plan level, SEA and AA process to date shaped the LACAP in a manner that ensures potential negative effects of Plan implementation are prevented and minimized, and potential positive effects of Plan implementation are maximized.</p> <p>It was suggested Cork County Council considered this submission further with a view to improving the effectiveness of Plan implementation generally, having regard to the Plan vision and objectives.</p>	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>The Plan should carefully position ‘net gain’ in a hierarchy of actions against this Objective. Net gain as it is designed elsewhere is for narrow use only – for planning proposals on wildlife poor farmland and to steer developers away from building on good standard habitat. The approach is clearly not designed for wider use and would weaken existing safeguards if it was used on projects that could harm neighbouring land or damage protected sites and species.</p> <p>We recommend this Objective is amended to use the term 'nature positive'. This phrasing, now adopted in global biodiversity accords (https://www.naturepositive.org/). would align the Plan with the latest explicit global goals for biodiversity. Nature positive goals set out the need to halt and reverse nature loss measured from a baseline of 2020, through increasing the health, abundance, diversity and resilience of species, populations and ecosystems so that nature is visibly and measurably on the path of recovery.</p> <p>Regards ‘net gain’ the Plan must overcome how this term has grown in use without a clear and aligned understanding among business, finance, government and civil society actors about what the phrase represents and does not represent. Ensuring clarity and preserving the integrity of the definition is key to ensure the necessary actions flow and with real accountability.</p> <p>We offer ten principles that must underpin net gain if it is to work for nature:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adhere to the mitigation hierarchy (i.e. avoid harm as a priority, mitigate where this is not possible, and compensate as a last resort). 2. Not weaken existing environmental protections for designated sites and species. 3. Secure biodiversity net gain first, and not to trade biodiversity against other environmental benefits. 	<p>At Plan level, SEA and AA process to date shaped the LACAP in a manner that ensures potential negative effects of Plan implementation are prevented and minimized, and potential positive effects of Plan implementation are maximized.</p> <p>It was suggested Cork County Council considered this submission further with a view to improving the effectiveness of Plan implementation generally, having regard to the Plan vision and objectives.</p>	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>4. Not allow offsetting of irreplaceable habitats and wildlife.</p> <p>5. Be inclusive and equitable to the people affected by development.</p> <p>6. Contribute to the delivery of strategic local, national and international ecological networks.</p> <p>7. Be mandatory for almost all development, in order to account for the cumulative impacts of development on nature.</p> <p>8. Take transparent decisions that deliver reliable net gains and best practice management.</p> <p>9. Secure net gains permanently.</p> <p>10. Provide additional conservation outcomes including for the coastal environment and habitats.</p>			
	<p>Light Pollution</p> <p>Light pollution is harmful for nature but also people and the heritage value of our night skies. Light is also a significant contributor to emissions and energy use. There is reference but only in the context of nature and a blanket notion that LED lighting is good.</p>	<p>Noted. SEA and AA processes to date defined adequate mitigation measures to prevent light pollution arising due to Plan Action implementation.</p>	None	None
<p>Kerry County Council (excerpts relevant to SEA and AA)</p>	<p>Finally, it is noted that Cork County Council has determined that the LACAP requires a SEA and AA.</p> <p>The Cork LACAP is accompanied by a SEA Environmental Report and a Natura Impact Report (NIR).</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	None.	None.



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>It is noted both reports have assessed the Cork LACAP for likely significant effects on the environment and the potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites. This includes an assessment further to other plans and programmes, such as those of adjoining Local Authorities, including KCC LACAP. The mitigation measures from both the SEA ER and NIR are noted and the integration of same into Cork's LACAP. Similarly, KCC has also undertaken a SEA and prepared a NIR. All documents including Kerry's LACAP 2024-2029 are also now on public consultation until December 1st, 2023. Submissions from adjoining local authorities are welcomed. Please see for https://consult.kerrycoco.ie/ for further information.</p>			
Save Murrrough	<p>4.5 Biodiversity, The Natural Environment, Heritage & Land Use, Land Use</p> <p>Change and Forestry</p> <p>Inland waterways, their valleys and flood fields etc are also vital and need to be protected. More heavy rain over the winter means more flooding and longer and more heat / drought conditions in the summer, meaning increased low water levels which threaten freshwater species. County Cork is lacking protected inland areas (see attached map of protected areas in Ireland). Inland areas also form key elements of our biodiversity and should be protected. Cork County is very sparse in areas of protection and we hope there would be a commitment to improve on this.</p>	Noted.	None	None
	<p>4.5.1 Goal: Protect, restore, and enhance Biodiversity</p> <p>Protecting biodiversity, restoring, and enhancing it should be a key consideration when granting planning.</p>	Noted. The County Development Plan provided a suitable framework for biodiversity protection and enhancement during planning consent processes. The CDP was subject to its own SEA and AA.	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>Especially in cases where developments have the potential to disrupt and degrade biodiversity. As the Council are the gate keepers of planning on a local level, local communities entrust them to be stringent when it comes to planning for developments that can negatively impact on biodiversity and contribute to further loss of it. Greater action is required to address the rapid rate of biodiversity loss in this country. The Council should be leaders of this on a county level. Biodiversity and the restoring of it should be at the forefront of planning considerations. According to the National Biodiversity Forum 2021;</p> <p>“The status of biodiversity in protected areas, seas and the wider countryside is in poor condition and continues to decline”.</p> <p>They don't mention the state of the unprotected areas, but they can only be worse.</p>			
	<p>4.5.1.2.3 Work with stakeholders to support the establishment of Marine Protected Areas</p> <p>Having Marine protected areas is hugely important and it's very welcome to see the commitment of the Council to engage with stakeholders in the establishment of these areas. We think it is also critical that work is done for the establishment of new Special Protected Areas (SPA) and Special Area of Conservations (SAC) along rives / inland water bodies. Not only to protect and increase the quality of the habitat to support biodiversity, but also the natural river flood plains for natural flood management.</p> <p>Considering its size and compared to most counties County Cork has very little inland protected area.</p>	Noted.	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>4.5.1.3.3 Retention and protection of existing biodiversity shall be a key consideration in all works or developments</p> <p>Retention and protection of existing biodiversity and climate action should take precedence to economic points for developments where there are alternatives with less negative impact on biodiversity and climate. It is very disheartening to see developments get precedence over the natural environment and biodiversity.</p>	<p>Noted. The County Development Plan provided a suitable framework for biodiversity protection and enhancement during planning consent processes. The CDP was subject to its own SEA and AA.</p>	None	None
	<p>4.5.5.1.3 Support an integrated approach to the management of surface water catchments and the use and development of lands adjoining watercourses</p> <p>Work on a scheme to ensure farmers get financially rewarded for allowing flood fields to be flood fields.</p> <p>Such schemes could help in terms of flood management also.</p>	Noted	None	None



