

SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

FOR THE

ANCIENT DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN *

*THE "ANCIENT DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN" WAS REFERRED TO AS THE "DRAFT ANCIENT VISITOR EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN" DURING EARLIER CONSULTATIONS AND WITHIN EARLIER DOCUMENTS AND NOTICES. IT WAS DECIDED TO CHANGE THE TITLE OF THE PLAN TO THE "ANCIENT DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN" BEFORE IT WAS FINALISED. THIS CHANGE IS LIMITED TO THE TITLE AND WOULD NOT HAVE ANY ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTIONS.

for: Fáilte Ireland

88-95 Amiens Street
Dublin 1



by: CAAS Ltd.

1st Floor
24-26 Ormond Quay Upper
Dublin 7



SEPTEMBER 2020

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations	v
Glossary	vi
Section 1 SEA Introduction and Background	1
1.1 Introduction and Terms of Reference.....	1
1.2 SEA Definition	1
1.3 SEA Directive and its transposition into Irish Law	1
1.4 Implications for the Plan.....	1
Section 2 The Plan	3
2.1 Overview	3
2.2 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes.....	4
Section 3 SEA Methodology	5
3.1 Introduction to the Iterative Approach	5
3.2 Appropriate Assessment and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment	6
3.3 Scoping	6
3.4 Alternatives.....	7
3.5 Environmental Report	7
3.6 The SEA Statement.....	7
3.7 Difficulties Encountered.....	7
Section 4 Environmental Baseline.....	9
4.1 Introduction.....	9
4.2 National Reporting on the Environment.....	9
4.3 Sustainable Development Goals.....	9
4.4 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of the Plan.....	10
4.5 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna.....	10
4.6 Population and Human Health.....	19
4.7 Soil	19
4.8 Water.....	23
4.9 Air and Climatic Factors.....	28
4.10 Material Assets.....	30
4.11 Cultural Heritage	32
4.12 Landscape	36
Section 5 Strategic Environmental Objectives.....	37
Section 6 Description of Alternatives.....	40
6.1 Introduction.....	40
6.2 Current Situation (Alternative 1: Business as Usual).....	40
6.3 Prepare a Plan (Alternatives 2A and 2B: Prepare a Plan)	40
Section 7 Evaluation of Alternatives	42
7.1 Introduction.....	42
7.2 Methodology	42
7.3 Cumulative Effects.....	44
7.4 Detailed Consideration of Alternatives	46

7.5	Selected Alternative for the Plan.....	48
Section 8	Evaluation of Plan Provisions	51
8.1	Introduction.....	51
8.2	Overall Evaluation (including Transboundary)	53
8.3	Appropriate Assessment	59
8.4	Interrelationship between Environmental Components.....	59
8.5	More Detailed Assessment of Plan Provisions	61
Section 9	Mitigation Measures	76
9.1	Introduction.....	76
9.2	Establishing the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework	76
9.3	Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the Plan ..	79
Section 10	Monitoring Measures	81
10.1	Introduction.....	81
10.2	Indicators and Targets	81
10.3	Sources	81
10.4	Reporting and Responsibility	81
Appendix I	SEA Determination	85
Appendix II	Relationship with Legislation and Other Plans and Programmes.....	86
Appendix III	Designated Sites	120
Appendix IV	Non-Technical Summary.....	Separately bound

List of Figures

Figure 3.1 Overview of the SEA/AA/Plan-preparation Processes.....	5
Figure 4.1 European Sites within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates.....	15
Figure 4.2 Other Ecological Designations within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates ..	16
Figure 4.3 CORINE Land Cover Mapping 2018.....	17
Figure 4.4 WFD Register of Protected Areas.....	18
Figure 4.5 Soils.....	21
Figure 4.6 Geological Heritage.....	22
Figure 4.7 Surface Water Status (2010-2015).....	26
Figure 4.8 Groundwater Vulnerability	27
Figure 4.9 Archaeological and Architectural Heritage.....	35
Figure 9.1 Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework, VEDPs/DDPs and Environmental Assessment Requirements	78

List of Tables

Table 3.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report	8
Table 5.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives, Indicators and Targets	38
Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives	43
Table 7.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives on SEOs	43
Table 7.3 Effects Common to All Alternatives	46
Table 7.4 Comparative Evaluation of Alternatives against SEOs	49
Table 8.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives	52
Table 8.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of Plan provisions on SEOs.....	52
Table 8.3 Overall Findings – Environmental Effects arising from Plan Provisions	56
Table 8.4 Potential for Interrelationships between Environmental Components	60
Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources.....	82

List of Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
ACA	Architectural Conservation Area
BVT	Boyne Valley Tourism
CCC	Cavan County Council
CFRAM	Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management
DCHG	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
DEHLG	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
FI	Fáilte Ireland
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
HSE	Health Service Executive
IWBNG	Inland Waterways – Boyne Navigation Group
LCC	Louth County Council
LTN	Local Tourism Network
OPW	Office of Public Works
MCC	Meath County Council
MnCC	Monaghan County Council
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
pNHA	Proposed Natural Heritage Area
PS	Private Sector
RMP	Record of Monuments and Places
RPA	Register of Protected Areas
RPS	Record of Protected Structures
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEO	Strategic Environmental Objective
SI No.	Statutory Instrument Number
SPA	Special Protection Area
Údarás	Údarás na Gaeltachta
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Glossary

Appropriate Assessment

The obligation to undertake Appropriate Assessment derives from Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action (such as a plan or programme) or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a European Site in view of its conservation objectives.

Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources including inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems' (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992).

Flora is all of the plants found in a given area.

Fauna is all of the animals found in a given area.

Environmental Problems

Annex I of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27th June 2001, on the assessment of the effects of certain Plans and programmes on the environment (the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) requires that information is provided on 'any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme', thus, helping to ensure that the proposed strategic action does not make existing environmental problems worse.

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and ideal targets. If environmental problems are identified at the outset, they can help focus attention on important issues and geographical areas where environmental effects of the plan or programme may be likely.

Environmental Vectors

Environmental vectors are environmental components, such as air, water or soil, through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings.

Mitigate

To make or become less severe or harsh.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing a human action, be it a plan, programme or project. Mitigation involves ameliorating significant negative effects. Where there are significant negative effects, consideration should be given in the first instance to preventing such effects or, where this is not possible, to lessening or offsetting those effects. Mitigation measures can be roughly divided into those that: avoid effects; reduce the magnitude or extent, probability and/or severity of effects; repair effects after they have occurred; and compensate for effects, balancing out negative impacts with other positive ones.

Protected Structure

Protected Structure is the term used in the Planning and Development Act and Regulations (as amended) to define a structure included by a planning authority in its Record of Protected Structures. Such a structure shall not be altered or demolished in whole or part without obtaining planning permission or confirmation from the planning authority that the part of the structure to be altered is not protected.

Recorded Monument

A monument included in the list and marked on the map that comprises the Record of Monuments and Places that is set out county by county under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Archaeological Potential in towns and all other monuments of archaeological interest that have so far been identified. Any works at or in relation to a recorded monument requires two months' notice to the former Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (now Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

Scoping

Scoping is the process of determining what issues are to be addressed, and setting out a methodology in which to address them in a structured manner appropriate to the plan or programme. Scoping is carried out in consultation with appropriate environmental authorities.

Strategic Actions

Strategic actions include *Policies/Strategies*, which may be considered as inspiration and guidance for action and which set the framework for Plans and programmes; *Plans*, sets of co-ordinated and timed objectives for the implementation of the policy; and *Programmes*, sets of projects in a particular area.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt it.

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Plan and the alternatives can be evaluated in order to help identify which provisions would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and where such effects would be likely to occur, if - in the case of adverse effects - unmitigated.

Section 1 SEA Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction and Terms of Reference

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan (hereafter referred to as 'DDP' or 'the Plan'). It has been undertaken by CAAS Ltd. on behalf of Fáilte Ireland.

The "Ancient Destination Development Plan" was referred to as the "Draft Ancient Visitor Experience Development Plan" during earlier consultations and within earlier documents and notices. It was decided to change the title of the Plan to the "Ancient Destination Development Plan" before it was finalised. This change is limited to the title and would not have any environmental interactions.

1.2 SEA Definition

Environmental assessment is a procedure that ensures that the environmental implications of decisions are taken into account before such decisions are made. *Environmental Impact Assessment*, or EIA, is generally used for describing the process of environmental assessment for individual projects, while *Strategic Environmental Assessment* or SEA is the term that has been given to the environmental assessment of plans and programmes, which help determine the nature and location of individual projects taking place. SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan or programme, in order to ensure that these effects are adequately addressed at the earliest appropriate stages of decision-making in tandem with economic, social and other considerations.

1.3 SEA Directive and its transposition into Irish Law

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of

27th June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including tourism.

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument Number (SI No. 435 of 2004) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004). Both sets of Regulations became operational on 21st July 2004. The Regulations have been amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 201 of 2011).

1.4 Implications for the Plan

Article 3 para. 2 of the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes, or modifications to these:

- a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of

- projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive¹, or
- b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive² i.e. the Directive requires that SEA is undertaken where Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)³ is being undertaken on plans, programmes etc.

The tourism sector Plan does not contribute towards the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive and does not contain provisions or define rules that must be complied with when administrative consent of other projects is being granted.

The Plan does, however, fall under the definition of a "plan" contained within the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and therefore must be screened for the need to undertake AA. The Screening for AA has found that the Plan has the potential, if unmitigated, to affect the ecological integrity of European Sites and that measures to ensure that potential effects are avoided are required. Taking into account the requirements of the Habitats Directive and recent case law (including, European Court of Justice Judgement C323-17), Stage 2 AA was therefore be carried out for the Plan. As Stage 2 AA has been undertaken on the Plan, SEA was also undertaken - see requirement at b) above. An SEA Determination is provided at Appendix I.

This SEA Environmental Report provides the findings of the SEA and should be read in conjunction with the Plan. This report was altered in order to take account of recommendations contained in submissions and in order to take account of changes that were made to the Plan on foot of submissions. Fáilte Ireland have taken into account the findings of an this report and other related SEA output during their consideration of the Plan and before it was finalised. On finalisation of the Plan, an SEA Statement is prepared which summarises, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan.

¹ Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011, on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification)

² Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

³ AA is provided for by the Habitats Directive and is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a European Site in view of its conservation objectives.

Section 2 The Plan

2.1 Overview

The Ancient Destination Development Plan is a five-year destination development plan. It is designed to be a roadmap for enhancing the existing Ancient visitor proposition to achieve the objectives of addressing seasonality, increasing visitor numbers, improving dwell time and visitor dispersion across the destination.

The Plan provides a destination wide tourism development focus, harnessing existing plans and examining new projects to create a world class destination, using Ancient as the core theme. The Plan seeks to capture these projects within one plan and maximise their potential.

The target outputs from the Plan include a reduction in seasonality, increase visitor spend and a growth in visitor bednights, employment and visitor dispersion. In addition to the core economic performance measurements, the Plan is designed to address the following objectives:

1. Ensure visitor experience consistency across the Ancient destination in visitor experience delivery and throughout all phases of the visitor journey from pre visit to post visit.
2. Address existing destination 'bottlenecks' to tourism growth.
3. Promote tourism vibrancy within the destination through visitor dispersion across a range of Ancient Experience clusters.
4. Realise the value of the core assets within Ancient, including Destination Towns, natural assets and visitor attractions to deliver sustained growth.
5. Engage the visitor with fascinating stories of Ancient in a UNESCO World Heritage area, delivered through best in class immersive experiences and activities.
6. Create the world's most immersive and experiential ancient heritage route linking all strategic development pillars.
7. Become Ireland's food heritage destination told through immersive visitor food experiences telling the Ancient story.
8. Create iconic experiences through iconic visitor attractions and associated experiences within the destination.
9. Address the challenges of evening economy provision.
10. Work with the tourism industry to improve their capacity to deliver new and enhanced experiences.
11. Protect, sustain and enhance the natural environment of the Plan area.

In order to achieve the strategic objectives of the Plan, the development framework is structured under **two headings**:

- **The Ancient Routes** (World's leading experiential ancient routes)
- **The Ancient Senses** (Bringing the stories alive through active and cultural immersion in the stories of Ancient).

Three interdependent layers of activity are identified under each heading:

A. Achieving the 'Big Ideas' through Catalyst Projects (Transformational)

There are **two Catalyst Projects** under the Ancient Routes:

1. Re-imagining of the Boyne Valley Drive; and
2. The Boyne Greenway and Navigation.

And **two Catalyst Projects** under the Ancient Senses:

3. Bringing the stories alive, Ancient Alive; and
4. The Irish Food Story.

B. Strategic Development Pillars – that create the conditions for experience development

There are **four Strategic Development Pillars** with associated goals under the Catalyst Projects as follow (each goal has a number of objectives that are identified in the Plan):

- i. **Unlocking the Heritage Assets** - Develop the portfolio of accessible Ancient heritage assets to deliver best in class visitor experiences befitting an area with UNESCO World Heritage status. It will capitalise on the potential of existing sites while expanding the experience capacity of supporting sites to create the world's most experiential trail of Ancient experiences.
- ii. **Reveal the Natural Assets** - The creation a necklace of visitor experiences linking the heritage story through the natural assets of the area e.g. River Boyne, integrating the broader geographic area from Drogheda to Carbury, to Monaghan and Cavan. It will create a focal point for visitors to engage with the ancient story through immersive experiences in the ancient land and waterscapes.
- iii. **Introduce the Legends** - Build on the intrigue of the local stories, myths and legends, integrating these tales with the delivery of experiences linked to Ancient through activities and sectors such as food and agri-tourism. Provide the industry with an easily accessible narrative and focus for experience development adopting the Ancient legends and stories.
- iv. **Develop the Industry Base** - Support the development of the tourism industry to enhance their delivery of experiences across all stages of the visitor journey and advance the tourism capacity of key towns to deliver a consistent and quality experience to the international visitor.

C. Elevation Projects – destination enablers

Three Elevation Projects are identified that are designed to focus on industry capacity development, industry collaboration and developing motivational visitor experiences that will leverage assets in the Plan area:

1. An **Industry Ancient Experience Development Programme** will be designed to develop the structures to 'incubate' the tourism industry with a particular focus on product providers with significant growth potential. The programme will also work with the local tourism industry to create new saleable experiences relevant to the Ancient themes while enhancing their ability to scale their business, aligned with the objectives of the Programme.
2. **Experience Innovation Clusters** – the geography of the Ancient DDP predominantly aligns with the River Boyne and a number of natural clusters are formed through the existence of key destination hubs along the river route. A number of clusters are proposed. Central to each cluster area is the location of the destination towns currently in development supported by towns that can emerge as cluster hubs. This targeted cluster focus will also support the industry capacity building process with key alignment with cluster themes.
3. **Partnering with the OPW** - central to the Ancient theme and contributing to the success of the Ancient DDP is the wide portfolio of OPW managed sites. The existence of the strategic partnership between Fáilte Ireland and OPW provides a communications channel to ensure future projects align with each stakeholder's operational remit and ensure a sustainable approach to delivering the Ancient story.

The Ancient Destination Development Plan includes an action plan that identifies a list of actions relating to all proposed projects and Strategic Pillars.

2.2 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes

The Plan sits within a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These documents include plans and programmes such as those detailed in Appendix II⁴ (see also, Section 4 "Environmental Baseline", Section 5 "Strategic Environmental Objectives", Section 6 "Description of Alternatives" and Section 9

"Mitigation Measures"). These documents have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction for the next 22 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSEs for the Eastern & Midlands and Northern & Western Regions set out objectives relating tourism development that have been subject to environmental assessment, including those relating to: enhancing provision of tourism and leisure amenity; promoting tourism activity; developing a road network and public transport services, facilitating improved visitor access and longer dwell times; developing walking and cycling trails, opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes; and facilitating appropriate tourism development, including that relating to greenways, blueways and peatlands. When adopted, the RSEs will inform the review of existing, assessed Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which already include various provisions relating to land use, tourism and infrastructure. Such reviews will also be subject to environmental assessments.

Implementation of the Plan shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

⁴ Appendix II is not intended to be a full and comprehensive review of EU Directives, the transposing regulations or the regulatory framework for environmental protection and

management. The information is not exhaustive and it is recommended to consult the Directive, Regulation, Plan or Programme to become familiar with the full details of each.

Section 3 SEA Methodology

3.1 Introduction to the Iterative Approach

Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the integrated Plan preparation, SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes. The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the SEA and AA have informed the Plan.

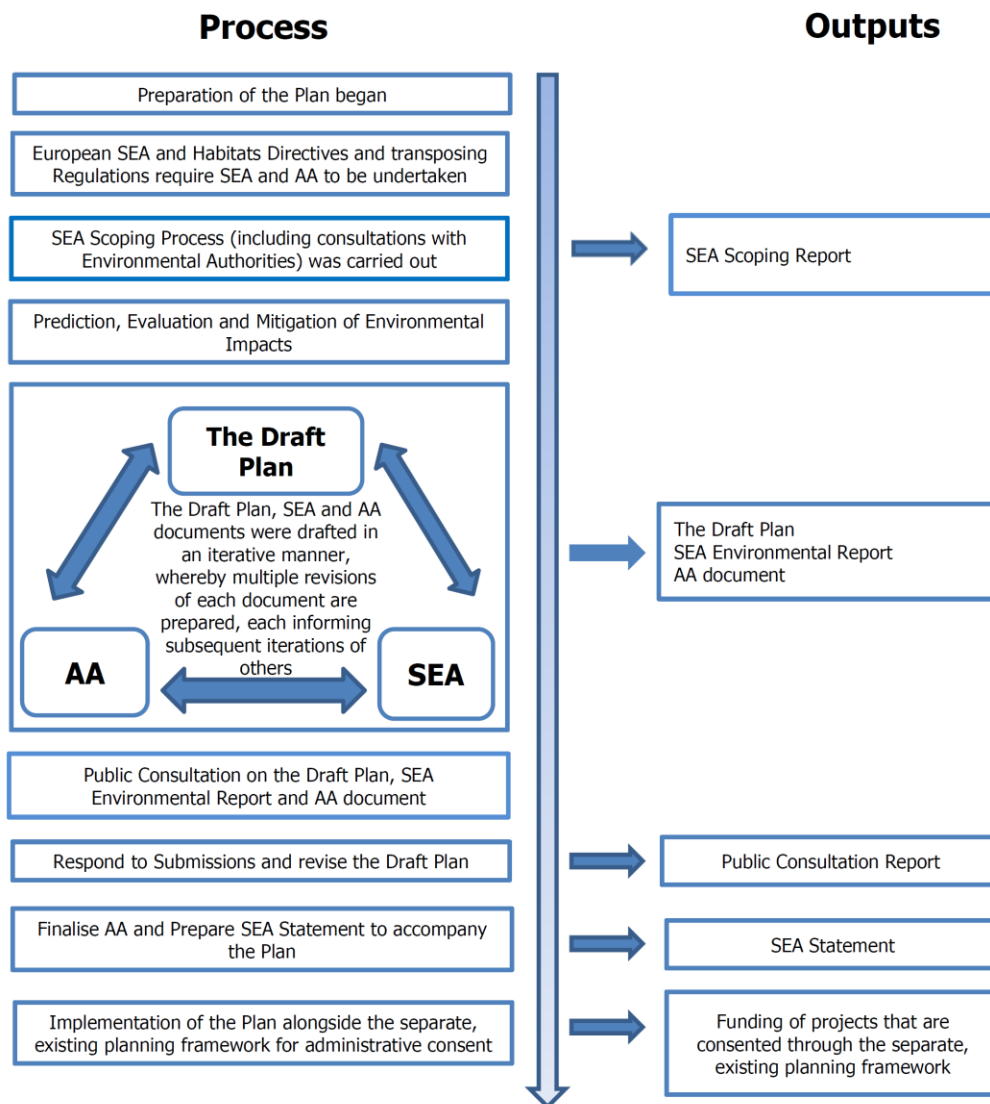


Figure 3.1 Overview of the SEA/AA/Plan-preparation Processes

3.2 Appropriate Assessment and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

3.2.1 Appropriate Assessment

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been undertaken alongside preparation of the Plan. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA.

3.2.2 Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

Many elements of Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment as detailed in the EPA's (2013) Practitioner's Manual have been aligned with in the undertaking of the SEA for the Plan. These include:

Scoping

- Biodiversity-relevant issues were identified for consideration at scoping stage and these are now detailed in Section 4.
- Reference to a zone of influence is provided at Section 4.

Baseline

- Biodiversity data sources relevant for this local level assessment have been identified and datasets collated/gathered.
- The biodiversity baseline addresses designated sites and other habitats and species of ecological value.
- AA information has been incorporated into the SEA baseline.

Alternatives

- Impacts upon biodiversity are considered under each of the alternatives and potential conflicts can be mitigated.

⁵ These components comprise biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

Impact assessment

- Effects on biodiversity are identified and assessed and the AA considers the interrelationship between biodiversity and potential effects on European Sites.

Mitigation and monitoring

- Taking into account all measures contained within the Plan, all the proposed mitigation measures deriving from the various processes were generally consistent and compatible.
- Indicators and associated targets have been included in SEA for monitoring European Sites.

Reporting

- This SEA ER addresses all biodiversity-related considerations relevant for this level of assessment.
- This SEA ER contains all biodiversity-relevant information, data, figures and maps relevant for this level of assessment.
- This SEA ER has been informed by the AA findings.

Communication and consultation

- Submissions received have been taken on board.
- The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA.

3.3 Scoping

3.3.1 Introduction

The scope of environmental issues to be dealt with by the SEA together with the level of detail to which they are addressed was broadly decided upon taking into account the collection of environmental baseline data and input from environmental authorities. Scoping allowed the SEA to become focused upon key issues relevant to the environmental components that are specified under the SEA Directive⁵.

As the Plan is not likely to have significant effects on the environment in another Member State, transboundary consultations as provided for by Article 7 of the SEA Directive were not undertaken.

3.3.2 Scoping Notices

Relevant environmental authorities⁶ identified under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations, as amended, were sent SEA scoping notices by Fáilte Ireland indicating that submissions or observations in

⁶ The following authorities were notified: The Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report could be made to Fáilte Ireland.

3.3.3 Scoping Submissions

Submissions from the following environmental authorities were made during the SEA Scoping process:

- Environmental Protection Agency; and
- Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment.

These submissions were taken into account during preparation of the SEA and informed the various SEA recommendations that have been integrated into the Plan (see Section 9).

3.4 Alternatives

The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternatives (taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme) are identified, described and evaluated for their likely significant effects on the environment. In accordance with this requirement, alternatives for the Plan are examined in Section 7.

3.5 Environmental Report

In this SEA Environmental Report, an earlier version of which was placed on public display alongside the Plan, the likely environmental effects of the Plan and the alternatives are predicted and their significance evaluated.

The Environmental Report provides Fáilte Ireland, stakeholders and the public with a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of implementing the Plan.

Mitigation measures to prevent or reduce significant adverse effects posed by the Plan are identified in Section 9 - these have been integrated into the Plan.

This Environmental Report has been updated in order to take account of recommendations contained in submissions and in order to take account of changes that were made to the original, Draft Plan that was placed on public display. Updates to the Draft Plan did not provide for any uses, works or activities and

were not considered to be material. Consequently, they did not require further, detailed SEA or AA consideration.

This Environmental Report contains the information specified in Schedule 2 of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004) as amended (see Table 3.1).

3.6 The SEA Statement

On finalisation of the Plan by Fáilte Ireland, an SEA Statement has been prepared that includes information on:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan, highlighting the main changes to the Plan that resulted from the SEA process;
- How the SEA Environmental Report and consultations have been taken into account, summarising the key issues raised in consultations and in the Environmental Report indicating what action was taken in response;
- The reasons for choosing the Plan in the light of the other alternatives, identifying the other alternatives considered, commenting on their potential effects and explaining why the Plan as adopted was selected; and
- The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing of the Plan.

3.7 Difficulties Encountered

No significant difficulties were encountered in undertaking the assessment.

Table 3.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report

Information Required to be included in the Environmental Report	Corresponding Section of this Report
(A) Outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Sections 2, 5 and 8
(B) Description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of that environment without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 4
(C) Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Sections 4, 7 and 8
(D) Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme, particularly those relating to European Sites	Section 4
(E) List environmental protection objectives, established at international, EU or National level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and describe how those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account when preparing the Plan	Sections 5, 7, 8 and 9
(F) Describe the likely significant effects on the environment	Sections 7 and 8
(G) Describe any measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme	Section 9
(H) Give an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives considered, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken (including any difficulties)	Sections 3, 6, 7 and 8
(I) A description of proposed monitoring measures	Section 10
(J) A non-technical summary of the above information	Non-Technical Summary separately appended
(K) Interrelationships between each environmental topic	Addressed as it arises within each Section

Section 4 Environmental Baseline

4.1 Introduction

Reflecting the specifications in the SEA Directive, the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment for the following environmental components are identified in this section:

- Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna;
- Population and Human Health;
- Material Assets;
- Water;
- Air and Climatic Factors;
- Landscape;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Soil; and
- The interrelationship between the above factors.

Information which is relevant to planning and project development and associated environmental assessments and administrative consent of projects is identified (note that Article 5 of the SEA Directive, in accordance with the established European principle of subsidiarity, requires that the Environmental Report includes the information that may reasonably be required taking into account, inter alia, the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment).

The area to which the Plan relates covers parts of counties Meath, Louth, Cavan, Monaghan, Westmeath, Offaly and Kildare.

4.2 National Reporting on the Environment

The EPA's "*Ireland's Environment - An Assessment 2016*" report provides an integrated assessment of the overall quality of Ireland's environment, the pressures being placed on it and the societal responses to current and emerging environmental issues. This report has informed various parts of the environmental baseline provided below. The key environmental challenges or messages identified by the report are:

Environment and Health and Wellbeing

Recognising the benefits of a good quality environment to health and wellbeing.

Climate Change

Accelerating mitigation actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement adaptation measures to increase resilience in dealing with adverse climate impacts.

Implementation of Legislation

Improving the tracking of plans and policies and the implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation to protect the environment.

Restore and Protect Water Quality

Implementing measures that achieve ongoing improvement in the environmental status of water bodies from source to the sea.

Sustainable Economic Activities

Integrating environmental sustainability ideas and performance accounting across economic sectors and sectoral plans should be a key policy for growth.

Nature and Wild Places

Protecting pristine and wild places that act as biodiversity hubs, contributing to health and wellbeing, and providing tourism opportunities

Community Engagement

Informing, engaging and supporting communities in the protection and improvement of the environment.

The report highlights that high-quality green and blue spaces are not just for nature but are for peoples' health and wellbeing, particularly in the context of an increasingly urban society and increasing settlement densities.

4.3 Sustainable Development Goals

Implementation of the Plan will contribute towards efforts to achieve a number of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which were adopted by world leaders in 2015 at a United Nations Summit and came into force in 2016. These Goals include:

- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

4.4 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of the Plan

The likely evolution of the environment in the absence of a plan would resemble the environmental effects that are described for Alternative 1 (Business as Usual) under Section 7.

⁷ SACs have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) by the DECLG due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000.

⁸ SPAs have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) - referred to as the Birds Directive - by the DECLG due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the European Union.

⁹ pNHAs were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated. These sites are of significance for wildlife and habitats.

¹⁰ Nature Reserves are areas of importance to wildlife, which is protected under Ministerial order. There are currently 78 Statutory Nature Reserves in Ireland. Most are owned by the State but some are owned by organisations or private landowners. **The nearest Nature Reserve is designated at Scragh Bog (to the south-west of the area to which the plan relates).**

¹¹ Ramsar Sites are designated and protected under the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Water Fowl Habitat, which was established at Ramsar in 1971 and ratified by Ireland in 1984. Ireland presently has 45 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance, with surface areas of 66,994 hectares. The objective of a Ramsar site is the conservation of wetlands for wildfowl. While Ireland ratified the Ramsar Convention in 1984 there is no legal backing for Ramsar sites unless they are also Nature Reserves or SPAs and as such are protected by the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000 or

4.5 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

4.5.1 Overview

Information on biodiversity and flora and fauna which is relevant to project planning and development and associated environmental assessment and administrative consent of projects includes available information on designated ecological sites and protected species, ecological connectivity (including stepping stones and corridors) and non-designated habitats.

Ecological designations include:

- Special Areas of Conservation⁷ (SACs) and Special Protection Areas⁸ (SPAs);
- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)⁹;
- Nature Reserves;¹⁰
- Ramsar Sites¹¹;
- Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)¹²;
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage site¹³;
- Salmonid Waters¹⁴;
- Shellfish Waters¹⁵;

the Birds or Habitats Directives. **The closest Ramsar Site is located at Dundalk Bay (in the north-east of the Plan area).**

¹² Under the OSPAR Convention to Protect the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic, Ireland committed to establishing marine protected areas to protect biodiversity (OSPAR MPAs). Ireland established a number of its cSACs as OSPAR MPAs for marine habitats. **There is one OSPAR MPA adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates: Dundalk Bay OSPAR MPA (O-IE-0002971).**

¹³ UNESCO World Heritage List comprises sites of outstanding universal value: cultural, natural or mixed. **There are two UNESCO sites in Ireland; Brú na Bóinne (UNESCO World Heritage Site) is located within the area to which the Plan relates.**

¹⁴ Salmonid waters are designated and protected as under the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1988 (SI No. 293 of 1988). Designated Salmonid Waters are capable of supporting salmon (*Salmo salar*), trout (*Salmo trutta*), char (*Salvelinus*) and whitefish (*Coregonus*). **The River Boyne is designated under Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only).**

¹⁵ In order to protect existing shellfish waters and to ensure the future protection of these areas, the European Union introduced the Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC). The purpose of this Directive is to put in place concrete measures to protect waters, including shellfish waters, against pollution and to safeguard certain shellfish populations from various harmful consequences, resulting from the discharge of pollutant substances into the sea. The Directive applies to the aquatic habitat of bivalve and gastropod molluscs only (includes oysters, mussels, cockles, scallops and clams). It does not include crustaceans such as lobsters, crabs and crayfish. **Dundalk**

- Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments¹⁶;
- Flora Protection Order¹⁷ sites;
- Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas¹⁸;
- Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979)¹⁹;
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)²⁰;
- Ecological connectivity and networks;
- EPA Ecological Network Classes²¹;
- CORINE Landcover²².
- Watercourses, wetlands and peatlands; and
- Other sites of high biodiversity value or ecological importance, e.g. BirdWatch Ireland's 'Important Bird Areas'.

Relevant ecological designations in Northern Ireland include:

- European Sites (see description above);
- Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs)²³;
- Nature Reserves²⁴; and
- Ramsar Sites (see description above).

4.5.2 Existing Fáilte Ireland Environmental Monitoring

Fáilte Ireland regularly engages with environmental research that is used to make informed management decisions and produce robust guidelines to facilitate the protection of the environment. From its inception in 2014, the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) Operational

Programme Monitoring Programme (undertaken to date by CAAS on behalf of Fáilte Ireland guided by relevant stakeholders) has been conducting research into the impacts of tourism on the receiving environment. To date the surveys have covered 43 sites and monitored the activities and effects of over 20,000 visitors to WAW discovery points.

This research characterises visitor movements at each site while examining the ecological features and sensitives present. A detailed assessment of the site facilities and management actions on site is also undertaken. From this data, impacts to ecological features are quantified in a systematic way and management recommendations are made. Over the first 4 years of the monitoring, the data has shown that visitors themselves cause low-level effects, and high-level effects are predominantly caused by the mismanagement of sites. As well as the site-specific data being collected, the monitoring program collates and interprets existing national environmental indicator data compiling the results into annual macro monitoring reports. The WAW monitoring research is guided by an independent working group that steers the research and develops the program as the data is collected. This working group comprises of members from the EPA, NPWS, the Environmental Pillar and a representative from each of the County Councils along the WAW.

Each year the results are refined and published online in the form of Visitor Observation Reports, Ecological Impact Reports and the

Bay, adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates, is designated as a Shellfish Area.

¹⁶ Freshwater Pearl Mussel is a globally threatened, long-lived and extremely sensitive species that can be impacted by many forms of pollution, particularly sediment and nutrient pollution and by hydrological and morphological changes, which may arise from developments, activities or changes in any part of the catchment. **There are two Fresh Pearl Mussel catchments identified adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates: catchments of other extant populations; and catchments with previous records of Margaritifera, but current status unknown.**

¹⁷ The current list of plant species protected by Section 21 of the Wildlife Act, 1976 is set out in the Flora (Protection) Order, 1999.

¹⁸ In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive a number of water bodies or parts of water bodies which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by wildlife have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs). RPAs include those for Protected Habitats or Species, Shellfish, Salmonid, Nutrient Sensitive Areas, Recreational Waters and Drinking Water.

¹⁹ Wildfowl Sanctuaries are areas that have been excluded from the 'Open Season Order' so that game birds can rest

and feed undisturbed. There are 68 sanctuaries in the State. Shooting of game birds is not allowed in these sanctuaries.

²⁰ TPOs are a planning mechanism whereby individual trees or groups of trees can be identified as important and protected by a TPO.

²¹ This is an EPA dataset identifying a national spread of Ecological Network Classes which have been informed by CORINE land cover data. The study developed criteria to classify the relative importance of different areas within an Ecological Network. Five Classes of areas were defined on the basis of naturalness.

²² Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface.

²³ Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) are protected areas that represent the best of Northern Ireland's wildlife and geological sites that make a considerable contribution to the conservation of Northern Ireland's most valuable natural places.

²⁴ Nature reserves are chosen from among the very best examples of Northern Ireland's wildlife, habitats and geology. They contain a wide range of species, communities and geology and their designation is a public recognition of their importance.

Macro Monitoring Reports. The reports are then dissected and detailed reports containing all relevant site-specific information are sent to each of the County Councils along the WAW; as well as any site management teams at sites not under the management of the County Council. This ensures that the research can be harnessed on site by those responsible while contributing towards informed management plans and guidelines created by Fáilte.

This extensive database demonstrates that over 85% of visitors observed at WAW discovery points are having low or no effects on the ecological features or processes at these sites. Ecological impacts observed comprise:

- Destruction of structures, vegetation or fauna;
- Trampling of herbaceous vegetation;
- Disturbance of wildlife;²⁵
- Heavy littering or dumping quantities of waste;
- Addition/alteration of site features, transient emissions, noise;
- Harvesting of large quantities of shells from beach sites;
- Fishing activities;
- Removal and throwing of large rocks; and
- Unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.

It is assumed that visitor interactions within the area to which the Plan relates will be consistent with the trends, activities and effects recorded in this dataset.

²⁶ SACs have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010. The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.

²⁷ SPAs have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild

The Monitoring Programme has identified that dunes, machair, maritime grasslands and upland habitats such as heathlands are the most sensitive/vulnerable to visitor effects. Therefore, the management of visitor movements within these habitats is key for the avoidance of potential effects.

4.5.3 European Sites

A significant portion of the area to which the Plan relates, its coastline and its surrounding waters are designated as European Sites (see Section 4.5.3 below). European Sites in the area to which the Plan relates occur in the greatest concentrations along the coastline and in upland areas. European Sites comprise:

- Special Areas of Conservation²⁶ (SACs), including candidate SACs; and
- Special Protection Areas²⁷ (SPAs).

The SEA uses the same zone of influence cited in the AA; a 15 km buffer around the area to which the Plan relates (see sites within this zone listed in the Appendix III and mapped on Figure 4.1). The AA review of all sites within this zone has allowed a determination to be made that in the absence of significant hydrological links the characteristics of the DDP will not impose effects beyond the 15 km buffer.

There are number of SACs designated within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates, including: Carlingford Mountain SAC²⁸, Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally) SAC²⁹, Dundalk Bay SAC³⁰, White Lough, Ben Loughs and Lough Doo SAC³¹ and Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC³²,

Birds (79/409/EEC) - referred to as the Birds Directive - due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the EU.

²⁸Sensitive features include: Northern Atlantic wet heaths, European dry heaths, alpine and boreal heaths, species-rich grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas, transition mires and quaking bogs, alkaline fens, siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels, rocky slopes with vegetation.

²⁹Sensitive features include: active raised bogs and degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration.

³⁰Sensitive features include: estuaries, mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, perennial vegetation of stony banks, salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand, Atlantic salt meadows and Mediterranean salt meadows.

³¹Sensitive features include: hard waters with vegetation of chara spp. and white-clawed crayfish.

³²Sensitive features include: estuaries, mudflats and sandflats, annual vegetation of drift lines, salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand, Atlantic salt meadows, embryonic shifting dunes, shifting dunes along

Lough Forbes Complex SAC³³, Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC³⁴, Clogher Head SAC³⁵, Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC³⁶ and Mount Jessop Bog SAC³⁷.

There are number of SPAs designated within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates including Dundalk Bay SPA³⁸, Glen Lough SPA³⁹, Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA⁴⁰, Boyne Estuary SPA⁴¹, Ballykenny-Fisherstown SPA⁴², Lough Sheelin SPA⁴³, Lough Iron SPA⁴⁴, Lough Oughter Complex SPA⁴⁵, Stabannan-Braganstown SPA⁴⁶, River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA⁴⁷.

For more detail on European Sites please refer to the AA document that accompanies the Plan and this SEA Environmental Report.

4.5.4 Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated due to their national conservation value for ecological and/or geological/geomorphological heritage. They cover nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms or geomorphological features, wildlife plant and animal species or a diversity of these natural attributes. NHAs are designated under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Proposed NHAs (pNHAs) were published on a non-

statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated.

There are number of NHAs and pNHAs designated within or adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates including those listed in the Appendix III and mapped on Figure 4.2.

4.5.5 Land Cover Mapping

CORINE⁴⁸ land cover mapping for the area to which the Plan relates is shown on Figure 4.3. The most dominant land cover type is pasture.