2.5 SEA and Plan Modifications

CCC prepared a Chief Executive (CE) Report responding to consultation submissions from Environmental Authorities, interested stakeholders and members of the public.

The CE Report recommended Plan modifications in light of the consultations submissions received in relation to the Plan and associated environmental reports and subsequent consideration of these submissions. The CE Report was appropriately informed by recommendations made by the SEA (and AA) team on foot of their review of consultation submissions relating to SEA (and AA) issues and documentation. Recommendations were taken on board by the plan-making team as appropriate.

Plan modifications made were screened for SEA and AA. All Plan modifications made during the plan-making process were determined to be non-material and did not introduce any additional environmental effects not previously considered and mitigated during the SEA and AA processes.

An earlier draft version of the SEA Environmental Report was finalised having appropriate regard to the consultation submissions made during the SEA consultation period, recommendations made in the CE Report on consultation submissions, and the modifications made to the original draft version of the LACAP that was put on display for consultation. The updates made to the report were clerical or minor and non-material in nature and did not materially change the parameters of the environmental assessment undertaken or the environmental mitigation defined.

The CE Report on consultation submissions received on the Plan and associated environmental reports accompany the adopted Plan and this SEA Statement and provides exact detail on how consultation submissions were considered by the local authority during the plan-making process. This CE Report also documents the Plan modifications made by the local authority following its consideration of consultation submissions relating to both the content, focus and goals of the Plan and the environmental assessment of the Plan presented in the associated SEA and AA documentation. All Plan Action modifications are presented in Table 2-5. No further modifications affecting the SEA and AA processes were made upon Plan Adoption.

Table 2-5: Plan Action Modifications

Action	Summary of Modification
4.2.1.2.1	<p>The action below has been amended:</p> <p>'The existing internal structure for the development of this plan will remain in place initially and will be adapted throughout the lifetime of the plan to respond to new challenges as they occur. This structure will nurture inter-departmental co-operation to ensure that progress on the 'implementation monitoring' of the plans actions is being reported on to deliver this plan. This structure is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A high-level senior management Steering Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, the purpose of which is to set the overall targets for the delivery of the Climate Action Plan, including budgets and resources. This group meets 1-2 times per annum. 2. An Operational Group which is chaired by the Divisional Manager with responsibility for the Environment Directorate. This is also a senior management group and it reports to the Steering Group. The purpose of this group is to ensure that the individual and specific actions included in the Climate Action Plan are undertaken by the directorates. This group meets 2-4 times per annum.



Action	Summary of Modification
	3. An Implementation Group, which will include a representative from all directorates and functions, which is made up of middle management who review the day-to-day logistics and implementation of individual actions. This group will be chaired by the Climate Action Co-ordinator and will meet as required and at a minimum of once a quarter.'
4.2.1.2.3	The action below has been amended: 'Ensure that relevant actions from this Climate Action Plan are incorporated into all Council plans, strategies and policies including departmental work plans, team plans and staff meeting agendas.'
4.2.1.2.7	The action below has been amended: 'With the support of CARO, the Council will monitor European and national policy developments and incorporate as appropriate to the Council's approach to Climate Action.'
4.2.1.3.2	The action below has been amended: 'Support and administer the Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) funded by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, which will allow communities to apply for grants to enable climate projects at a local level.'
4.4.1.1.1	The action below has been amended: 'Support communities to co-create a vision for climate action by working with existing community models/mechanisms (e.g., the SEAI, Sustainable Energy Communities, PPN etc.) and also supporting new models, where appropriate.'
4.4.1.2.9	The action below has been amended: 'Support and work with LAWPRO to encourage a community response to encourage water conservation and greater water use efficiency in the community, in association with local community.'
4.4.1.3.1	The action below has been amended to include the word 'community' and to exclude the financial detail: 'Support the delivery of Local Climate Action projects funded through the new Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP). The CCAP will operate under the following themes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home(Community)/Energy • Travel • Food and Waste • Shopping and Recycling • Local Climate and Environmental Action.'
4.5.1.1	The objective below has been amended to exclude the word 'prepare': 'Implement the Biodiversity Action Plan with cognisance of the impacts of climate change.'
4.5.1.1.2	The action below has been amended to include the word 'opportunities' and to exclude the words 'neighbourhood plans': 'Work with stakeholders and communities to identify suitable areas for Nature Recovery opportunities.'
4.5.1.1.5	The action below has been amended: 'Work with stakeholders to promote engagement and awareness of National Biodiversity Data Centre projects and initiatives.'