Categories from CORINE mapping that may indicate areas likely to contain Annex I habitats, in the area to which the Plan relates, include:

- Peat bogs;
- Natural grassland;
- Water bodies;
- Coastal lagoons;
- Mixed forests;
- Coniferous forest;
- Broad-leaved forests;
- Moors and heaths;
- Intertidal flats;
- Beaches dunes sand;
- Inland marshes;
- Sparsely vegetated areas;
- Salt marshes;
- Stream courses;
- Estuaries;
- Water bodies;

the shoreline with white dunes and fixed coastal dunes with grey dunes.

³³Sensitive features include: natural eutrophic lakes with vegetation, active raised bogs, degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration, alluvial forests.

³⁴Sensitive features include: natural eutrophic lakes, bog woodland and otter.

³⁵Sensitive features include: vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts and European dry heaths.

³⁶Sensitive features include: calcareous fens, alkaline fens, white-clawed crayfish.

³⁷Sensitive features include: degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration and bog woodland.

³⁸Sensitive features include: great crested grebe, greylag goose, light-bellied brent goose, shelduck, Teal, mallard, pintail, common scoter, red-breasted merganser, oystercatcher.

ringed plover, golden plover, grey plover, lapwing, knot, dunlin, black-tailed godwit, bar-tailed godwit, curlew, redshank, black-headed gull, common gull, herring gull, wetland and waterbirds.

³⁹Sensitive features include: whooper Swan.

⁴⁰Sensitive features include: pochard, tufted duck, wetland and waterbirds.

⁴¹Sensitive features include: shelduck, oystercatcher, golden plover, grey plover, lapwing, knot, sanderling, lack-tailed godwit, redshank, turnstone, little tern, wetland and waterbirds.

⁴²Sensitive features include: Greenland white-fronted goose.

⁴³Sensitive features include: great crested grebe, pochard, tufted duck, goldeneye, wetland and waterbirds.

⁴⁴Sensitive features include: whooper swan, wigeon, teal, shoveler, coot, golden plover, Greenland white-fronted goose, wetland and waterbirds.

⁴⁵Sensitive features include: great crested grebe, whooper swan, wigeon, wetland and waterbirds.

⁴⁶Sensitive features include: greylag goose.

⁴⁷Sensitive features include: oystercatcher, ringed plover, golden plover, knot, sanderling, herring gull, wetland and waterbirds.

⁴⁸ The CORINE (Coordinated Information on the Environment) land cover data series was devised as a means of compiling geo-spatial environmental information in a standardised and comparable manner. CORINE has become a key data source for informing environmental and planning policy on a national and European level. The main land cover type in Ireland is agricultural land including forestry, which accounts for two-thirds of the national landmass. Most of this is permanent grassland pastures. Peatlands and wetlands are the second most widespread land cover type, covering almost one-fifth of the country. While forested areas cover about one-tenth of the country. Despite rapid development in the past two decades, Ireland's landscape is predominantly rural and agricultural.

- Transitional woodland and scrub; and
- Land principally occupied by agriculture with areas of natural vegetation.

4.5.6 Register of Protected Areas

In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive a number of water bodies or parts of water bodies that must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs).

The groundwater underlying the area to which the Plan relates is part of the wider groundwater area relating to drinking water sources.

There are number of rivers in the area to which the Plan relates that are listed on the RPA for drinking water, including: Fane, Glyde, Dee, Tullyeskar, Boyne, Knightsbrode, Annalee, Big, Knocknagoran, Carlingford, Dromore, Inny and Lough Lene-Adeel Stream.

Lakes listed on the RPA for drinking water, includes: Egish, Nagarnaman, Namachree, Bawn, Monalty and Ramor.

Dundalk Bay, Carlingford Lough and Balbriggan-Skerries area are listed on the RPA for shellfish areas.

Nutrient Sensitive Areas in the area to which the Plan relates include lakes and estuaries (such as Inner Dundalk Bay, Lough Muckno, Boyne Estuary and Lough Oughter) and rivers (such as Proules Lower, Boyne and Castletown).

The River Boyne is also designated for Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only).

The number of bathing locations around the area to which the Plan relates are also listed on the RPA for bathing waters, including: Shelling Hill/Templetown, Port (Lurganboy), Clogherhead, Seapoint, Laytown/Bettystown, Balbriggan (Front Strand Beach), Skerries (South Beach), Loughshinny, Rush (South and North Beach) and Portrane (The Brook Beach).

Designations in Northern Ireland include areas of Economically Significant Species.

4.5.7 Existing Problems

Ireland's Article 17 report on the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (DCHG, 2019) identifies various Irish, EU-protected habitats and species to be of unfavourable status and many to be still declining, although it also identifies that a range of positive actions are underway. Categories for pressures and threats on Ireland's habitats and species identified by the report comprise:

- Agriculture;
- Forestry;
- Extraction of resources (minerals, peat, non-renewable energy resources);
- Energy production processes and related infrastructure development;
- Development and operation of transport systems;
- Development, construction and use of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational infrastructure and areas;
- Extraction and cultivation of biological living resources (other than agriculture and forestry);
- Military action, public safety measures, and other human intrusions;
- Alien and problematic species;
- Mixed source pollution;
- Human-induced changes in water regimes;
- Natural processes (excluding catastrophes and processes induced by human activity or climate change);
- Geological events, natural catastrophes;
- Climate change; and
- Unknown pressures, no pressures and pressures from outside the Member State.

The Plan includes measures to contribute towards the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna and associated ecosystem services.

Previous changes in land uses arising from human development have resulted in a loss of biodiversity and flora and fauna however, legislative objectives governing biodiversity and fauna were not identified as being conflicted with.

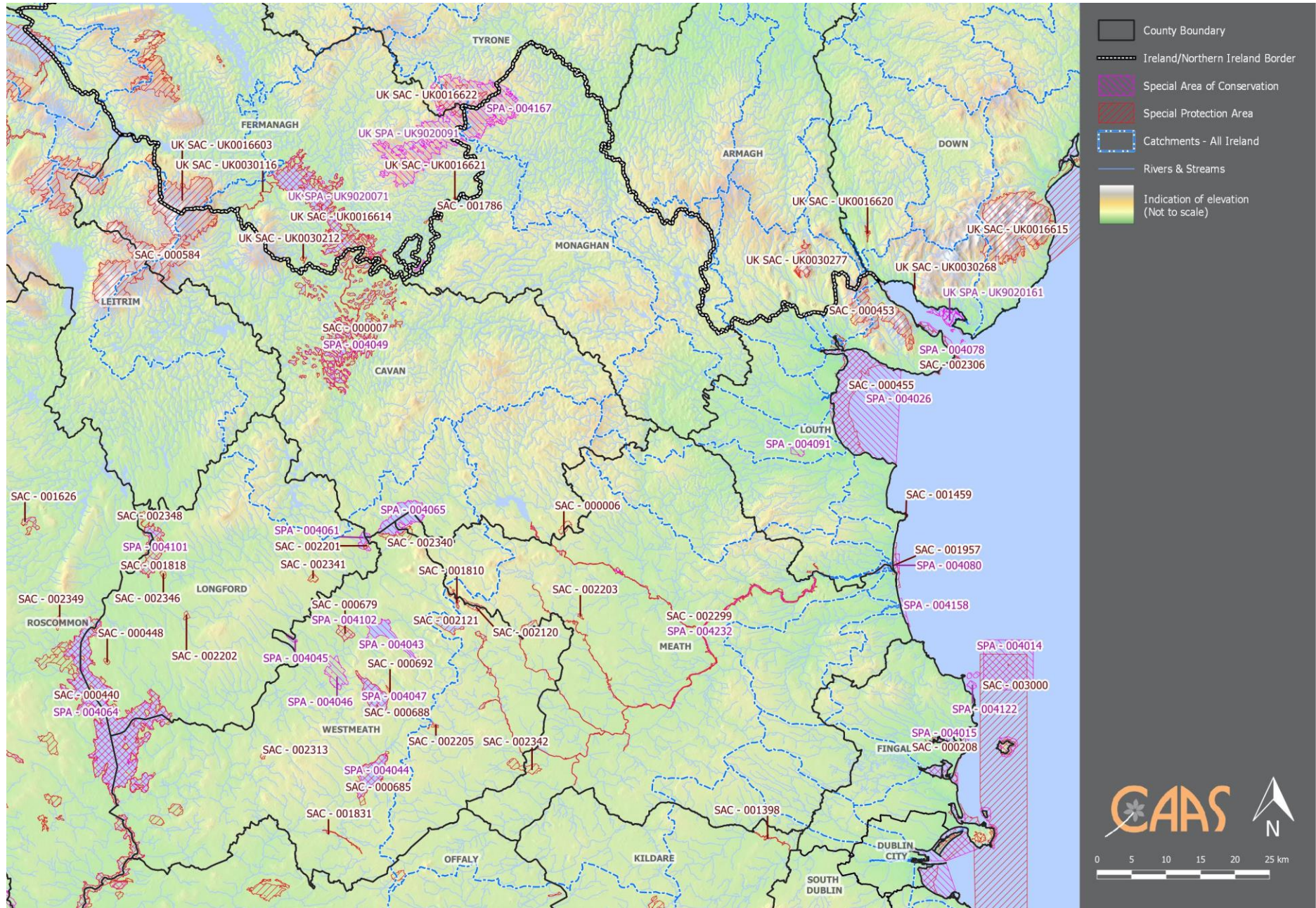


Figure 4.1 European Sites within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates

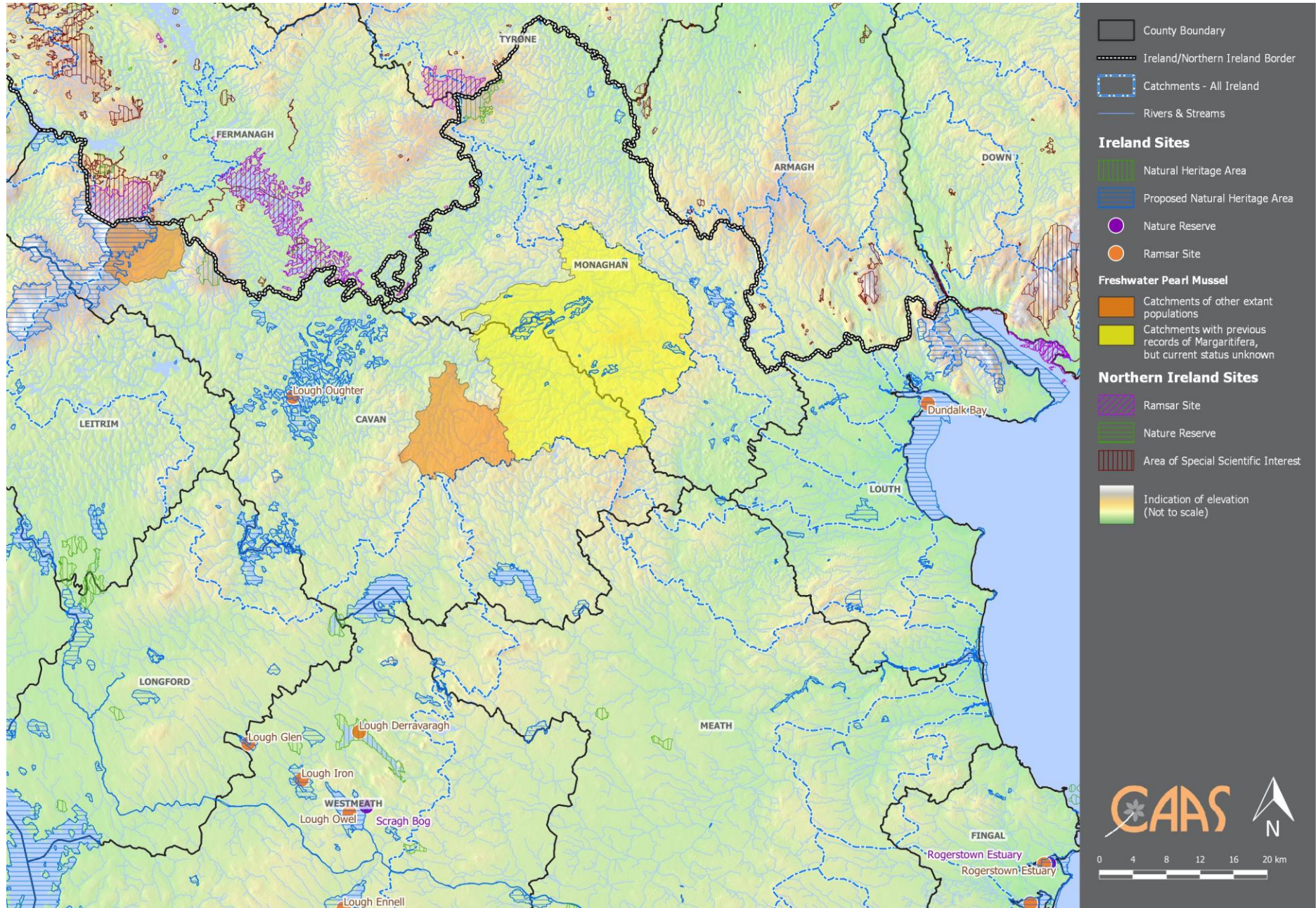


Figure 4.2 Other Ecological Designations within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates

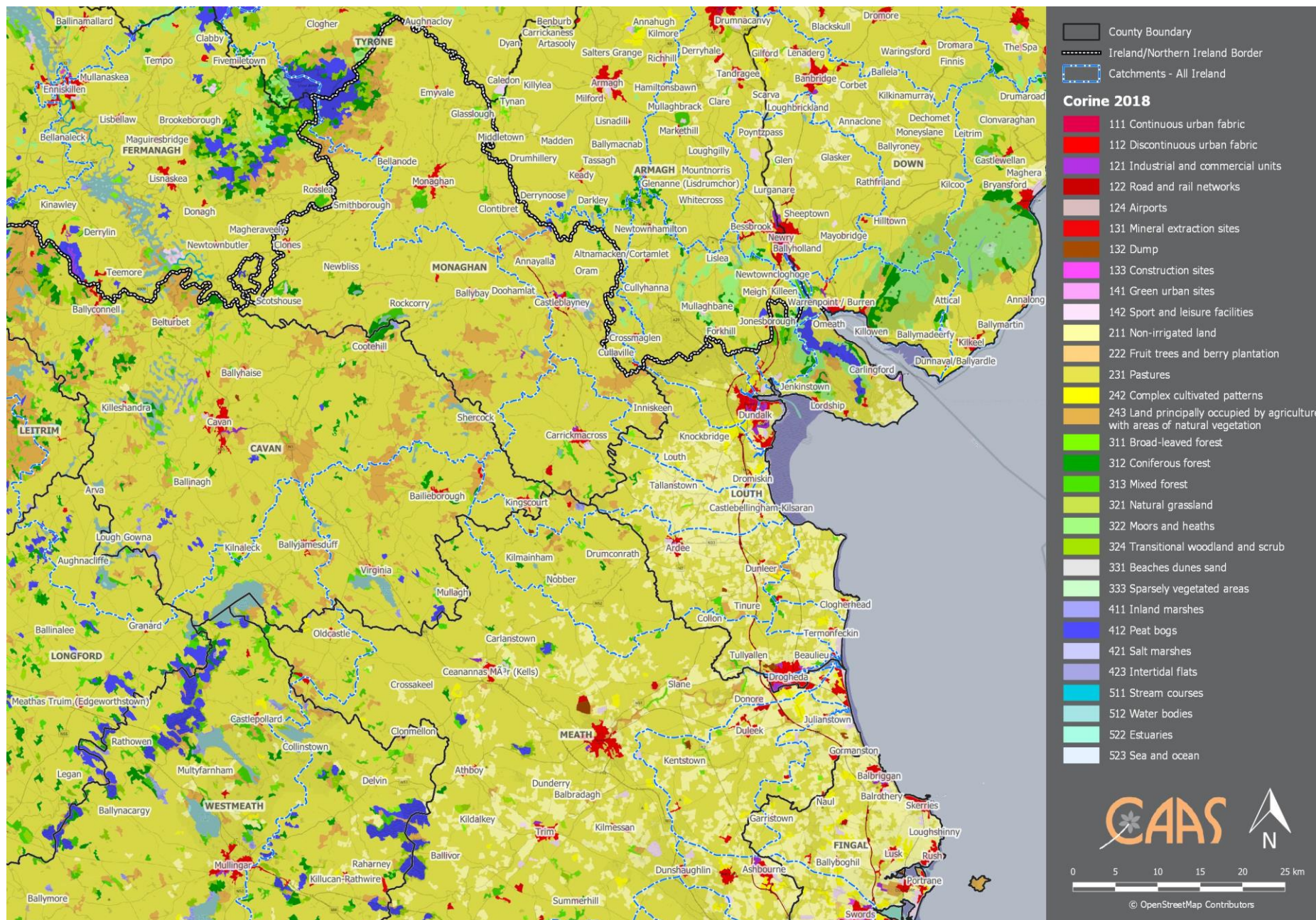


Figure 4.3 CORINE Land Cover Mapping 2018

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

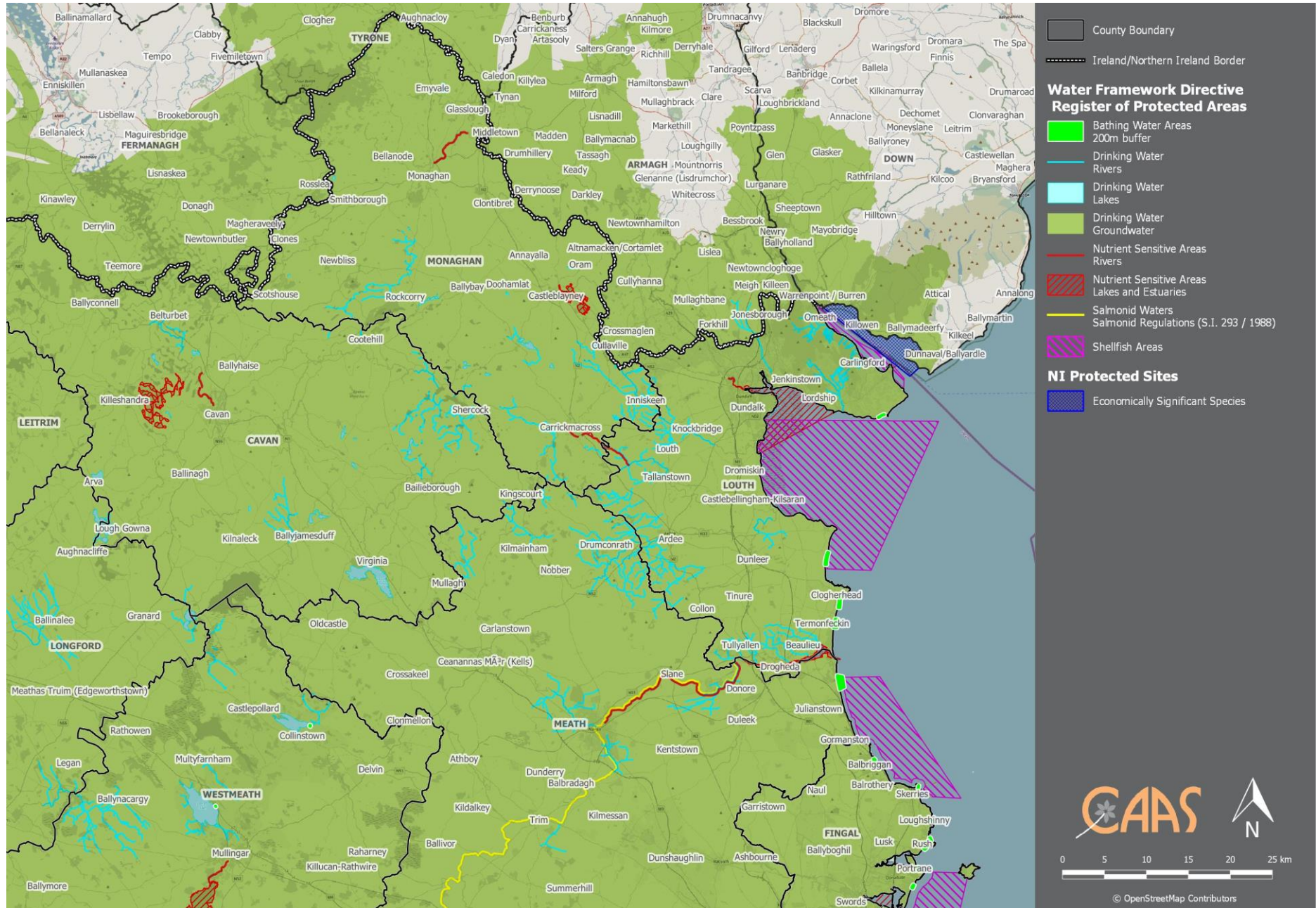


Figure 4.4 WFD Register of Protected Areas

4.6 Population and Human Health

4.6.1 Population

2016 Census data, identifies the populations of the settlements identified in the Plan including:

- Cavan – 10,914 persons;
- Carrickmacross – 5,032 persons;
- Dundalk – 39,004 persons;
- Carlingford – 1,445 persons;
- Drogheda – 40,956 persons;
- Slane – 1,369 persons;
- Trim – 9,194 persons;
- Navan – 30, 173 persons;
- Kells – 6,135 persons; and
- Edenderry – 7,359 persons.

Population has the potential to interact with various environmental components. Potential interactions include:

- Interactions with landslides (see Section 4.7.5);
- Recreational and development pressure on habitats and landscapes (see Section 4.5);
- Contribution towards increase in demand for waste water treatment at the municipal level (see Section 4.10);
- Contribution towards increase in demand for water supply and associated potential impact of water abstraction (see Section 4.10);
- Potential interactions in flood-sensitive area (see Section 4.8.9); and
- Potential effects on water quality (see Section 4.8).

4.6.2 Human Health

Human health has the potential to be impacted upon by environmental vectors (i.e. environmental components such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings). Hazards or nuisances to human health can arise as a result of exposure to these vectors arising from incompatible adjacent land uses for example. These factors have been considered with regard to the description of: the baseline of each environmental component; and the identification and evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan.

4.6.3 Existing Problems

The greatest health risk from radiation in Ireland is caused by radon. The presence of radon gas, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that originates from the decay of uranium in rocks and soils, occurs across the country. It accounts for more than half of the total radiation dose received by the Irish population. As a known carcinogen, in the same category as tobacco smoke and asbestos it is a cause of lung cancer. Exposure to radon for long periods or at high concentrations can lead to lung cancer.

The number of homes within the area to which the Plan relates with radon levels above the reference level is within the normal range experienced in other locations across the country⁴⁹.

Also refer to the other sections of this report referred to above with respect interactions with other environmental components.

4.7 Soil

4.7.1 Introduction

Soil is the top layer of the earth's crust. It is formed by mineral particles, organic matter, water, air and living organisms. Soil can be considered as a non-renewable natural resource because it develops over very long timescales. It is an extremely complex, variable and living medium and performs many vital functions including: food and other biomass production, storage, filtration and transformation of many substances including water, carbon, and nitrogen. Soil has a role as a habitat and gene pool, serves as a platform for human activities, landscape and heritage and acts as a provider of raw materials. Such functions of soil are worthy of protection because of their socio-economic as well as environmental importance. Soils in any area are the result of the interaction of various factors, such as parent material, climate, vegetation and human action.

To date, there is no legislation which is specific to the protection of soil resources. However, there is currently an EU Thematic Strategy on the protection of soil that includes a proposal for a Soil Framework Directive that proposes

⁴⁹ Mapping available at <http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap>

common principles for protecting soils across the EU.

4.7.2 Soil Types

Brown earths⁵⁰ and luvisols⁵¹, are the two most dominant soil types across the area to which the Plan relates (see Figure 4.5). Other soil types identified include:

- Alluvial soils⁵² (in the flood plains of the rivers and streams);
- Lithosols⁵³ (in the upland and coastal areas); and
- Surface Water Gleys⁵⁴ (in depressions in the upper reaches of river valleys in both uplands and lowlands).

Rain-fed and groundwater-fed peat soils occurring in the area to which the Plan relates are subject to ecological designations (see Section 4.5). Outcropping rock is identified in a number of upland locations.

4.7.3 County Geological Sites

There are number of County Geological Sites across the area to which the Plan relates. These Sites do not receive statutory protection like Natural Heritage Areas but receive an effective protection from their inclusion in the planning system.

The greatest concentrations of County Geological Sites across the area to which the Plan relates occur in upland and/or coastal areas including locations in counties Meath, Louth, Monaghan, Westmeath, Offaly and Kildare⁵⁵ (as shown on Figure 4.6).

4.7.4 Other Geological Designations

Marble Arch Caves (shown on Figure 4.6), located at the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, was designated a UNESCO Global Geopark in 2015. UNESCO Global Geoparks are single, unified

⁵⁰ Brown earths are well drained mineral soils, associated with high levels of natural fertility.

⁵¹ Luvisol soils are generally fertile, widely used for agriculture and associated with significant accumulation of clay.

⁵² These are associated with alluvial (clay, silt or sand) river deposits.

⁵³ Lithosols are shallow non-calcareous soils, commonly overlying hard rock or skeletal and gravelly material. They tend to be stony soils, or with shattered bedrock and are associated with frequent rock outcrops.

geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance, managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development. They strive to raise awareness of geodiversity and promote protection, education and tourism best practices. There are two other UNESCO Geoparks on the island of Ireland, the Copper Coast in County Waterford and the Burren and Cliffs of Moher.⁵⁶

4.7.5 Landslides

The term "landslide" describes a wide variety of processes that result in the downward and outward movement of materials such as rock, debris, earth, mud and peat under the force of gravity. Issues such as existing ground conditions, slope stability and storage of excavated material have the potential to influence susceptibility to landslides/bog bursts. The potential impacts of landslides include loss of human life/injury, flooding, pollution of watercourses and impacts upon aquatic biodiversity.

The area to which the Plan relates has several locations with a history of multiple landslide events⁵⁷. These events occur in upland areas and in areas along the coast and include Chamberlainstown (1999), Edenderry (1916) and Mell. The GSI have identified various upland and coastal areas across the area to which the Plan relates that are of high and moderately high levels of landslide susceptibility.

4.7.6 Existing Problems

There have been a number of landslide events across the area to which the Plan relates and there are various areas identified by the GSI as being of elevated levels of landslide susceptibility (see Section 4.7.5).

Legislative objectives governing soil were not identified as being conflicted with.

⁵⁴ Surface Water Gleys are wetland soils with slowly permeable horizons resulting in seasonal waterlogging.

⁵⁵ Individual audited site reports for counties Meath, Louth, Monaghan, Westmeath, Offaly and Kildare are available from GSI (www.gsi.ie).

⁵⁶ There are currently 147 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 41 countries.

⁵⁷ Over 2,500 landslide events are recorded in the National Landslides Database available from GSI (www.gsi.ie). This dataset also includes Landslide Susceptibility Mapping to assist in the identification of areas that are likely to experience land sliding.

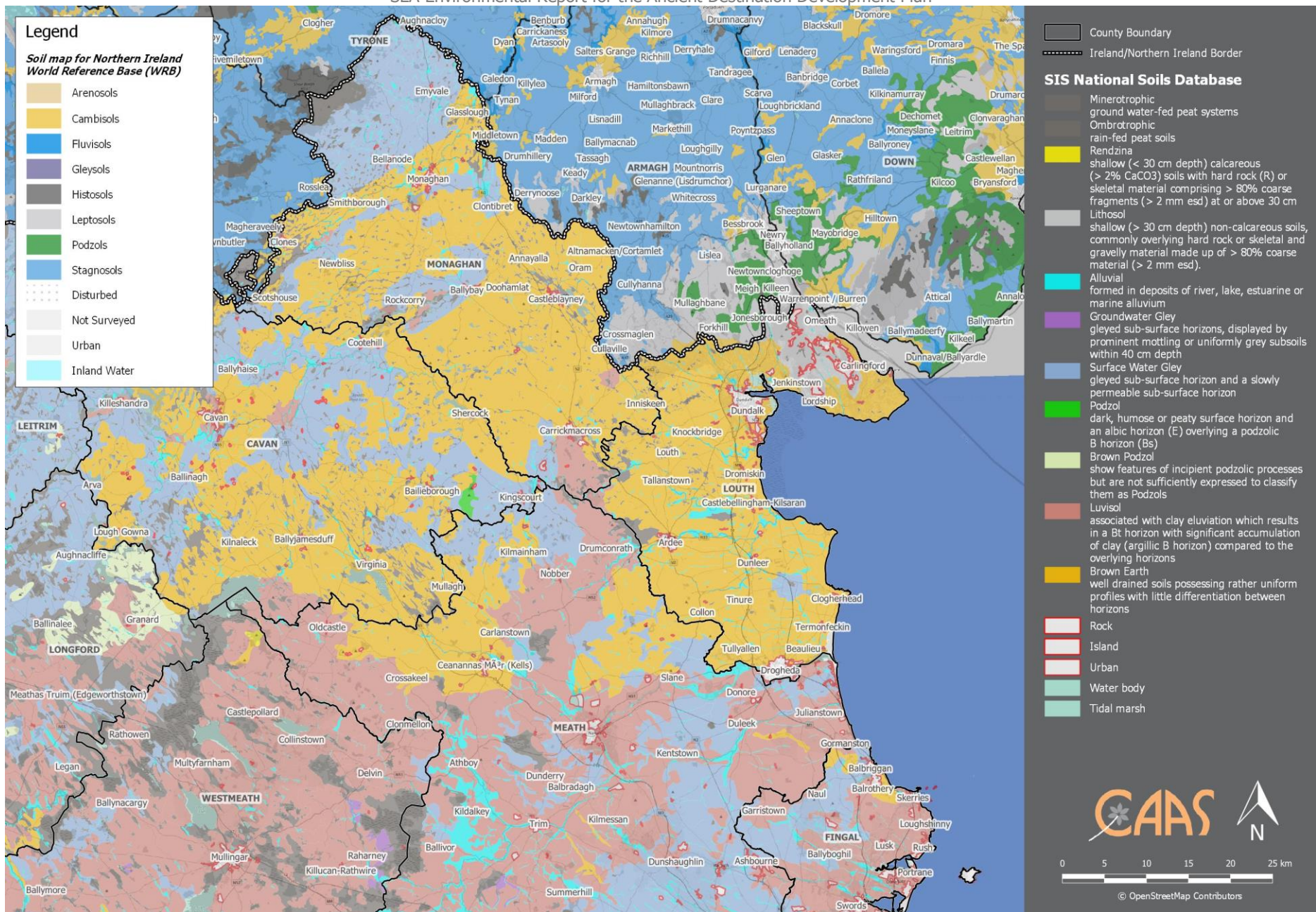


Figure 4.5 Soils

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

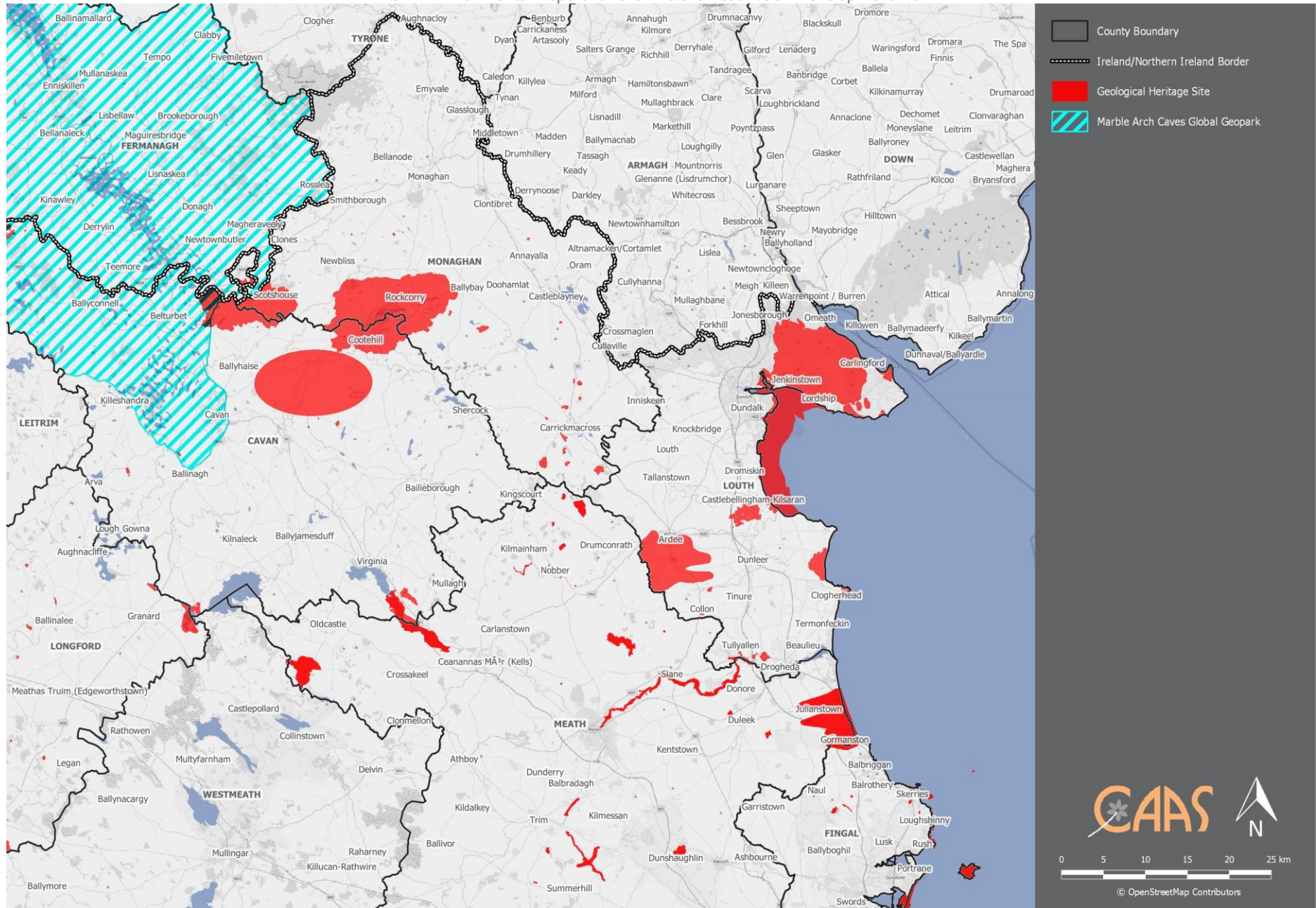


Figure 4.6 Geological Heritage

4.8 Water

4.8.1 The Water Framework Directive

Since 2000, Water Management in the EU has been directed by the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD). The WFD requires that all Member States implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all waters - surface, ground, estuarine and coastal - and protect, enhance and restore all waters with the aim of achieving *good status*. All public bodies are required to coordinate their policies and operations so as to maintain the *good status* of water bodies which are currently unpolluted and improve polluted water bodies to *good status*.

Article 4 of the WFD sets out various exemptions for deterioration in status caused as a result of certain physical modifications to water bodies. This is provided: all practicable mitigation measures are taken; there are reasons of overriding public interest or the benefits to human health, safety or sustainable development outweigh the benefits in achieving the WFD objective; there are no better alternatives; and the reasons for the physical modification are explained in the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP).

The EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Documents No. 20 and 36 provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the WFD.

For the purpose of assessment, reporting and management, water is divided into groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and coastal waters that are in turn divided into specific, clearly defined water bodies.

4.8.2 Zone of Influence

The Zone of Influence of the Plan beyond the area to which the Plan relates, with respect to impacts upon waters can be estimated to be all bodies of groundwater and all surface waters downstream areas of catchments which drain the area to which the Plan relates.

4.8.3 Surface Water Drainage

A catchment is an area of land contributing to a waterbody, with all the water ultimately running off to a single outlet. The WFD requires water quality management to be based on natural river catchments i.e. by reference to the natural, environmental unit rather than by reference to administrative or legal boundaries, which often fragment river catchments.

The main rivers in the area are the Boyne, Nanny, Dee, Fane, Castletown, Big, Blackwater, Drumleck and Fane.

The surface water from the area to which the Plan relates drains into a number of catchments including: Newry-Fane-Glyde-Dee; Boyne; Nanny-Delvin; Erne; Upper Shannon; Lower Shannon; Liffey and Dublin Bay; Barrow; and Lough Neagh and Lower Bann.

4.8.4 Surface Water Status

The WFD defines 'overall surface water status' as the general expression of the status of a body of surface water, determined by the poorer of its ecological status and its chemical status. Thus, in order to achieve 'good surface water status' both the ecological status and the chemical status of a surface water body need to be at least 'good'.

Ecological status is an expression of the structure and functioning of aquatic ecosystems associated with surface waters. Such waters are classified as of 'good ecological status' when they meet Directive requirements.

Chemical Status is a pass/fail assignment with a failure defined by a face-value exceedance of an Environmental Quality Standards (EQS) for one or more Priority Action Substances (PAS) listed in Annex X of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The EQS values for individual PAS substances are set at European level. Good surface water chemical status means that concentrations of pollutants in the water body do not exceed the environmental limit values specified in the Directive.

The WFD surface water status (2010-2015) of rivers, lakes, coastal and transitional waters, within and surrounding the area to which the Plan relates is shown on Figure 4.7.

Lakes, rivers and their tributaries in the area to which the Plan relates range in status from *high* and *good*, to *moderate*, *poor* and *bad*. In addition, there are a number of *unassigned*⁵⁸ rivers and lakes across the area to which the Plan relates.

The River Boyne catchment includes the area drained by the River Boyne and by all streams entering tidal water between the Haven and Mornington Point. There were 30 river and lake water bodies within the River Boyne catchment at *good* or *high* status, and 68 at less than *good* status in 2015.⁵⁹ The 2010-2015 WFD status of the main channel of the River Boyne was identified as *moderate*.

The WFD 2010-2015 status of transitional and coastal waters adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates are generally identified as *good*.

4.8.5 Groundwater Status

Groundwater is stored in the void spaces in underground layers of rock, or aquifers. These aquifers are permeable, allowing both the infiltration of water from the soils above them and the yielding of water to surface and coastal waters. Groundwater is the part of the subsurface water that is in the saturated zone - the zone below the water table, the uppermost level of saturation in an aquifer at which the pressure is atmospheric, in which all pores and fissures are full of water.