Action	Summary of Modification
4.5.1.2.2	The action below has been amended: 'Work with stakeholders to carry out a county wide survey to identify and map wetlands; protect and restore wetlands in Local Authority control; and to support landowners and others to protect and restore wetlands in accordance with relevant environmental protection requirements, including water quality, habitat and protected species related requirements.'
4.5.1.2.6	The action below has been amended: 'Identify opportunities to preserve, enhance and develop ecological connections between areas of high biodiversity value, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality.'
4.5.1.3	The objective below has been amended: 'Objective: Embed Biodiversity retention and net gain in development and placemaking with a nature positive goal.'
4.5.1.4.5	The action below has been amended: 'Recognise natural regeneration of woodland and identify opportunities for native tree planting and native woodland creation within the Local authority's landbank - and aim to avail of the Creation of Woodland in Public Lands Scheme and other grant aided schemes to extend native woodland cover in the county, particularly where co-benefits can be achieved.'
4.5.2.1.1	The action below has been amended: 'Support the Water Framework Directive Regional Operational Committees' activities and assist in the improvement of water quality standards and monitoring arrangements, so that they remain fit for purpose and data generated can be shared with other decision makers.'
4.5.2.1.4	The action below has been amended: 'Utilise natural flood management where feasible and financially viable, having due regard to the need to protect environmental sensitivities at these locations, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.'
4.5.2.2.1	The action below has been amended: 'Implement the National Clean Air Strategy and with the support of central government and the EPA ensure monitoring arrangements remain fit for purpose, so that data generated can be shared with other decision makers.'
4.5.2.3.3	The action below has been amended: 'Conduct Beach Sediment Transportation Study to monitor select sites, document coastal change over time, develop and validate predictive models and inform funding and future interventions having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites and biodiversity.'
4.5.4.1.2	The action below has been amended: 'Develop a Tree Strategy to support County Development Plan objectives and provide a framework for the planning, protection, planting and management of trees and woodlands on Council property, ensuring a focus on native trees and having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites and biodiversity.'
4.7.1.1.1	The action below has been amended: 'Collaborate with communities and stakeholders in relation to the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS).'



Action	Summary of Modification
4.7.1.1.2	The action below has been amended: 'Collaborate with communities and stakeholders in relation to the Local Transport Plans for towns as the plans are developed by the Council.'
4.7.1.3.1	The action below has been amended: 'Promote growth in locations benefitting from existing high quality public transport capacity.'
4.8.5.2.7	The action below has been amended: 'During the operational lifetime of flood relief schemes, ensure that any upgrades and/or replacements use best available energy efficient technology and/or best practice, including innovative solutions where financially viable.'
4.4.1.3.1	The Lead Department for the action has been amended: 'Environmental, Climate Change & Emergency Services'
4.5.1.1.2	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'No. of Nature Recovery Projects identified'
4.5.1.2.3	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'No of Meetings held'
4.5.1.2.6	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'No of opportunities identified'
4.5.1.3.1	The timeframe for the action has been amended: 'Annual Review'
4.5.1.3.2	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'Inclusion of ecological and biodiversity measures in public projects.' The timeframe for the action has been amended: 'Annual Review'
4.5.1.5.1	The timeframe for the action has been amended: 'Within 3 years'
4.5.2.1.4	The timeframe for the action has been amended: 'Annual Review'
4.5.3.1.2	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'No of information campaigns run'
4.5.4.1.6	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'Assessment of green infrastructure net gain'
4.5.5.1.1	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'Creation and issuing of guidance notes and tracking pre-planning engagement on these issues.'
4.5.5.1.2	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'Development of Educational Toolkits related to climate action and future proofing new developments.'
4.7.1.2.2	The Lead Department for the action has been amended: 'Roads & Transportation'



Action	Summary of Modification
4.7.1.2.4	The Lead Department for the action has been amended: 'Roads & Transportation'
4.7.1.2.5	The Lead Department for the action has been amended: 'Roads & Transportation' The KPI for the action has been amended: 'Number of Schools Completed.'
4.7.1.2.6	The Lead Department for the action has been amended: 'Roads & Transportation'
4.7.1.3.1	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'Review number of permitted units within proximity to public transport corridors.'
4.7.1.3.2	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'No of Plans Completed.'
4.8.1.1.1	The KPI for the action has been amended: 'Permitted KWHs of offshore wind energy generation.'
4.8.5.2.4	The Lead Department for the action has been amended: 'Roads & Transportation'



3. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

3.1 Introduction

Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive states that: *'Where an environmental assessment is required under Article 3(1), an environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated.'*

The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternative means of achieving the strategic goals of the LACAP (taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of a plan or programme) are identified, described and evaluated for their likely significant effects on the environment. Such reasonable alternative must be realistic and capable of implementation.

Reasonable alternatives to the LACAP were initially explored and examined during the SEA Scoping stage of the SEA process, having regard to the scope, function and strategic aims and main objectives of the LACAP, as defined in the Local Authority Climate Action Plan. This process facilitated the accurate identification of reasonable alternatives to the LACAP and also suitably informed the plan-making process, ensuring optimal environmental outcomes.