For groundwater bodies, the approach to classification is different from that for surface water. For each body of groundwater, both the chemical status and the quantitative must be determined. Both have to be classed as either *good* or *poor*. The WFD sets out a series of criteria that must be met for a body to be classed as good chemical and quantitative status.

The WFD status (2010-2015) of most of groundwater underlying the area to which the Plan relates is identified as being of *good* status, meeting the objectives of the WFD.

⁵⁸ There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. Overall status is currently not assigned and the term "unassigned status" applies in respect of these waterbodies.

4.8.6 Aquifer Vulnerability and Productivity

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates groundwaters according to both their productivity and vulnerability to pollution. The area to which the Plan relates is underlain by a poor bedrock aquifer (unproductive except for local zones).

Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter into groundwater. The aquifers underlying most the area to which the Plan relates are generally classified as being of *high vulnerability* and *extreme vulnerability* and *rock at or near surface or Karst* (see Figure 4.8). Groundwater vulnerability in Northern Ireland ranges from 1 (low) to 5 (high), as shown on Figure 4.8.

4.8.7 WFD Registers of Protected Areas

The WFD requires that Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs) are compiled for a number of water bodies or part of water bodies which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife.

The WFD requires that these RPAs contain: areas from which waters are taken for public or private water supply schemes; designated shellfish production areas; bathing waters; areas which are affected by high levels of substances most commonly found in fertilizers, animal and human wastes - these areas are considered nutrient sensitive; areas designated for the protection of habitats or species e.g. Salmonid areas; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Entries to the RPAs within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates include:

- All groundwater and surface waters sustaining areas designated as SACs and SPAs (as mapped on Figure 4.1);
- The River Boyne is designated for Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only);
- The number of bathing locations are listed on the RPA for bathing waters (as shown on Figure 4.4);

⁵⁹ EPA Report (2018): *Boyne Catchment Assessment 2010-2015* (available at www.catchemnts.ie)

- A number of rivers and lakes are designated as Nutrient Sensitive Areas (as shown on Figure 4.4);
- Dundalk Bay, Carlingford Lough and Balbriggan-Skerries are all identified as Shellfish Areas (these areas are mapped on Figure 4.4).
- Groundwater across the area to which the Plan relates is included on the RPA for Groundwater Drinking Water (see Figure 4.4); and
- A number of rivers and lakes are included on the RPA for Drinking Water Rivers and Drinking Water Lakes (see Figure 4.4).

Other designations in Northern Ireland include areas of Economically Significant Species (shown on Figure 4.4).

4.8.8 Bathing Waters

For bathing waters, Mandatory and Guide Values are set out for bathing waters in the 2006 EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Regulations. Mandatory Values are values that must be observed if the bathing area is to be deemed compliant with the Directive. Compliance with Guide Values exceeds guidance with Mandatory Values and can be regarded as quality objectives which bathing sites should endeavour to achieve.

Bathing waters are now classed into four quality categories; 'excellent', 'good', 'sufficient', or 'poor' with a minimum target of 'sufficient' required to be achieved for all bathing waters.

The most recent available data from the EPA⁶⁰ shows that all bathing waters within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates reported on are of *excellent* or *good* water quality.

Further to this information on bathing water quality, the Blue Flag award is given to beaches and marinas that have excellent water quality and maintain other standards including effective and appropriate management to ensure the protection of the natural environment and safety standards. The bathing locations at Shellinghill/Templetown, Port/Lurganboy and Clogherhead were awarded with the Blue Flag in 2019.

4.8.9 Flooding

Certain areas across the area to which the Plan relates are at risk from coastal and fluvial flooding.

Historical flooding is documented at various locations across the area to which the Plan relates, including the settlements of Drogheda, Edenderry, Kells, Dundalk, Carrickmacross, Navan, Slane and Trim.

Predictive flood risk mapping is available from the Office of Public Works (OPW) for rivers and coastal areas across the area to which the Plan relates.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) as required by the 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (OPW and DEHLG, 2009) is relevant to project planning and development and associated environmental assessment and administrative consent of projects.

4.8.10 Existing Problems

Subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD, based on available water data, certain surface and groundwater bodies will need improvement in order to comply with the objectives of the WFD.

There is historic and predictive evidence of elevated levels of flood risk from fluvial and coastal sources at various locations across the area to which the Plan relates.

⁶⁰ EPA Report on *Bathing Water Quality in Ireland 2018*

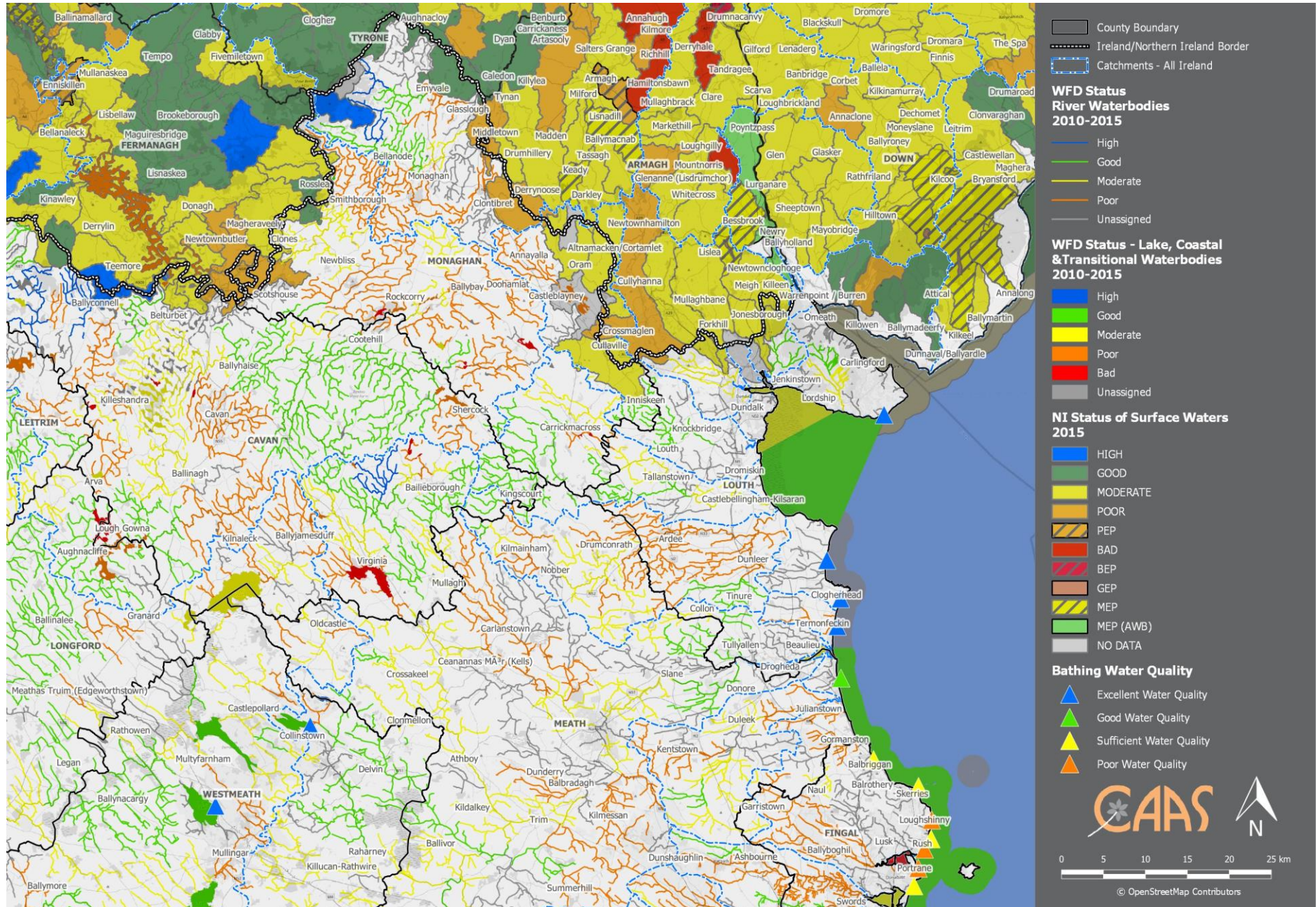


Figure 4.7 Surface Water Status (2010-2015)

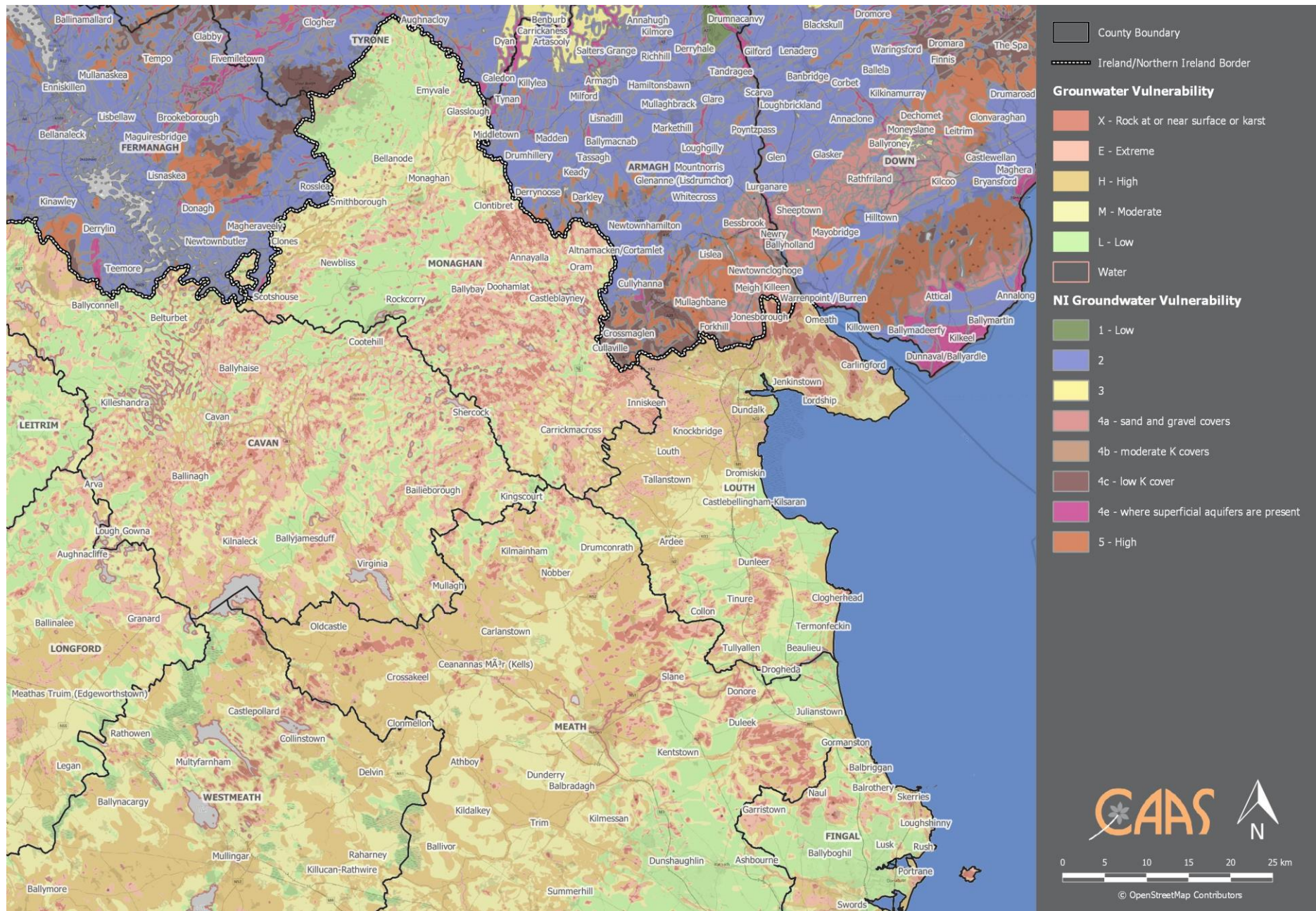


Figure 4.8 Groundwater Vulnerability

4.9 Air and Climatic Factors

4.9.1 Climatic Factors

Various provisions relating to climatic factors have been integrated into the Plan, compliance with which will need to be demonstrated by those seeking or maintaining funding from Fáilte Ireland. Such measures include those relating to (for more detail refer to Section 9):

- Walking and cycling; and
- Contribution towards European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation, taking into account a wide range of detailed measures including those relating to resilience.

Interactions with climatic factors are also present with other environmental components including water/flooding (see Section 4.8).

Total emissions of greenhouse gases by humans come from various sectors including transport, agriculture, energy industries, manufacturing combustion, industrial processes, residential developments, commercial services developments, waste management processes and Fluorinated gases equipment (such as refrigeration and fire protection systems).

Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2017 (EPA, 2018) details provisional estimates of greenhouse gas emissions for the period 1990-2017. For 2017, total national greenhouse gas emissions are estimated to be 60.75 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂eq). This is 0.9% lower (0.53 Mt CO₂eq) than emissions in 2016.

The EPA 2018 publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2017-2035* provides an assessment of Ireland's progress towards achieving its emission reduction targets set down under the EU Effort Sharing Decision (Decision No 406/2009/EC) for the years 2013-2020 and a longer-term assessment based on current projections. Ireland's 2020 target is to achieve a 20% reduction of non-Emission Trading Scheme (non-ETS) sector emissions (i.e. agriculture, transport, the built environment, waste and non-energy intensive industry) on 2005 levels with annual limits set

for each year over the period 2013-2020. Key Insights identified as part of the report's package of documents are that:

- Latest EPA greenhouse gas emissions projections indicate an overall increase in greenhouse gas emissions from most sectors. The projected growth in emissions is largely underpinned by projected strong economic growth and relatively low fuel prices leading to increasing energy demand over the period.
- The positive impact on emissions of existing and planned policies and measures is tempered by the strong economic outlook and associated increase in energy demand.
- Ireland is not projected to meet 2020 emissions reduction targets and is not on the right trajectory to meet longer term EU and national emission reduction commitments.
- Fossil fuels such as coal and peat continue to be key contributors to emissions from the power generation sector and the extent of their use will be a key determinant in influencing future emissions trends from this sector.
- A strong growth in emissions projections from the transport sector is attributed to a rise in fuel consumption particularly for diesel cars and diesel freight up to 2025. A projected accelerated deployment of electric vehicles between 2025 and 2030 does however result in a projected decline in emissions during this period.
- Agriculture emissions are projected to continue to grow steadily over the period. This is based on an updated outlook that sees an increase in animal numbers particularly for the dairy herd.
- The gap between the two scenarios – With Existing Measures and With Additional Measures – is narrowing over the period to 2020 indicating that mitigation options in the short-term are largely established.
- These projections do not consider the impact of policies and measures that form part of the recently announced National Development Plan or the full impact of policies and measures included in the National Mitigation Plan. It is anticipated that additional impact will be provided to the EPA by relevant Government Departments and

Agencies and included in the 2019 Emission Projections.

Ireland's National Policy position is to reduce CO₂ emissions in 2050 by 80% on 1990 levels across the Energy Generation, Built Environment and Transport sectors, with a goal of Climate neutrality in the Agriculture and Land-Use sector. The 2016 emissions for all of these sectors are rising, making achievement of long-term goals more difficult.

The National Mitigation Plan (Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, 2017), represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the level of decarbonisation required. It is a whole-of-Government Plan, reflecting in particular the central roles of the key Ministers responsible for the sectors covered by the Plan – Electricity Generation, the Built Environment, Transport and Agriculture, as well as drawing on the perspectives and responsibilities of a range of other Government Departments.

The National Adaptation Framework (Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, 2018), sets out the national strategy to reduce the vulnerability of the country to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of positive impacts. The National Adaptation Framework outlines a whole of government and society approach to climate adaptation. Under the Framework, a number of Government Departments will be required to prepare sectoral adaptation plans in relation to a priority area that they are responsible for.

The National Climate Action Plan 2019 is an all of Government plan to tackle climate change and bring about a step change in Ireland's climate ambition over the coming years. The plan sets out an ambitious course of action over the coming years to address the diverse and wide-ranging impacts climate disruption is having on Ireland's environment, society, economic and natural resources. The Climate Action Plan sets out clear 2030 targets for each sector with the ultimate objective of achieving a transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient, and environmentally sustainable society and economy by 2050.

The use of alternative fuels, including electricity, forms a significant part of government policy to reduce emissions, including from transport. Greater use of alternative fuels, including renewable energy,

has the potential to further contribute towards energy security.

4.9.2 Ambient Air Quality

In order to protect human health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU Directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other Member States for a wide variety of pollutants. These pollutants are generated through fuel combustion, in space heating, traffic, electricity generation and industry and, in sufficient amounts, could affect the well-being of the areas inhabitants. The EU Directives include details regarding how ambient air quality should be monitored, assessed and managed.

The principles to this European approach are set out in the Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) (which replaces the earlier Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 and the first, second and third *Daughter Directives*; the fourth *Daughter Directive* will be included in CAFE at a later stage).

In order to comply with the directives mentioned above, the EPA measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants. For the purposes of monitoring in Ireland, four zones are defined in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 (SI No. 271 of 2002).

The EPA's (2019) *Air Quality in Ireland 2018* identifies that:

- Levels at monitoring sites in Ireland were below the EU legislative limit values in 2018;
- Ireland was above World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guideline value levels at a number of monitoring sites for fine particulate matter, ozone and nitrogen dioxide;
- Ireland was above the European Environment Agency reference level for PAH, a toxic chemical, at three monitoring sites.

Problem pollutants identified by the EPA include particulate matter from burning of solid fuel and nitrogen dioxide from transport emissions in urban areas. Indications that Ireland will exceed EU limit values for nitrogen dioxide in the near future.

With regards to solutions, the report identifies that:

- To tackle the problem of particulate matter, clean ways of heating homes and improve energy efficiency of homes can be progressed; and
- To reduce the impact of nitrogen dioxide, transport options in the Government's Climate Action Plan can be implemented and transport choices can be considered by individuals

In order to apply with European Directives relating to air quality, the EPA manages the National Ambient Air Quality Network and measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants at locations across the country. The current⁶¹ air quality in the Leinster Air Quality Region is identified by the EPA as being *good*.⁶²

4.9.3 Noise

Noise is unwanted sound. The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing EU policy on noise reduction from source. The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to:

- Draw up *strategic noise maps* for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels;
- Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and,
- Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise.

In compliance with the Directive and transposing Environmental Noise Regulations (SI No. 140 of 2006), Noise Action Plans have been prepared for each local authority area within the country. These action plans address the agglomeration of Dublin and major roads, railways and airports. The Action Plans include noise mapping and are required to include measures to manage noise issues and effects, including noise reduction if necessary.

4.9.4 Existing Problems

The Climate Change Advisory Council's Annual Review 2019 identifies that the most recent projections demonstrate that, under different assumptions, Ireland will not meet its emissions reduction targets, even with the additional policies and measures included in the National Development Plan. The projections also show that progress on reducing emissions is sensitive to the future path of fuel prices. A significant and sustained rate of emissions reduction of approximately -2.5% per year is required to meet our objectives for 2050. It is noted that additional measures within the recent Climate Action Plan are not included.