Reasonable alternatives were assessed against the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) established for the aspects of the baseline environment which are likely to be significantly affected by the LACAP.

3.2 Approach to Developing Reasonable Alternatives

A range of alternatives to the LACAP were considered during the plan-making process. The approach for identifying reasonable alternatives to the LACAP is defined below:

1. Iterative communication was held between the plan-making and environmental assessment teams to identify the various alternative approaches and options being considered to achieve the vision of the plan - the reduction of GHG emissions at Local Authority organizational level and within the Community in support of Climate Action policy. This communication commenced early on during the plan-making process.
2. Reasonable alternatives considered were identified. For an alternative to be considered reasonable, it must be practical/functional, realistic and implementable. An evaluation of whether each alternative was practical/functional, reasonable and implementable took place. This evaluation considered the following factors:
 - 2.1. The vision of high-level objectives of the LACAP.
 - 2.2. The geographic scope of the LACAP.
 - 2.3. The actual powers and functions of the Local Authority.
 - 2.4. The climate action merits of the alternative.
 - 2.5. The genuine ability of the alternative to achieve the plan vision and high-level objectives.
 - 2.6. The technical feasibility of the alternative.
 - 2.7. The availability of resources, including financial resources to deliver the plan within the required timeframe.
 - 2.8. The policy hierarchy and the parameters placed around the LACAP by higher-level policy.
 - 2.9. The legislative context and the parameters placed around the DLACAP by climate action and environmental related legislation.



The toolkit contained in the EPA's guidelines entitled 'Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment Good Practice Guidance' (2015) was utilised when identifying reasonable alternatives. The 'Why? What? Where? When?' Model defined in the guidelines were used when framing reasonable alternatives, as shown in Figure 3-1.

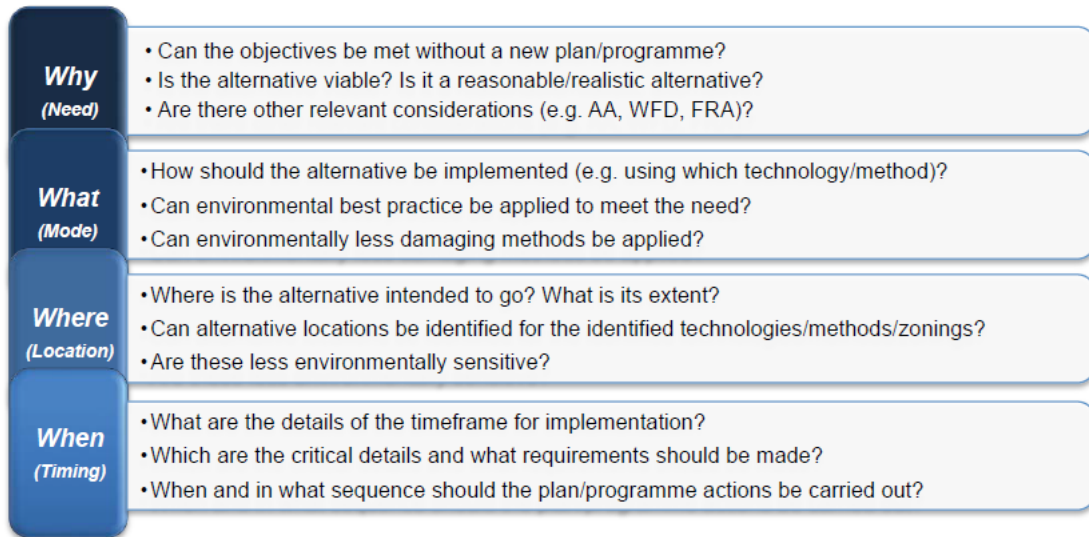


Figure 3-1: 'Why? What? Where? When?' Model for framing alternatives - Adapted from Figure 4.3 Developing and Assessing Alternatives in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Process (EPA, 2015).

3.3 Identification and Description of Reasonable Alternatives

Reasonable alternatives to the LACAP were identified. A description of these reasonable alternatives and the reasons for selecting these reasonable alternatives are presented in Table 3-1.

A 'Do Nothing' or 'Do Minimum' alternative was not a reasonable alternative in this instance as the preparation of an effective LACAP is a statutory requirement under Section 16 of the Climate Act.



Table 3-1: Reasonable Alternatives to the LACAP

Reasonable Alternative	Description of Reasonable Alternative	Reasoning for selecting this Reasonable Alternative
<p>Alternative 1 - The Pareto Approach: Prioritise reducing GHG emissions from largest GHG emitting sectors to mitigate against climate change impacts.</p>	<p>This alternative involved developing a LACAP that primarily focusses on climate mitigation and reducing GHG emissions associated with the largest GHG emitting sectors in the County that a local authority can reasonable influence having regard to the functions of a local authority - the Residential and Transport sectors.</p>	<p>This was a viable alternative that could achieve a significant reduction in GHG emissions by prioritising and supporting climate mitigation related action for the Residential and Transport sectors. The alternative would cover the period from 2024 to 2029 (the duration of the prospective LACAP).</p>
<p>Alternative 2 - The Holistic Approach: Adopt a multi-pronged approach and focus on a range of priority areas to mitigate against and adapt to climate change impacts.</p>	<p>This alternative involved developing a LACAP that has a balanced focus on both climate mitigation and adaptation across several theme areas and all socio-economic sectors.</p>	<p>This was a viable alternative that would have enhanced potential to reduce GHG emissions across multiple sectors, potential to offset GHG emissions, and greater potential to protect the local community and the environment from climate change related risks. Climate mitigation and adaptation actions across a wide breath of theme areas would be supported by the LACAP. The alternative would cover the period from 2024 to 2029 (the duration of the prospective LACAP).</p>
<p>Alternative 3 - The Holistic and Participatory Approach (Current LACAP): Adopt a multi-pronged approach - that has a strong community engagement emphasis - and focus on a range of priority areas to mitigate against and adapt to climate change impacts.</p>	<p>This alternative involved developing a LACAP that has a balanced focus on both climate mitigation and adaptation across several theme areas and all socio-economic sectors, and which has a strong community engagement emphasis, which underpins, supports and drives the climate action contained in the plan.</p>	<p>This was a viable alternative that would have enhanced potential to reduce GHG emissions across multiple sectors, potential to offset GHG emissions, and greater potential to protect the local community and the environment from climate change related risks. Climate mitigation and adaptation actions across a wide breath of theme areas would be supported by the LACAP. The range of climate mitigation and adaptation actions defined in the LACAP is likely to have better community level and organisational support given its strong community engagement emphasis. The alternative would cover the period from 2024 to 2029 (the duration of the prospective LACAP).</p>



3.4 Evaluation of Reasonable Alternatives and Reasons for Choosing the Preferred Plan

An evaluation of the potential effects of the reasonable alternatives on the baseline environment was carried out in accordance with the SEA Directive and best practice guidelines. This evaluation is documented in the SEA Environmental Report for the LACAP. A summary of this evaluation and the reason for choosing the preferred Plan is presented below.

Alternative 1 - The Pareto Approach - would have led to some positive environmental effects and would have resulted in the reduction of GHG emissions in the sectors that the local authority can control or exert substantial influence on that contribute most in terms of GHG emission in the County - the Residential and Transport sectors. It is less likely that this alternative would have delivered the wide-ranging climate mitigation and offsetting related action required to fully realise GHG emission reduction potential in the County. It is also less likely this alternative would have defined a wide range of climate adaptation measures that would fully protect biodiversity, heritage resources, environmental receptors and people from climate change risks. This alternative approach may have generated several negative environmental effects, which would not be counterbalanced by the positive environmental effects associated with Alternatives 2 and 3.

Alternative 2 - The Holistic Approach - and Alternative 3 - The Holistic and Participatory Approach - would have both broadly delivered suitably wide ranging and effective climate action. These alternatives have the potential to generate multiple positive environmental effects, including a reduction in GHG emissions at organisational, community and sectoral levels, in addition to a variety of other environmental benefits. These alternatives would have placed a balanced emphasis on both climate mitigation and adaptation action, ensuring climate change related environmental risks are adequately understood and managed at community level.

Alternative 3 had the best potential to deliver effective climate action given its holistic, wide encompassing nature; and given its strong community engagement emphasis, which supports better participation in climate action at community level. Alternative 3 had better potential therefore to fully realise potential environmental effects than Alternative 2.

Reasonable Alternative 3 - The Holistic and Participatory Approach - therefore constituted the preferred alternative or preferred plan.



4. SEA CONCLUSION

The reasonable alternative evaluation presented in the preceding section resulted in the development of a LACAP that achieves the best environmental outcomes in comparison to other reasonable alternative considered.

The adoption of the mitigation measures to be integrated into the LACAP, in combination with the continued adoption of the development planning and control related environmental protection measures defined in the CDP will prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any potential negative environmental effects due to the implementation of the LACAP. No further mitigation measures are required for the LACAP.

With the adoption of the defined mitigation measures, the implementation of the adopted LACAP will not result in any likely, significant, adverse environmental effects.



5. SEA MONITORING

The SEA Directive requires that the environmental effects of the implementation of a plan are monitored in order 'to identify at an early stage unforeseen effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action.'

A series of indicators and targets were established for identified SEOs to enable ongoing monitoring and measurement of LACAP implementation performance, the environmental effects of the implementation of the LACAP and the efficacy of environmental mitigation measures. Such monitoring will be carried out regularly to support plan implementation.

SEO indicators are simple and effective quantifiable indicators used to measure the environmental effects of implementing the LACAP and the progress of SEO objectives and targets. SEO targets set focussed, measurable aims and thresholds that the LACAP can support the achievement of.

CCC are responsible for implementation of the SEA monitoring programme. The environmental effects (including positive, negative and cumulative effects) of LACAP implementation will be monitored once every year over the course of the plan's five-year lifetime. This monitoring will be carried out by the Environment section of Cork County Council who will report on progress and performance to the relevant SPC annually. A monitoring report will be prepared to document monitoring outcomes. This report shall be made available for public inspection.

Where monitoring identifies that the implementation of the LACAP is having a significant negative environmental effect, an in-depth review of the LACAP should take place and the LACAP should be updated in a manner that satisfactorily mitigates these environmental effects (i.e., through the adoption of additional environmental mitigation measures.). Similarly, where monitoring indicates that potential positive environmental effects associated with LACAP implementation are not being adequately realised, the LACAP should be reviewed and updated in a manner that supports the realisation of all potential positive environmental effects, having regard to the overall vision and high-level objectives of the plan.