⁶¹ 13/06/2019 (<http://www.epa.ie/air/quality/>)

4.10 Material Assets

4.10.1 Water Services

4.10.1.1 Waste Water

The EPA's 2019 report '*Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2018*' identified that:

- Waste water treatment at 21 large urban areas did not meet European standards;
- Raw sewage is released into the environment from 36 urban areas;
- Waste water from 57 areas is the sole threat to waters at risk of pollution;
- Waste water contributed to poor quality bathing waters at three beaches in 2018;
- Discharges from 13 areas must improve to protect freshwater pearl mussels;
- Disinfection systems must be installed at two villages to safeguard shellfish; and
- Eight waste water collection systems have been found non-compliant with European Union requirements.

Based on the EPA's assessment of monitoring information provided by Irish Water and the enforcement activities carried out by the EPA, this report identifies urban areas with the most important environmental issues that must be addressed.

There are urban areas in the counties within or partially within the area to which the Plan relates, listed currently as priority areas where improvements are required to resolve urgent environmental issues:

- Six areas in County Louth;
- Five areas in County Cavan;
- Two areas in County Monaghan;
- Five areas in County Westmeath; and
- Two areas in County Offaly.

Settlements and rural areas across the area to which the Plan relates are served by a combined sewer network, including septic tanks and sewerage treatment schemes serving agglomerations under 500 P.E.

Irish Water, working in partnership with Monaghan County Council, Louth County Council, Meath County Council, Cavan County Council, Westmeath County Council, Offaly County Council and Kildare County Council is making investments to undertake essential upgrade works to wastewater treatment plants in towns and villages across their counties.

Capacity and performance improvements will help to support new development in these areas, including tourism related development.

⁶² 11/12/2019

4.10.1.2 Water Supply

Drinking water supply in the area to which the Plan relates is provided by private and public water supply schemes.

Under Section 58 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, the EPA is required to collect and verify monitoring results for all water supplies in Ireland covered by the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000. The EPA publishes their results in annual reports that are supported by Remedial Action Lists (RALs). The RAL identifies water supplies that are not in compliance with the Regulations mentioned above.

The most recent EPA Remedial Action List (Q3 of 2019) lists a number of drinking water supplies serving the population within or partially within the area to which the Plan relates:

- Six water supplies in County Cavan, including Cavan Rural Water Supply Scheme (due to elevated levels of pesticides);
- Three water supplies in County Louth, including South Louth-East Meath Water Supply Scheme (due to elevated levels of Trihalomethanes);
- Two water supplies in County Meath, including Navan and Mid-Meath Public Water Supply (due to treatment and management issues);
- One water supply in County Offaly (due to elevated levels of Trihalomethanes);
- One water supply in County Westmeath (due to inadequate treatment for cryptosporidium); and
- One water supply in County Fingal (due to treatment and management issues)⁶³.

4.10.2 Public Assets and Infrastructure

Settlements across the area to which the Plan relates include Cavan, Carrickmacross, Dundalk, Carlingford, Drogheda, Slane, Trim, Navan, Kells and Edenderry.

Dundalk and Drogheda are the largest settlements in the area to which the Plan relates and are designated Regional Growth Centres. Dundalk is also designated a Gateway Region by the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial Economic Strategy.

The settlements in the area to which the Plan relates is served by rail, bus and regional and strategic roads. The area is also served by the Dublin Airport and also Dundalk and Drogheda ports and harbours, which have many functions

including industrial, fishing, transport, marine leisure and tourism.

Public assets and infrastructure that have the potential to be impacted upon by the development of tourism related infrastructure, if unmitigated, include resources such as public open spaces, parks and recreational areas; public buildings and services; utility infrastructure (electricity, gas, telecommunications, water supply, waste water infrastructure etc.). These resources are generally located within the immediate outskirts of urban/suburban areas.

Various provisions relating to material assets have been integrated into the Plan, compliance with which will need to be demonstrated by those seeking or maintaining funding from Fáilte Ireland. Such measures include those relating to Critical Infrastructure and the Mitigation of Traffic (for more detail refer to Section 9).

4.10.3 Waste Management

Waste management across the area to which the plan relates is guided by the Eastern and Midlands Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 and Connacht Ulster Waste Management Plan 2015-2021.

The Eastern and Midlands Waste Region comprises 12 local authority areas of Dublin City, Fingal, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Kildare, Laois, Longford, Louth, Offaly, Meath, Wicklow, Westmeath and South Dublin. The Connacht Ulster Waste Management Region comprises the 9 local authority areas of Cavan, Donegal, Galway City, Galway County, Leitrim, Mayo, Monaghan, Roscommon and Sligo.

The Plan provides a framework for the prevention and management of waste in a sustainable manner.

4.10.4 Existing Problems

The provisions of the Plan will contribute towards protection of the environment with regard to impacts arising from material assets.

The provisions of infrastructure and supporting services for development, particularly water and waste water services, is critical.

disinfection' (October 2019) and 'poor turbidity removal' (November 2019).

⁶³ EPA has recently issued boil water notices for areas of Dublin, Meath and Kildare supplied by the Leixlip Water Treatment Plant due to 'inadequate treatment –

2018 saw long dry spells, which Met Éireann compared to 1976 when similar drought conditions were experienced across the country. The prolonged hot weather during the summer caused a huge increase in water usage across the country. As demand for water rose to critical levels, Irish Water's supplies were put under severe stress as more water was being used than could be produced. Public Water Supply Schemes in the area to which the Plan relates were also under pressure during this extended period of dry weather. As a result, measures were taken to reduce consumption to help replenishing water supplies and to minimise the impact on communities and businesses in Counties Meath, Louth, Cavan, Monaghan, Westmeath, Offaly and Kildare⁶⁴.

Irish Water is currently preparing a National Water Resources Plan (NWRP) to address issues with the supply and demand for drinking water in Ireland over the short, medium and long term. Measures have been integrated into the DDP that will ensure that those receiving funding from Fáilte Ireland will not direct additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure have been identified (for more detail refer to Section 9).

4.11 Cultural Heritage

4.11.1 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment. Archaeological sites and monuments vary greatly in form and date; examples include earthworks of different types and periods, (e.g. early historic ringforts and prehistoric burial mounds), megalithic tombs from the Prehistoric period, medieval buildings, urban archaeological deposits and underwater features.

The European Convention on Protection of the Archaeological Heritage known as the Valletta Convention of 1992. This was ratified by Ireland in 1997 and requires that appropriate consideration be given to archaeological issues at all stages of the planning and development process.

Archaeological heritage is protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004), Natural Cultural Institutions Act 1997 and the Planning Acts.

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is an inventory, put on a statutory basis by amendment to the National Monuments Act 1994, of sites and areas of archaeological significance, numbered and mapped. It is available from the National Monuments Service and at archaeology.ie.

The term 'monument' includes all man-made structures of whatever form or date except buildings habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes. All monuments in existence before 1700 A.D. are automatically considered to be historic monuments within the meaning of the Acts. Monuments of architectural and historical interest also come within the scope of the Acts. Monuments include: any artificial or partly artificial building, structure or erection or group of such buildings, structures or erections; any cave, stone or other natural product, whether or not forming part of the ground, that has been artificially carved, sculptured or worked upon or which (where it does not form part of the place where it is) appears to have been purposely put or arranged in position; any, or any part of any, prehistoric or ancient tomb, grave or burial deposit, or, ritual, industrial or habitation site; and any place comprising the remains or traces of any such building, structure or erection, any such cave, stone or natural product or any such tomb, grave, burial deposit or ritual, industrial or habitation site, situated on land or in the territorial waters of the State', but excludes 'any building or part of any building, that is habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes' (National Monuments Acts 1930-2004).

A recorded monument is a monument included in the list and marked on the map, which comprises the RMP set out county by county under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Archaeological Potential in towns and all other monuments of archaeological interest, which have so far been identified.

Archaeological heritage designations in Northern Ireland include entries to the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record and Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest and

⁶⁴ Information from Irish Water's website www.water.ie

Archaeological Potential and Historic Parks and Gardens, as shown on Figure 4.9.

Figure 4.9 shows the spatial distribution of recorded monuments in the area to which the plan relates. Clusters of monuments are indicated within already developed urban and suburban areas and in other locations.

The Underwater Archaeology Unit was established within the National Monuments Service to manage and protect Ireland's underwater cultural heritage, including the quantification of the underwater resource and assessing development impacts in order to manage and protect this aspect of Ireland's heritage. The Shipwreck Inventory is principally a desktop survey with information gathered from a broad range of cartographic, archaeological and historical sources, both documentary and pictorial. An inventory of wrecks covering the coastal waters off County Dublin was published in 2008. Wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects found underwater are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts 1987 and 1994. Significant wrecks less than 100 years old can be designated by Underwater Heritage Order on account of their historical, archaeological or artistic importance. Such Orders can also be used to designate areas of seabed or land covered by water to more clearly define and protect wreck sites and archaeological objects. Under the legislation all diving on known protected wreck sites or with the intention of searching for underwater cultural heritage is subject to licensing requirements.

There are a number of historically recorded shipwrecking events located in vicinity of the area to which the Plan relates.

Therefore, coastal waters, tidal estuaries and rivers within and surrounding the area to which the Plan relates, may contain many features and finds associated with maritime/riverine heritage such as shipwrecks, piers, quay walls, fords, stepping stones and associated archaeological objects and features.

4.11.2 UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne⁶⁵

The World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne, refers to the area within the bend of the river Boyne around Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth, and is one of the world's most important archaeological complexes (shown on Figure 4.9). It contains many outstanding archaeological features, notably its megalithic art, the large and varied grouping of monuments, and evidence of continuous settlement and activity in the area for some 7,000 years. The international significance of Brú na Bóinne has gradually been revealed through an ongoing process of discovery and research which began 300 years ago, leading to its inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993. The large passage tombs are on high ground overlooking the valley, while there are numerous other archaeological sites on the low-lying areas and floodplain closer to the river. The flood plain along the north side of the Boyne is rich in wildlife and has been designated a Natural Heritage Area.

The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne's famous archaeological remains, including National Monuments in the ownership of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, are comprehensively identified in the Archaeological Inventory of County Meath and are given legal protection in the RMP of County Meath (1996) which lists all known archaeological monuments and sites. Some 93 Recorded Monuments identified to date, which are protected under the National Monuments Acts, lie within the bounds of the World Heritage Site. These include passage tombs, henges, fulacht fiadhs and cist burials, ringforts and souterrains, granges, medieval and manorial villages.

The area of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne encompasses Battle of the Boyne landmarks, structures of significant architectural heritage, many of which are included on the Record of Protected Structures, demesne landscapes (Netterville, Campbell – Caldwell and Coddington Estate) and the Boyne Navigation.

⁶⁵ Text in this section comes from the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019

4.11.3 Architectural Heritage

The term architectural heritage is defined in the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments Act 1999 as meaning all: structures and buildings together with their settings and attendant grounds, fixtures and fittings; groups of structures and buildings; and, sites which are of technical, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest.

Records of Protected Structures are legislated for under Section 12 and Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. Protected structures are defined in the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended as structures, or parts of structures that are of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view.

In relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, the following are encompassed:

- The interior of the structure;
- The land lying within the curtilage⁶⁶ of the structure;
- Any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors; and,
- All fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii).

Figure 4.9 shows entries to NIAH in Ireland and also Listed Buildings in Northern Ireland. Similar to the general spatial spread of archaeological heritage, clusters of architectural heritage are indicated within already developed villages, urban and suburban areas such as Slane, Navan, Drogheda, Trim, Kells, Dundalk, Carlingford, Carrickmacross, Cavan and Edenderry.

In addition to Protected Structures, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides the legislative basis for the protection of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). An

ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures, whose character it is an objective to preserve in a development plan. The ACA designation requires that planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in the ACA that might alter the character of the structure or the ACA.

In Northern Ireland, Conservation Areas (areas of special architectural or historic interest) are designated by the Department under Article 50 of the Planning Order (Northern Ireland) 1991.

There are number of ACAs designated within the settlements in the area to which the Plan relates, including Slane, Laytown, Julianstown, Carlingford, Ardee, Carrickmacross and Cavan.

4.11.4 Existing Problems

The context of archaeological and architectural heritage has changed over time however no existing conflicts with legislative objectives governing archaeological and architectural heritage have been identified.

⁶⁶ Curtilage is normally taken to be the parcel of ground immediately associated with the Protected Structure, or in use for the purposes of the structure. Protection extends to the buildings and land lying within the curtilage. While the curtilage sometimes coincides with the present property boundary, it can originally have included lands, features or

even buildings now in separate ownership, e.g. the lodge of a former country house, or the garden features located in land subsequently sold off. Such lands are described as being attendant grounds, and the protection extends to them just as if they were still within the curtilage of the Protected Structure.

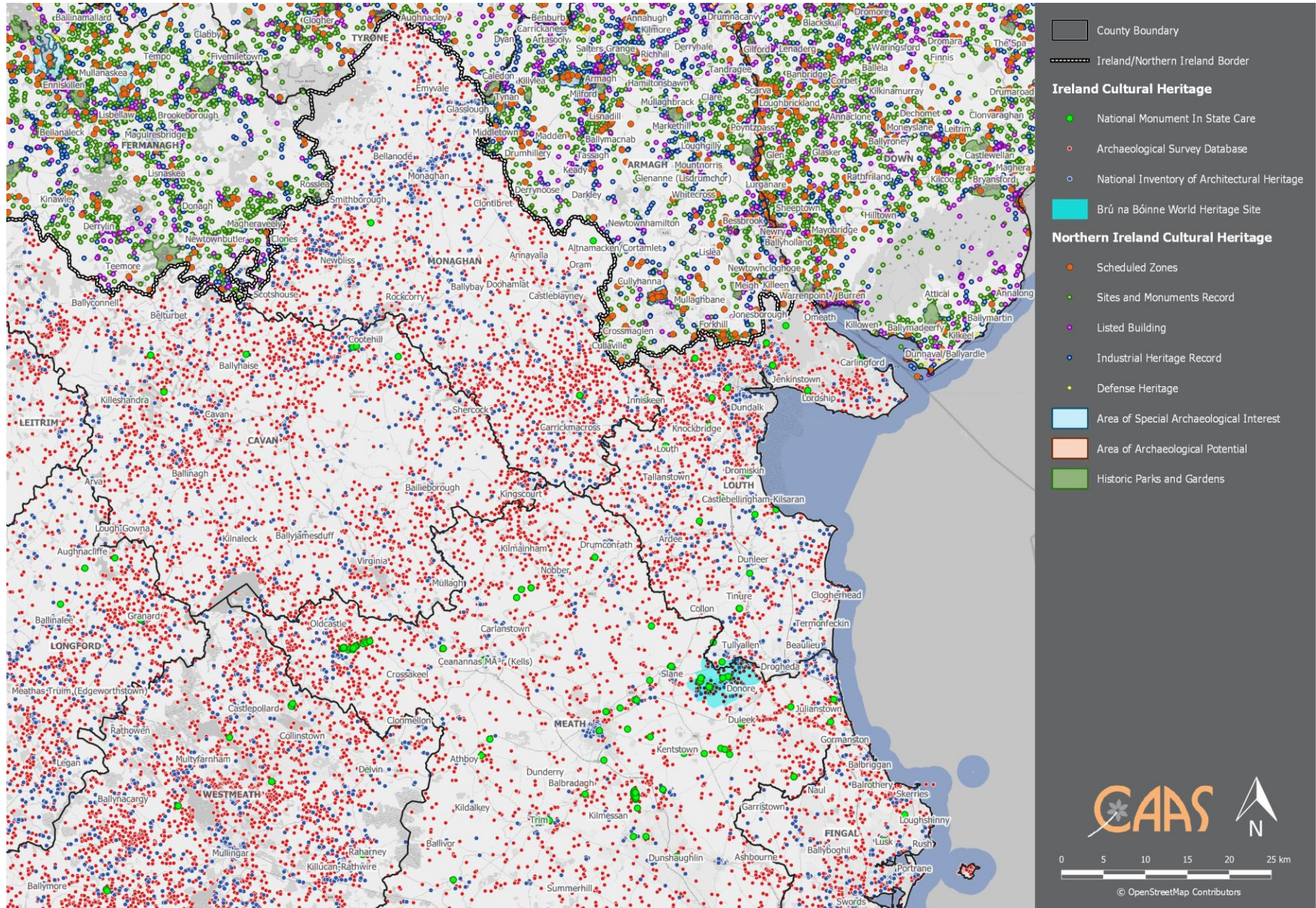


Figure 4.9 Archaeological and Architectural Heritage

4.12 Landscape

4.12.1 Introduction

Landscapes are areas which are perceived by people and are made up of a number of layers: landform, which results from geological and geomorphological history; landcover, which includes vegetation, water, human settlements, and; human values which are a result of historical, cultural, religious and other understandings and interactions with landform and landcover.

The European Landscape Convention - also known as the Florence Convention, - promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. The Convention defines landscape as '*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*'. As a signatory of the Convention, Ireland has prepared and adopted a National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025.

4.12.2 Landscape Character Assessment

The area to which the Plan relates is identified as being situated mainly within counties Louth and Meath, and partially within counties Cavan, Monaghan, Westmeath, Offaly and Kildare. Relevant Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) include:

County Louth:

- Dunany, Boyne Estuary Close LCA
- Louth Drumlin & Lake Areas LCA
- Muirhevna Plain LCA
- Uplands of Collon, Monasterboice LCA
- Dundalk Bay Coast LCA
- Lower Faughart, Castletown & Flurry River Basins LCA
- Carlingford Lough, Mountains Including West Feede Uplands LCA
- Cooley Lowlands & Coastal Area LCA

County Meath:

- Coastal Plains LCA
- Central Lowlands LCA
- Central Woodlands LCA
- Tara Skryne Hills LCA
- South West Lowlands LCA
- West Navan Lowlands LCA
- Bellewstown Hills LCA
- Boyne & Mattock Valley LCA
- Rathkenny Hills LCA
- South West Kells Lowlands LCA
- Lough Sheelin Uplands LCA

- North Navan Lowlands LCA
- North Meath Lakelands LCA
- Teervurcher Uplands LCA

County Kildare

- Northern Hills LCA
- North-Western Lowlands LCA

County Monaghan:

- Mullyash Uplands LCA
- Ballybay Castleblayney Lakelands LCA
- Monaghan Drumlin Uplands LCA

County Cavan:

- Lake Catchments of South Cavan LCA
- Highlands of East Cavan LCA

County Westmeath:

- River Deel Lowlands LCA
- Northern Hills and Lakes LCA

County Offaly:

- Rural and Agricultural LCA
- The Grand Canal Corridor LCA

4.12.3 Protection and Management of the Landscape

All areas are 'landscape', not just those areas identified as being of higher value or sensitivity. The importance of landscape and visual amenity and the role of its protection are recognised in the Act as amended, which requires that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty. These objectives and associated plan content often designate different aspects of the landscape such as the following:

- Landscape character areas;
- Landscape sensitivity and value areas;
- High amenity zones;
- Scenic views and prospects; and
- Land use objectives relating to landscape protection.

These designations vary from local authority to local authority and change over time.