The SEA Monitoring Programme established for the LACAP is contained in Table 5-1. This monitoring programme has been developed in accordance with EPA guidelines entitled 'Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring' (2020). The monitoring programme includes detail on the indicators, targets and data sources used to monitor and measure progress.

A stand-alone monitoring report on the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan will be prepared in advance of the plan review process. The Council is responsible for the ongoing review of indicators and targets, collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of remedial action.



Table 5-1: SEA Monitoring Programme

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
Overall	O1	Ensure, where appropriate, that lower-level plans and projects contribute to overall environmental monitoring processes within the County.	Lower-level plan and project accordance with the plan.	Require all lower-level plans and projects have appropriate regard to and appropriately support all action and development proposals defined in the Plan. Ensure alignment between the Plan and the County Development Plan.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Review of lower-level plan SEA documentation.
Population & Human Health	PHH1	Avoid or minimise impacts to population and human health.	Number of spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan.	No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan.	Consultation with the Health Service Executive (HSE)/Health Atlas Ireland and the EPA.
	PHH2	Ensure the Decarbonising Zone avoids and minimises impacts to the existing economic activities within the area and does not compromise/conflict with existing land use objectives.	Compliance of action and development supported by the plan with policies and land use objectives protective/supportive of economic development in the county defined in the County Development Plan (CDP).	No contravention of policies and land use objectives protective/supportive of economic development in the county defined in the CDP. Consent for development proposals supported by the plan only to be granted where development complies with policies protective/supportive of economic development.	Internal monitoring of compliance with CDP Policy Objectives. Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.
Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna	B1	Ensure Climate Action does not conflict with biodiversity protection, restoration and rehabilitation.	Compliance of action and development supported by the plan with policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the CDP. Condition of habitats impacted by climate change (Area km ² /length metres).	No contravention of policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the CDP. Ensure no habitats are impacted by the effects of climate change. Ensure no reduction in the number of geographic distribution of species as a result of climate change effects.	Internal monitoring of compliance with CDP Policy Objectives. Internal monitoring of compliance with the County Biodiversity Action Plan. Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
			<p>Number and geographical distribution of Species or Species population trends impacted by climate change.</p> <p>Compliance of action and development supported by the plan with policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the County's Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>	<p>No contravention of policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the County's Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Consent for development proposals supported by the plan only to be granted where development complies with policy supporting biodiversity protection and enhancement.</p>	
	B2	Ensure compliance with Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to protection of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species ⁴ .	Condition of European Sites and annexed species.	No adverse impacts on the condition of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species as a result of plan implementation.	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Consultation with the NPWS.</p> <p>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive.</p> <p>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's National Birds Directive Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12.</p> <p>Review of NPWS publications regarding the status of European sites.</p>

⁴ 'Annexed habitats and species' refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
	B3	Support Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.	<p>Condition of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora.</p> <p>Linear meters of riparian corridors enhanced with native planting.</p> <p>Fragmentation or breaks in continuity of habitats and loss of wildlife corridors, stepping stones and connectivity (km²).</p> <p>Number of developments consented that have significant greenspace proposals.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts on the condition of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as a result of plan implementation.</p> <p>Increase linear metres of riparian corridor enhanced with native planting.</p> <p>Reduce habitat fragmentation or breaks.</p> <p>Increase number of developments consented that have significant greenspace proposals.</p>	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Mapping of LR important habitats and species as part of the County Biodiversity Plan.</p>
	B4	To avoid or minimize significant impacts on semi-natural habitats, species, environmental features, or other sustaining resources in designated national sites, non-designated locally important sites, and sites proposed for designation; and to comply with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2012 with regard to listed species.	Condition of semi-natural habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated national sites, non-designated locally important sites, and sites proposed for designation.	<p>No adverse impacts on condition of semi-natural habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated national sites, non-designated locally important sites, and sites proposed for designation, as a result of plan implementation.</p> <p>No adverse impacts on listed species in the Wildlife Acts 1976 - 2012 as a result of plan implementation.</p>	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Mapping of LR important habitats and species as part of the County Biodiversity Plan.</p>
	B5	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration in response to the biodiversity emergency.	<p>Compliance of development supported by the plan with policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the CDP.</p> <p>No. of developments consented that have significant greenspace proposals.</p>	<p>No contravention of policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the CDP.</p> <p>Increase number of developments consented that have significant greenspace proposals.</p> <p>Increase quantum of improved biodiversity areas.</p>	<p>Internal monitoring of compliance with CDP Policy Objectives.</p> <p>Internal monitoring of compliance with the County Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p>



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
			Improved biodiversity areas (Area km ² /length metres). Compliance of development supported by the plan with policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the County's Biodiversity Action Plan.	No contravention of policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the County's Biodiversity Action Plan. Consent for development proposals supported by the plan only to be granted where development complies with policy supportive of biodiversity protection and enhancement.	
Landscape, Seascape & Visual Amenity	L1	Avoid or minimise impacts to statutory landscape designations defined in the CDP.	Status of Landscape Character Areas, the Seascape, High Amenity Zones, Historic Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects. Number of developments consented that result in avoidable adverse impacts on Landscape Character Areas, the Seascape, High Amenity Zones, Historic Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects. Number of areas in the local authority functional area designated for their landscape character or visual amenity.	All action and development proposals supported by the plan must comply with policy objectives relating to the protection of Landscape Character Areas, the Seascape, High Amenity Zones, Historic Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects defined in the CDP. No development supported by the plan should have an adverse impact on Landscape Character Areas, the Seascape, High Amenity Zones, Historic Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects.	Internal monitoring of compliance with CDP Policy Objectives. Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Review of future iterations of the Landscape Character Assessment.
	L2	Avoid or minimise adverse visual effects on residential receptors or other sensitive visual receptors.	Number of developments consented that result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on residential receptors or other sensitive visual receptors.	No development supported by the plan should have a significant adverse visual impact on residential receptors or other sensitive visual receptors. All development supported by the plan should adhere to relevant Development Management Standards defined in the CDP, in particular standards defined in relation to physical and visual impacts.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
Cultural Heritage - Archaeology & Architectural	CH1	Avoid impacts upon archaeological heritage (including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)) and architectural heritage (including entries to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAHs)).	<p>Percentage of features contained in the RMP (and, where relevant, the associated surrounding context) protected from adverse effects due to action and development occurring as a result of this plan.</p> <p>Percentage of features contained in the RPS and NIAH (and, where relevant, the associated surrounding context) protected from adverse effects due to action and development occurring as a result of this plan.</p>	<p>No features contained in the RMP (nor the associated surrounding context) should be significantly adversely affected as a result of the implementation of this plan.</p> <p>No features contained in the RPS and NIAH (nor the associated surrounding context) should be significantly adversely affected as a result of the implementation of this plan.</p>	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Consultation with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.</p> <p>Review of Heritage Plan environmental effect monitoring.</p>
Soils	S1	Avoid or minimise effects on mineral resources or soils.	Number of instances of significant adverse impacts on mineral resources or soils occurring, including the pollution, loss or degradation of mineral resources or soils, as a result of action and development supported by the plan.	No instances of significant adverse impacts on mineral resources or soils occurring as a result of action and development supported by the plan.	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Consultation with Geological Survey of Ireland and review of published data on the soils environment.</p>
Land Use	LU1	Avoid or minimise effects on existing land use.	Number of instances of significant adverse impacts on existing land use as a result of plan implementation.	No instances of significant adverse impacts on existing land use as a result of plan implementation.	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Review of Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry related Greenhouse Gas emissions calculated in the Baseline Emission Inventory.</p>
Air Quality and Noise	AQN1	Increase the number of people travelling to work or school via public transport or by non-mechanical means.	<p>% change in modal split.</p> <p>Length of new sustainable transport routes developed.</p>	<p>Reduction in private car use.</p> <p>Extension and improvement of the sustainable transport network in the plan area.</p>	<p>Central Statistics Office (CSO) Population data - Commuting in Ireland.</p> <p>Internal monitoring of length of new sustainable transport routes developed.</p>



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
	AQN2	Avoid or minimise effects on local air quality.	<p>Number of developments consented that result in avoidable adverse air quality impacts on sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Number of exceedances of ambient air quality standards in the County, as monitored under the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network.</p> <p>Improvements in air quality status in the county.</p>	<p>No development supported by the plan should have a significant adverse air quality impact on sensitive receptors.</p> <p>All development supported by the plan should adhere to relevant Development Management Standards defined in the CDP relating to the protection of air quality.</p> <p>Minimise ambient air quality standard exceedances in the County.</p>	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Consultation with the EPA.</p> <p>Review of EPA Air Quality Monitoring undertaken in the County.</p> <p>Review of EPA annual 'Air Quality in Ireland Report.</p>
	AQN3	Avoid or minimise adverse noise impacts.	<p>Number of sensitive receptors exposed to noise nuisance.</p>	<p>No sensitive receptors exposed to nuisance noise in the County.</p>	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Monitoring of internal noise complaint investigations undertaken. Consultation with the EPA.</p>
Water	W1	Maintain and/or improve, the quality and status of surface, transitional, bathing, and coastal waters.	<p>Status of surface water bodies as reported by the EPA Water Monitoring Programme for the Water Framework Directive (WFD).</p> <p>Status of bathing waters as monitored under the Bathing Water Directive.</p> <p>Status of transitional and coastal water bodies as reported by the EPA Water Monitoring Programme for the Water Framework Directive (WFD).</p> <p>Number of water bodies achieving High or Good Ecological Status as defined by the WFD within the life-cycle of the Climate Action Plan.</p>	<p>Number of Pollution Incidents detected due to poor bathing water quality results.</p> <p>Not to cause deterioration in the status of any water or affect the ability of any water to achieve 'good status.'</p> <p>No deterioration in the status of any bathing waters, having appropriate regard to bathing water mandatory and guidelines values defined in the Bathing Water Directive.</p> <p>Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the national River Basin Management Plan.</p>	<p>EPA surface water monitoring data and reports.</p> <p>EPA bathing water monitoring data and reports.</p> <p>Review of environmental quality data detailed in the EPA Maps Application.</p>