4.12.4 Existing Environmental Problems

The legislative objectives governing landscape and visual appearance were not identified as being conflicted with.

Section 5 Strategic Environmental Objectives

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies that generally govern environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level e.g. the environmental protection objectives of various European Directives that have been transposed into Irish law and that are required to be implemented.

The SEOs are set out under a range of topics and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Plan and the alternatives are evaluated in order to help identify which provisions would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and where such effects would be likely to occur, if - in the case of adverse effects - unmitigated.

The SEOs are linked to indicators that can facilitate monitoring the environmental effects of the Plan as well identifying targets that the Plan can help work towards.

All SEOs, indicators and targets are provided on Table 5.1 overleaf.

Further detail on legislation, plans and programmes are provided under Section 2 (and associated Appendix II "Relationship with Legislation and Other Plans and Programmes") and Section 4.

Table 5.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives, Indicators and Targets

Environmental Component	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1: To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species ⁶⁷	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive	B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under National and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan ⁶⁸
	B2: To contribute towards compliance with 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 act 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	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from Plan	B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from the Plan
	B3: To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites ⁶⁹ and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of listed species	B3i: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan B3ii: No significant impacts on the protection of listed species resulting from the Plan
Population and Human Health	PHH1: To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses	PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency	PHH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result the Plan
Soil	S1: To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource	S1: Artificial surfaces land cover extent	S1: Contribute towards the target of the National Planning Framework's SEA (2018) to "Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%."
Water	W1: To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters	W1i: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009) W1ii: Mandatory and Guide values as set by the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008)	W1i: No deterioration in the status of any surface water or adverse effect upon the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the Plan W1ii: No deterioration in the value of bathing waters or adverse effect upon the ability of any bathing water to achieve Mandatory values and, where possible, Guide values as a result of the Plan

⁶⁷ '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.

⁶⁸ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) No alternative solution available; (b) Imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the programme to proceed; and (c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

⁶⁹ The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

Environmental Component	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
	W2: To contribute towards maintaining and improving, where possible, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters	W2: Interactions with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC resulting from development adhering to the Plan	W2: Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC, subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD
	W3: To contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines	W3: Compliance of relevant lower tier assessments and decision making with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines	W3: For lower tier assessments and decision making to comply with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
Air and Climatic Factors	AC1: To contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation	AC1: Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation have been integrated into the Plan.	C1: To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented
Material Assets	M1: For development to be served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health	M1: Number of instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity is unavailable	M1: No instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity that does not present a danger to human health are unavailable
	M2: To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, including that relating to recreation and leisure, transport, utilities and marine areas and fisheries	M2: Number of significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure	M2: No significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure
	M3: To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse	M3: Preparation and implementation of construction and environmental management plans	M3: For construction and environmental management plans to be prepared and implemented for relevant projects
Cultural Heritage	CH1: To contribute towards the protection of archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH1: No unauthorised adverse effects on archaeological heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan
	CH2: To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context	CH2: Percentage of entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH2: No unauthorised adverse effects on architectural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan
Landscape	L1: To avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	L1: Number of unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	L1: No unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

Section 6 Description of Alternatives

6.1 Introduction

As per the requirements of the SEA Directive, this SEA considers reasonable alternatives, which are capable of being implemented for Plan, taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the Plan.

6.2 Current Situation (Alternative 1: Business as Usual)

There are various strengths associated with the current tourism development situation include:

- Depth of "Ancient" heritage assets including globally renowned locations;
- Authenticity of the local food story and first farmers association with the area;
- UNESCO World Heritage site status creating global destination recognition;
- Depth of the Ireland's Ancient East story across the destination supported by extended range of hero and signature experiences; and
- Boyne Blueway at Trim and current Boyne Navigation segment facilitating immersive heritage experiences.

However, there are a number of weaknesses associated with this situation, including:

- Limited number of accessible food experiences available throughout the year.
- Operational model for a number of key sites resulting in site closures outside of peak visitor periods limiting the area's capacity to become a year-round destination.
- Lack of promotable evening economy visitor options.
- Current perception of area as a transit zone particularly among tour operators.
- Destination not maximising economic value of major attractions to increase dwell time and dispersion of visitors throughout the area.
- Natural assets of the area not entirely accessible or presented in a visitor centric manner.
- Number of international acclaimed visitor sites not delivering international standard experiences.
- Existing range of way marked routes and trails are not fit for purpose or effective in delivering tourism value to the destination from driving routes to current walking and cycling trail provision.
- The area is not communicating the range of experiences currently available to the visitor or to the internal referral market
- Perceived difficulty of accessing slower paced activities and experiences.
- Quality of industry marketing of destination experiences.
- Lack of consistent narrative being adopted by industry and failing to embrace the Ireland's Ancient East opportunity to attract international visitors.

This current situation presents **Alternative 1 (Business as Usual)** to be considered by the SEA. Numbers of visitors would continue to increase under this scenario – consistent with the development of tourism over many decades. The most popular locations in the area to which the Plan relates would see the largest increases in visitors, which would occur during the peak season.

6.3 Prepare a Plan (Alternatives 2A and 2B: Prepare a Plan)

The weaknesses presented by the current situation (see Section 6.2) establish a potential need for a plan that seeks to better manage tourism in the area to which the Plan relates; facilitating, promoting, supporting and coordinating stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. Such a plan would not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for

granting consent (such frameworks fall under the remit of other public authorities). Any projects would continue to be required to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of documents that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

Features of such a Plan (in combination with the wider and extensive policy and wider and extensive policy and planning framework planning framework) would include:

- Enhancement of the existing Ancient visitor proposition to achieve the following objectives (and associated overseas revenue and employment) of:
 - Addressing seasonality
 - Increasing visitor numbers
 - Improving dwell time
 - Improving visitor dispersion across the region
- Provision of a destination wide tourism development focus, harnessing existing plans and examining new projects to create a world class destination, using "Ancient" as the core theme. The Plan would capture these projects within one plan and maximise their potential.
- Addressing the challenges of seasonality, regional dispersion of visitors and sustainability.

Under Alternative 2 there are two separate alternatives:

Alternative 2A: A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management

Fáilte Ireland provides funding sustainable tourism projects including land use and infrastructural development and land use activities. In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, **Alternative 2A** would require Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "Site Maintenance Guidelines" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others" (and any subsequent replacements).

In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) would have to demonstrate compliance, as relevant, with various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

Further environmental requirements would be integrated into the Plan under Alternative 2A, relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services.

Alternative 2B: A Plan without Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management

Alternative 2B would not include the requirements for environmental protection and management described under Alternative 2A. Projects would continue to be required to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of documents that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

Section 7 Evaluation of Alternatives

7.1 Introduction

This section provides a comparative evaluation of the environmental effects of implementing the alternatives that are detailed under Section 6. This determination sought to understand whether each alternative was likely to improve, conflict with or have a neutral interaction with environmental components.

7.2 Methodology

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (see Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Section 5 and Table 7.1) are used in the evaluation of alternatives.

The alternatives are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 7.2 below) in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the SEOs. The SEOs and the alternatives are arrayed against each other to identify which interactions - if any - would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies a likely conflict with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the conflict column - e.g. B1 which stands for the SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species'⁷⁰.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects⁷¹.

The degree to which effects can be fully determined at this level of decision-making is limited, as the Plan will be implemented alongside planning and project development and associated environmental assessments and administrative consent of projects. Nonetheless, a comparative evaluation of the various alternatives can be provided.

⁷⁰ '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.

⁷¹ These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives⁷²

Environmental Component	Code	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1	To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species ⁷³
	B2	To contribute towards compliance with 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 act 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
	B3	To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites ⁷⁴ and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act
Population and Human Health	PHH1	To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses
Soil	S1	To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource
Water	W1	To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters
	W2	To contribute towards maintaining and improving, where possible, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters
	W3	To contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
Air and Climatic Factors	AC1	To contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation
Material Assets	M1	For development to be served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health
	M2	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, including that relating to recreation and leisure, transport, utilities and marine areas and fisheries
	M3	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse
Cultural Heritage	CH1	To contribute towards the protection of archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
	CH2	To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage, including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
Landscape	L1	To avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

Table 7.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives on SEOs

Likely to Improve status of SEOs			Potential Conflict with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated by complying with other measures included within the Plan		
to the Greatest degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Greater degree

⁷² See Section 5 for a description of Strategic Environmental Objectives.

⁷³ '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.

⁷⁴ The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

7.3 Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects are one of the types of effects that have been considered by the assessment of the alternatives. Cumulative effects can be described as the addition of many small impacts to create one larger, more significant, impact.

There are two types of potential cumulative effects that have been considered, namely:

- Potential *intra-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise from the interactions between different types of potential environmental effects resulting from a plan, programme, etc. Where there are elevated levels of environmental sensitivities (such as those identified under Section 4), future development could result in environmental conflicts and lead to a deterioration in environmental integrity. The interrelationships between environmental components that help determine these potential effects are identified on Table 8.4 in Section 8 e.g. interrelationships between: human health and water quality; human health and air quality; human health and flood risk; and ecology and water quality.
- Potential *inter-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise when the effects of the implementation of one plan occur in combination with those of other plans, programmes, developments, etc.

In considering the relationship with legislation and other plans and programmes it is important to note that the Plan will form part of a wider and extensive policy and planning framework that covers sectors including tourism, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications and land use planning (see Section 2, 4 and 5 and Appendix II) for a range of sectors at a range of levels (e.g. National, Regional, County and Local). Legislation, plans and programmes from these other sectors also take into account demands from both residents and tourists when considering infrastructure and service needs. These plans, in turn, are also subject to their own SEA and AA requirements and include their own requirements relating to environmental protection and management. In this way, the environment is protected in a holistic manner so that the interactions of other uses and their associated plans and programmes are taken into account. Where they exist, the SEA recognises the existence of other environmental assessments with a view to avoid duplication of assessment, in compliance with the SEA Directive.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction for the next 22 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSEs for the Eastern & Midlands and Northern & Western Regions (the Plan area is located within both of these RSE Regions) sets out objectives relating to tourism development, that have been subject to environmental assessment, including those relating to: enhancing provision of tourism and leisure amenity; promoting tourism activity; developing a road network and public transport services, facilitating improved visitor access and longer dwell times; developing walking and cycling trails, opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes; and facilitating appropriate tourism development, including that relating to greenways, blueways and peatlands. When adopted, the RSE will inform the review of existing, assessed Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which already include various provisions relating to land use, tourism and infrastructure. Such reviews will also be subject to environmental assessments.

Implementation of the Plan shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSE and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards. These provisions are in addition to those that have been integrated into the Plan that will contribute towards sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (see Section 9).

Effects⁷⁵ that may arise as a result of implementing the Plan, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework, have been mitigated to the extent that the only residual adverse effects likely to occur as a result of implementation of the Plan are those that are identified under Table 8.3.

Cumulative effects that have been considered include those resulting from the Plan in-combination with the following:

- Land use policy, plans and programmes (e.g. the National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, Development Plans and Local Area Plans);
- Water services, waste management, transport and energy infrastructure plans (e.g. Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan and associated Capital Investment Grid25 and associated Implementation Programme) and the Local Economic and Community Plans; and
- Environmental protection and management plans (e.g. River Basin Management Plans, National Mitigation Plan, National Adaptation Framework, and Flood Risk Management Plans).

Potential cumulative effects include the following arising from the alternatives in combination with the plans etc. detailed above (note that potential adverse cumulative effects will be mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan - see Section 9):

- Contribution towards sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management – various provisions for which are provided for in the aforementioned plans (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).
- Need for and use of services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism), including those related to water services, transport, access or accommodation, that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework – and associated potential adverse environmental effects on various environmental components including biodiversity and flora and fauna, the status of waters, human health, soil, emissions, cultural heritage and landscape (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).
- Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation through measures such as those relating to walking and cycling, charging infrastructure, flood risk management and resilience (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).
- Contribution towards travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air as a result of increases in tourist numbers (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).
- Helps to minimise likelihood of exceeding capacity in material assets as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) have been identified (**Alternative 2A**). This would positively impact upon the protection and management of environmental components such as human health, water, soil, air and climatic factors.
- Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European Sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) through visitor management strategies, as relevant and appropriate (**Alternative 2A**).
- In combination with plans and programmes from all sectors potential adverse effects on all environmental components arising from all development in greenfield and brownfield areas (e.g. infrastructural, residential, accommodation, economic, forestry, agricultural etc.). The type of these effects is consistent with those described on Table 7.3. These plans and programmes from other sectors undergo SEA and comply with environmental legislation while projects are subject to EIA and AA, as relevant (**Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B**).

⁷⁵ Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services and infrastructure (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Mitigation includes that which has been integrated into the Plan – please refer to Section 9 of this report.

7.4 Detailed Consideration of Alternatives

Table 7.3 below describes effects common to all Alternatives (1, 2A and 2B).

Table 7.3 Effects Common to All Alternatives

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects from all Alternatives, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ⁷⁶	
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European Sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services. Contribution towards protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna as a result of contributing towards the protection of environmental vectors, air, water and soil. 	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of tourism related development/activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna; Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.
Population and human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of human health. Contribution towards the protection amenity usage and access. Contribution towards the sustainable growth of tourism and associated sustenance and growth of communities in the area to which the Plan relates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water are not mitigated. Potential interactions if additional tourists are directed towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) have been identified.
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards minimising land-take and loss of extent of soil resource. Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination. Contributes towards protection of designated sites of geological heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse impacts upon the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource. Adverse effects on designated geological heritage sites. Potential for increase in coastal /river bank erosion.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of water resources (including the status of surface and groundwaters), bathing water quality and water-based designations. Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. Increase in flood risk.
Air and climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential conflict, in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors including transport and land use planning, between increases in visitors (which is likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions to air, including from aviation, with associated interactions with climatic factors) and local, national and European objectives to reduce carbon emissions. Potential conflicts between transport movements, including car movements, and air quality.

⁷⁶ Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Effects would be to varying degrees – refer to Table 7.4 for comparative evaluation.

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects from all Alternatives, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework	
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes towards protection and allows for continued use of public assets and infrastructure. Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of visitors have the potential to increase traffic levels. The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Irish Water to provide for such needs). Increases in waste levels and residual wastes from visitors and construction of developments. Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the long-term protection of archaeological and architectural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential effects on designated and unknown archaeological heritage. Potential effects on architectural heritage.
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of landscape designations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occurrence of adverse visual impacts, especially in marine, estuary and ridge areas where, and conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape. Changes in the appearance of the landscape.

Alternative 1: Business as Usual

Sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection under Alternative 1 is provided through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. These measures would contribute towards positive effects on the protection and management of all environmental components (see Table 7.3).

Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.

In the absence of a Plan, there would continue to be an increase in tourist numbers – consistent with the development of tourism over many decades. The most popular locations in the area to which the Plan relates would see the largest increases in visitors, which would occur during the peak season. This would give rise to greater concentration of tourists during peak seasons and in the most popular locations thereby increasing potential environmental effects on all components and peak load additions on various infrastructure in particular locations/at particular times.

Contributions towards an increase in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation, would not occur as a result of a Plan that seeks to lengthen dwell time and grow visitor numbers however increases in tourist numbers would occur. Similarly, the positive mitigatory effects as a result of provisions of a Plan, such as those relating to sustainable mobility, traffic management and compliance with climate adaptation and management plans/strategies would not be provided for.

There would be one layer of mitigation under Alternative, through the existing statutory planning and consent framework.

Alternative 2A: A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management

In addition to the measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection, environmental management (and associated effects - see Table 7.3), which are provided under all alternatives, and measures relating to seasonality and regionality, provided for by this alternative and Alternative 2B, this alternative would provide additional requirements for environmental protection and management, including those taken from the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme and those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) would have to demonstrate compliance, as relevant, with various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.

Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan's objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the Plan area. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree than would be the case if there was no Plan. This would be likely to contribute towards an increase in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. These increases will be mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2019, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions), the National Mitigation Plan (2017 and any subsequent versions) and planning authority Climate Change Action Plans.

A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects. Notwithstanding this, there would be three layers of mitigation, through: the existing statutory planning and consent framework; visitor management strategies; and additional environmental requirements for environmental protection and management, under this alternative.

Alternative 2B: A Plan without Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management

In addition to the measures relating to sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection (and associated effects - see Table 7.3), which are provided under all alternatives, this Alternative (2B) would provide measures to improve seasonality and regionality – Alternative 2A would provide this also. Seasonality and regionality provide a greater spread of tourists throughout the year and across the area to which the Plan relates thereby reducing potential environmental effects and peak load additions on various infrastructure in particular locations/at particular times.

Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.

Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan's objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the area to which the Plan relates. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree than would be the case if there was no Plan.

This would be likely to contribute towards an increase in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. These increases would be mitigated by the wider planning framework.

A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects. Notwithstanding this, there would be one layer of mitigation, through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. A comparative assessment of all three alternatives against SEOs is provided on Table 7.4 overleaf.

7.5 Selected Alternative for the Plan

Taking into account the environmental effects detailed above and the challenges and opportunities present for tourism across the area to which the Plan relates, Fáilte Ireland have proceeded with Alternative 2A "A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management".

Table 7.4 Comparative Evaluation of Alternatives against SEOs

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs			Potential Conflict with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated by complying with other measures included within the Plan		
	to the Greatest degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Greater degree
Alternative 1: Business as Usual			<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 Sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection is provided through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. These measures would contribute towards positive effects on the protection and management of all environmental components (see Table 7.3).</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.</p> <p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 In the absence of a Plan, there would likely to be a continuing increase in tourist numbers – consistent with the development of tourism over many decades. The most popular locations in the area to which the Plan relates would be likely to see the largest increases in visitors, which would be likely to occur during the peak season. This would be likely to give rise to greater concentration of tourists during peak seasons and in the most popular locations thereby increasing potential environmental effects on all components and peak load additions on various infrastructure in particular locations/at particular times.</p>		
Alternative 2A: A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 In addition to the measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection, environmental management (and associated effects - see Table 7.3) and measures relating to seasonality, regionality and visitor management strategies, provided for by this alternative and Alternative 2B, this Alternative (2A) would provide additional requirements for environmental protection and management.</p>				<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.</p> <p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1 Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan’s objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the area to which the Plan relates. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree. A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects.</p> <p>Notwithstanding these issues, there would be three layers of mitigation, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing statutory planning and consent framework; • Visitor management strategies; and • Additional environmental requirements for environmental protection and management, under this alternative. 	

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs			Potential Conflict with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated by complying with other measures included within the Plan		
	to the Greatest degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Greater degree
Alternative 2B: A Plan without Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management		<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p> <p>In addition to the measures relating to sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection (and associated effects - see Table 7.3), this alternative would provide measures relating to seasonality and regionality – such measures would also be provided for by Alternative 2A.</p>				<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p> <p>Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue to be mitigated through that process.</p> <p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p> <p>Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan's objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the area to which the Plan relates. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree.</p> <p>A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, there would be two layers of mitigation, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing statutory planning and consent framework; and • Visitor management strategies.

Section 8 Evaluation of Plan Provisions

8.1 Introduction

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (see Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Section 5 and Table 8.1) are used in the assessment of the Plan.