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
				Increase in number of water bodies achieving High or Good Ecological Status as defined by the WFD within the life-cycle of the Climate Action Plan.	
	W2	Maintain and/or improve, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters.	Status of groundwater bodies as reported by the EPA National Groundwater Monitoring Programme for the WFD.	No deterioration in the status of groundwater quality, having appropriate regard to Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values defined under Directive 2006/118/EC.	EPA groundwater monitoring data and reports. Review of environmental quality data detailed in the EPA Maps Application.
	W3	Prevent impact upon the WFD status of surface waters and groundwater in line with the requirements of the WFD.	Number of instances of significant adverse impact on surface water or groundwater bodies resulting in a reduction in water quality or the ability of a water body to achieve 'good' water quality status. Number of water bodies achieving High or Good Ecological Status as defined by the WFD within the life-cycle of the Climate Action Plan.	No instances of significant adverse impact on surface water or groundwater bodies resulting in a reduction in water quality or the ability of a water body to achieve 'good' water quality status. Increase in number of water bodies achieving High or Good Ecological Status as defined by the WFD within the life-cycle of the Climate Action Plan.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Consultation with the EPA.
	W4	Comply as appropriate with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) consented within flood risk areas.	Minimise developments (supported by the plan) granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk, having appropriate regard to the Flood Risk Management guidelines.	Internal monitoring of development projects granted consent.
	W5	Prevent impact upon drinking water quality.	Number of non-compliances with Drinking Water Quality Standards defined in the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023.	No non-compliances with Drinking Water Quality Standards defined in the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023.	EPA Drinking Water Quality Reports. Review of environmental quality data detailed in the EPA Maps Application.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
Material Assets	MAI1	Avoid or minimise effects on built/amenity assets and infrastructure.	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) adversely affecting built/amenity assets and infrastructure.	No incompatible development (supported by the plan) adversely affecting built/amenity assets and infrastructure.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.
	MAI2	Avoid or minimise effects upon existing and (where known) planned infrastructure.	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned infrastructure, including water supply, wastewater management, energy and transport infrastructure.	No incompatible development (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned material assets infrastructure.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects, including monitoring of effects on other future planned or committed material asset infrastructure projects. Consultation with Irish Water, Gas Networks Ireland, ESB Networks and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
	MAI3	Promote sustainable transportation.	% change in modal split. Kilometers of permanent segregated cycling network. Kilometers of permanent integrated cycling network. Number of Electric Vehicle charging points in the county. Total Area of road reallocated for sustainable alternatives (m ²).	Percentage increase in the number of public transport users in the County. Increase kilometers of permanent segregated cycling network. Increase kilometers of permanent integrated cycling network. Increase number of Electric Vehicle charging points in the county. Increase Total Area of road reallocated for sustainable alternatives.	CSO Population data - Commuting in Ireland. Internal monitoring of length of new sustainable transport routes developed.
	MAI4	Promote sustainable waste management.	Tonnes of hazardous waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually. Tonnes of W.E.E.E. waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.	Increase waste recycling in the County. Reduce waste generation in the County.	EPA Waste Statistics. Consultation with the EPA.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
			<p>Tonnes of Bulky waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.</p> <p>Tonnes of garden waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.</p>		
	MAI5	Promote sustainable water use and drainage management.	<p>Level of water use in the County.</p> <p>Compliance with Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) related development management standards defined in the CDP.</p>	<p>Reduced water use in the county.</p> <p>All development (supported by the plan) must comply with SuDS related development management standards defined in the CDP.</p>	<p>CSO water consumption data.</p> <p>Internal monitoring of flood risk associated with of development projects and development project compliance with relevant flood risk and management related development management standards.</p>
Tourism & Recreation	TR1	Avoid or minimise effects upon tourism and recreation amenities.	Visitor trips to local authority functional area.	Stable or increasing number of visitor trips to local authority functional area.	Fáilte Ireland Data on Tourism Performance.
Climate Change	CF1	Delivery of the necessary action to support the national target of 80% electricity from renewable sources by 2030.	<p>Level of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in the County.</p> <p>Level of renewable energy infrastructure in the County.</p>	<p>Reduce GHG emissions associated with the Energy sector in the County.</p> <p>Increase the level of renewable energy infrastructure in the County.</p>	<p>EPA National Emission Inventory.</p> <p>Baseline Emission Inventory for the County.</p> <p>Megawatt hour (MWh) output from renewable energy infrastructure in the county.</p>
	CF2	Actively support the delivery of all national climate policy as appropriate to the county with the prioritisation and acceleration of evidence-based measures.	Level of GHG emissions in the County.	Reduce GHG emissions for all sectors in the County.	EPA National Emission Inventory. Baseline Emission Inventory for the County.
	CF3	Assist in the delivery of the climate neutrality objective at local and community levels.	<p>Level of GHG emissions in the County.</p> <p>Level of GHG emissions in the Decarbonising Zone.</p> <p>Net addition of tree cover added.</p>	<p>Reduce GHG emission in the County to Net Zero.</p> <p>Reduce Decarbonising Zone GHG emissions to Net Zero.</p> <p>Increase level of tree cover in the County.</p>	<p>EPA National Emission Inventory.</p> <p>Baseline Emission Inventory for the County.</p> <p>Baseline Emission Inventory for the Decarbonising Zone.</p>



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
	CF4	Deliver a Decarbonising Zone (DZ) within the local authority area to act as a test bed for a range of climate mitigation and adaptation measures in a specifically defined area through the identification of projects and outcomes that will assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective.	Level of GHG emissions in the Decarbonising Zone.	Reduce Decarbonising Zone GHG emissions to Net Zero.	Baseline Emission Inventory for the Decarbonising Zone.
Inter-relationships	IR1	Maintain and improve the health of people, ecosystems and natural processes, actively seek to integrate opportunities for environmental enhancement during adaptation to climate change.	Number of blue and green infrastructure measures included as part of development projects that have been granted consent.	Increase the number of blue and green infrastructure measures included as part of development projects that have been granted consent.	Review of granted consents.



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