The provisions are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 8.2) in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the SEOs. The SEOs and the Plan provisions are arrayed against each other to identify which interactions - if any - would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies a likely conflict with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the conflict column - e.g. B1 which stands for the SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species'⁷⁷.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects⁷⁸:

- Interactions that would be likely to improve the status of a particular SEO would be likely to result in a significant positive effect on the environmental component to which the SEO relates.
- Interactions that would potentially conflict with the status of an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated would be likely to result in potential significant negative effects however these effects will be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan (see Section 9).
- Interactions that would probably conflict with the status of an SEO and would be unlikely to be mitigated would be likely to result in a significant negative effect on the environmental component to which the SEO relates.

The degree to which effects can be fully determined at this level of decision-making is limited, as the Plan will be implemented alongside planning and project development and associated environmental assessments and administrative consent of projects. More detailed environmental measures may emanate from such assessments, further facilitating the mitigation of adverse effects.

⁷⁷ '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.

⁷⁸ These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Table 8.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives

Environmental Component	Code	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1	To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species ⁷⁹
	B2	To contribute towards compliance with 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 act 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
	B3	To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites ⁸⁰ and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act
Population and Human Health	PHH1	To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses
Soil	S1	To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource
Water	W1	To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters
	W2	To contribute towards maintaining and improving, where possible, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters
	W3	To contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
Air and Climatic Factors	AC1	To contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation
Material Assets	M1	For development to be served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health
	M2	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, including that relating to recreation and leisure, transport, utilities and marine areas and fisheries
	M3	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse
Cultural Heritage	CH1	To contribute towards the protection of archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
	CH2	To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
Landscape	L1	To avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

Table 8.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of Plan provisions on SEOs

Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
---	---	--	--

⁷⁹ '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.

⁸⁰ The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

8.2 Overall Evaluation (including Transboundary)

The overall findings of the SEA are that:

- **The Plan contributes towards Compliance with Environmental Legislation and Guidelines**

Fáilte Ireland are integrating all recommendations arising from the SEA and AA processes into the Plan (see Section 9 of this report), facilitating compliance of the Plan with various European and National legislation and Guidelines relating to the sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management.

Implementation of the Plan will contribute towards efforts to achieve a number of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals⁸¹ of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which were adopted by world leaders in 2015 at a United Nations Summit and came into force in 2016.

- **The Plan provides for Environmental Protection and Management**

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance⁸² with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards. Such legislation, policies, plans and programmes include:

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- Statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (e.g. Development Plans and Local Area Plans) and that have undergone environmental assessment, as appropriate, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management; and

⁸¹ Including: Goal 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Goal 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.; Goal 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; Goal 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; Goal 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; Goal 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

⁸² Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

- The Climate Action Plan 2019, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions), the National Mitigation Plan (2017 and any subsequent versions) and planning authority Climate Change Action Plans.

Further requirements have been integrated into the Plan under the headings of “Infrastructure Capacity”, “Visitor Management” and “Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services” – see Section 9 of this Environmental Report.

- **The Plan is likely to contribute towards, in combination with other governmental policies, plans etc., an increase in greenhouse gas emissions – although such increases will be mitigated**

The Plan seeks to lengthen dwell time and grow visitor numbers to the area to which the Plan relates and would, in combination with other governmental policies, plans etc., be likely to contribute towards in an increase in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. These increases will be mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2019, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions), the National Mitigation Plan (2017 and any subsequent versions) and planning authority Climate Change Action Plans.

Furthermore, as identified in the Climate Action Plan (Government of Ireland, 2019):

"Since 2012, greenhouse gas emissions associated with flights operating in the European Economic Area (EEA), including domestic flights as well as those to and from third countries, are covered by the EU ETS⁸³. Airlines are required to monitor, report and verify their emissions, and to surrender allowances against those emissions. Airlines receive tradable allowances covering a certain level of emissions from their flights per year and must purchase allowances to cover any shortfall between their allocated sum of free emissions allowances and their actual emissions, as reported annually.

To support the planned development of a global Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the EU agreed in 2014 to limit the scope of aviation in the EU ETS to flights within the EEA. CORSIA will come into effect in 2021 and aims to stabilise global aviation emissions at 2020 levels by requiring airlines to offset any emissions growth after 2020 by purchasing eligible emission units generated by projects that reduce emissions in other sectors. As Ireland is a member of ICAO, Irish aircraft operators will have to offset any emissions growth after 2020 by purchasing eligible emission units, i.e. pay full carbon price."

- **The Plan is Consistent with the existing Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework**

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, stakeholders and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent.

The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland’s planning policy direction for the next 22 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies

⁸³ Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)

(RSESs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSESs for the Eastern & Midlands and Northern & Western Regions (the Plan area is located within both of these RSES Regions) sets out objectives relating tourism development, that have been subject to environmental assessment, including those relating to: enhancing provision of tourism and leisure amenity; promoting tourism activity; developing a road network and public transport services, facilitating improved visitor access and longer dwell times; developing walking and cycling trails, opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes; and facilitating appropriate tourism development, including that relating to greenways, blueways and peatlands. When adopted, the RSES will inform the review of existing, assessed lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which already include various provisions relating to land use, tourism and infrastructure. Such reviews will also be subject to environmental assessments.

Implementation of the Plan shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents, including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the DDP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

- **Potentially Significant Adverse Effects to be mitigated**

Potentially significant adverse environmental effects arising from the Plan, in combination with the existing statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, are detailed on Table 8.3. These effects will be mitigated by the various provisions that have been integrated into the Plan including those that have arisen through the SEA and AA processes (see Section 9).

The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland. Taking into account, *inter alia*, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Plan (including that which is identified at Section 9) and the status of the Plan (the Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent – refer also to Section 2 or Section 9), it has been determined that significant residual adverse environmental effects will not occur in either Ireland or Northern Ireland.

Table 8.3 details the various types of environmental effects likely to arise with respect to the Plan (as developed from the selected alternatives – see Section 7) as a direct result of activities under the Plan and in combination with the existing statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework. By complying with appropriate mitigation measures - including those that have been integrated into the Plan - potentially significant adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing the Plan would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.

Table 8.3 Overall Findings – Environmental Effects arising from Plan Provisions

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ⁸⁴			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European Sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor management strategies; and Destination Development Plan requirements for environmental protection and management. Contributes towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services. Contribution towards protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna as a result of contributing towards the protection of environmental vectors, air, water and soil. 	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of tourism related development/activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna; Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces arising from projects consented through the statutory planning/consent-granting framework. Losses or damage to ecology (these would be: in compliance with relevant legislation; and mitigated as projects would demonstrate compliance with various environmental protection and management measures) 	B1 B2 B3
Population and human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of human health including through DDP requirements for environmental protection and management. Contribution towards the protection of human health as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) have been identified. Contribution towards the protection amenity usage and access. Contribution towards the sustainable growth of tourism and associated sustenance and growth of communities in the area to which the Plan relates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water are not mitigated. Potential interactions if additional tourists are directed towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) have been identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors. This has been mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. 	PHH1

⁸⁴ Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Mitigation includes that which has been integrated into the Plan – please refer to Section 9 of this report.

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ⁸⁴			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various provisions (e.g. relating to maintaining the wildness of areas that have not yet been developed) help to minimise land-take and loss of extent of soil resource. Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination. Contributes towards protection of designated sites of geological heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse impacts upon the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource. Adverse effects on designated geological heritage sites. Potential for increase in coastal /river bank erosion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces and from sea level rise/coastal erosion. 	S1
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of water resources (including the status of surface and groundwaters), bathing water quality and water-based designations including through integrating requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan. Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. Increase in flood risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased loadings as a result of development to comply with River Basin Management Plan. Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by: measures that have been integrated into the Plan; and the statutory planning/consent-granting framework. 	W1 W2 W3
Air and climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation through measures relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking and cycling; and Contribution towards European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation, taking into account a wide range of detailed measures including those relating to resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential conflict, in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors including transport and land use planning, between increases in visitors (which is likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions to air, including from aviation, with associated interactions with climatic factors) and local, national and European objectives to reduce carbon emissions. Potential conflicts between transport movements, including car movements, and air quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. This has been mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2019, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions), the National Mitigation Plan (2017 and any subsequent versions) and planning authority Climate Change Action Plans. Risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to climate and interactions with issues including flooding and material assets. 	AC1
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes towards protection and allows for continued use of public assets and infrastructure. Contains clear objectives around seasonality and regionality which look not only to spread the benefits of tourism but also the potential impacts/ load associated with tourism. Helps to minimise likelihood of exceeding capacity in material assets as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) have been identified. Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of visitors have the potential to increase traffic levels. The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Irish Water to provide for such needs). Increases in waste levels and residual wastes from visitors and construction of developments. Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher level waste management policies. Increased loading on critical infrastructure (drinking water, waste water, waste and transport) where no significant problems have been identified with this infrastructure. Exceedance of capacity in critical infrastructure risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however such risks will be mitigated by: measures that have been integrated into the Plan; and the statutory planning/consent-granting framework. Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework. 	M1 M2 M3

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ⁸⁴			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the long-term protection of archaeological and architectural heritage by encouraging greater levels of awareness and appreciation through, use, interpretation and access, in line with the requirements relating to the protection of cultural heritage including: entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context; and entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential effects on designated and unknown archaeological heritage. Potential effects on architectural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential alteration to the context and setting of architectural heritage however, these will occur in compliance with legislation. Potential alteration to the context and setting of archaeological heritage however, this will occur in compliance with legislation. Potential loss of unknown archaeology however, this loss will be mitigated by measures integrated into the Plan. 	CH1 CH2
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of landscape designations as a result of: facilitating compliance with relevant plans; and maintaining the wildness of areas that have not yet been developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occurrence of adverse visual impacts, especially in marine, estuary and ridge areas where, and conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape. Changes in the appearance of the landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residual visual effects (these would comply with landscape designation provisions). 	L1

8.3 Appropriate Assessment

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been undertaken alongside preparation of the Plan. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA. Various content has been integrated into the Plan through the SEA and AA processes (see Section 9).

8.4 Interrelationship between Environmental Components

The SEA Directive requires the Environmental Report to include information on the likely significant effects on the environment, on issues such as biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

Likely significant effects on environmental components that are identified include those that are interrelated; implementation of the Plan will not affect the interrelationships between these components. The presence of significant interrelationships between environmental components is identified on Table 8.4.

Table 8.4 Potential for Interrelationships between Environmental Components

Component	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air and Climatic factors	Material assets	Cultural heritage	Landscape
Biodiversity, flora and fauna		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Population and human health			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Soil				Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Water					Yes	Yes	No	No
Air and Climatic factors						Yes	No	No
Material assets							Yes	Yes
Cultural heritage								Yes
Landscape								

8.5 More Detailed Assessment of Plan Provisions

8.5.1 Overarching Objectives

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs-likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs-unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<p>The Ancient Destination Development Plan is a five-year destination development plan. It is designed to be a roadmap for enhancing the existing Ancient visitor proposition to achieve the objectives of addressing seasonality, increasing visitor numbers, improving dwell time and visitor dispersion across the destination.</p> <p>The Plan provides a destination wide tourism development focus, harnessing existing plans and examining new projects to create a world class destination, using Ancient as the core theme. The Plan seeks to capture these projects within one plan and maximise their potential.</p> <p>The target outputs from the Plan include a reduction in seasonality, increase visitor spend and a growth in visitor bednights, employment and visitor dispersion. In addition to the core economic performance measurements, the Plan is designed to address the following objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure visitor experience consistency across the Ancient destination in visitor experience delivery and throughout all phases of the visitor journey from pre visit to post visit. 2. Address existing destination 'bottlenecks' to tourism growth. 3. Promote tourism vibrancy within the destination through visitor dispersion across a range of Ancient Experience clusters. 4. Realise the value of the core assets within Ancient, including Destination Towns, natural assets and visitor attractions to deliver sustained growth. 5. Engage the visitor with fascinating stories of Ancient in a UNESCO World Heritage area, delivered through best in class immersive experiences and activities. 6. Create the world's most immersive and experiential ancient heritage route linking all strategic development pillars. 7. Become Ireland's food heritage destination told through immersive visitor food experiences telling the Ancient story. 8. Create iconic experiences through iconic visitor attractions and associated experiences within the destination. 9. Address the challenges of evening economy provision. 10. Work with the tourism industry to improve their capacity to deliver new and enhanced experiences. 11. Protect, sustain and enhance the natural environment of the Plan area. 	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		
<p>SEA Commentary:</p> <p><i>The assessment of the Plan's overarching Objectives against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and</i> • <i>Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.</i> <p><i>Implementing the DDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The DDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The DDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</i></p> <p><i>The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and</i> • <i>The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.</i> <p><i>These Plan provisions would contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors and associated potential adverse effects. Such effects would include in-combination arising from services and infrastructure to service development, including tourism, which are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include</i></p>				

developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional DDP measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the DDP or integration of DDP provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

Sustainability and the environment have been integrated into various parts of the overarching Objectives, for example:

- "reduction in seasonality"
- "visitor dispersion"
- Objective 3 "visitor dispersion across a range of Ancient Experience clusters"
- Objective 4 "natural assets "
- Objective 5 "UNESCO World Heritage area"
- Objective 11 "protect, sustain and enhance the natural environment of the Plan area"

8.5.2 Catalyst Projects

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs-likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs-unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<p>In order to achieve the strategic objectives of the Plan, the development framework is structured under two headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ancient Routes (World's leading experiential ancient routes) • The Ancient Senses (Bringing the stories alive through active and cultural immersion in the stories of Ancient). <p>There are two Catalyst Projects under the Ancient Routes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-imageneering of the Boyne Valley Drive; and 2. The Boyne Greenway and Navigation. <p>And two Catalyst Projects under the Ancient Senses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Bringing the stories alive, Ancient Alive; and 4. The Irish Food Story. 	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		
<p>SEA Commentary:</p> <p>The assessment of the Plan's Catalyst Projects against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and • Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report. <p>Implementing the DDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The DDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The DDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</p> <p>The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and • The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised. <p>These Plan provisions would contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors and associated potential adverse effects. Such effects would include in-combination arising from services and infrastructure to service development, including tourism, which are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional DDP measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the DDP or integration of DDP provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.</p>				

8.5.3 Strategic Pillars

There are **four Strategic Development Pillars** with associated goals, objectives and actions (relating to 29 numbered tourism projects). For each action, a timeframe for implementation is indicated: short-term (Year 1-2 of Plan implementation, 2020-2021), medium-term (Years 3-4 of implementation, 2022-2023) and long-term (Year 5+ of implementation, 2024 onwards). Partners for each action are also identified, comprising:

- **BVT** Boyne Valley Tourism
- **CCC** Cavan County Council
- **DCHG** Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- **FI** Fáilte Ireland
- **IWBNG** Inland Waterways – Boyne Navigation Group
- **LCC** Louth County Council
- **LTN** Local Tourism Network
- **MCC** Meath County Council
- **MnCC** Monaghan County Council
- **OPW** Office of Public Works
- **PS** Private Sector
- **Údarás** Údarás na Gaeltachta
- **LEO** Local Enterprise Office
- **NPWS** National Parks and Wildlife Service

The following Guiding Principles for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism, which will contribute towards environmental protection and management and sustainable development have been integrated into the Plan:

- Assess the feasibility of developing and implementing visitor management plans where relevant
- Monitor the quality of visitor experiences and local social/cultural impact at key sites
- Encourage the adoption of a responsible tourism approach with ongoing monitoring of environmental impacts
- Ensure Ancient DDP visitor experiences are accessible to all where possible
- Increase awareness and appreciation of Ancient DDP unique landscape and environment
- Support voluntary and community-led environmental protection projects, which in turn benefit tourism
- Increase environmental performance among tourism businesses
- Advocate for the protection of key environmental and tourism assets
- Encourage sustainable modes of transport and ensure they are accessible to tourists
- Improve tourist management, particularly in mature and established tourist areas
- Introduce and implement minimum sustainable standards for tour guides
- Encourage tourism related businesses to engage in the Leave No Trace Programme
- Increase and promote environmental protection and enhancement when progressing actions derived from this Plan⁸⁵

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<p>Pillar 1: Unlocking the Heritage Assets</p> <p>Goal: Develop the portfolio of accessible Ancient heritage assets to deliver best in class visitor experiences befitting an area with UNESCO World Heritage status. It will capitalise on the potential of existing sites while expanding the experience capacity of supporting sites to create the world’s most experiential trail of Ancient experiences.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop existing ‘internationally’ renowned Ancient sites to deliver international class experiences. 2. Development of an Ancient site linkage model to create cross selling synergies between key sites. 3. Deliver a visitor dispersion approach to increase footfall in areas with potential by enhancing key sites throughout the Ancient geography. 4. Creation of the Ancient Route on land and water as experience led alternatives linking key ancient sites. 	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		

⁸⁵ - Ensure the EPA’s Environmental Sensitivity Mapping Webtool is consulted when implementing projects resulting from this plan.
 - Ensure crucial infrastructure including water & wastewater services are in place and adequate
 - Harness the importance of ecosystem services and protected sites to encourage sustainable levels of ecotourism growth and awareness
 - Ensure invasive species management is in place through the promotion of effective biosecurity measures

Actions					
PROJECT 1 - BRÚ NA BÓINNE					
1.1	Continue to provide experience development support for the Brú na Bóinne development as a priority that supports the site in maximising the investment to create a world class attraction and visitor experience, developed with consideration to the carrying capacity of monuments within a World Heritage sites.				
	Commence:	2020 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	FI			
1.2	Examine approach to cross sell other 'Ancient' sites and local activities.				
	Commence:	2020 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	FI			
1.3	Provide experience development support for the development of Dark Sky experience at the site along with other diversification of the offering.				
	Commence:	2020 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
1.4	Undertake a pilot of the 360 Commercial Plan for Visitor Attractions with Brú na Bóinne				
	Commence:	2021 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	FI			
PROJECT 2 - LOUGHCREW CAIRNS					
2.1	Undertake an examination of existing site review documents to establish areas of prioritisation in addressing visitor management requirements for the site and future inclusion in strategic projects between OPW and Fáilte Ireland.				
	Commence:	2021 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
2.2	Provide experience development support for the identification of range of management options for the site accounting for the current archaeological management requirements of the site.				
	Commence:	2021 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	FI			
PROJECT 3 - TRIM CASTLE					
3.1	Continue to provide experience development support for the development and a working group to continually review and upgrade the visitor experience requirements based on the agreed new investment into Trim Castle.				
	Commence:	2020 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	MCC			
3.2	Provide experience development support for the development of a visitor experience combining the development requirements of Trim Castle and Trim as identified in the Boyne Valley Masterplan and supported by the destination town activity.				
	Commence:	2021 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	MCC			

PROJECT 4 - KING JOHN'S CASTLE CARLINGFORD					
4.1	Provide experience development support for the development of an operational and visitor development plan based on a new visitor experience approach to support and maximise the impact of the recent project investment in the site.				
	Commence:	2021 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	FI			
PROJECT 5 - ARDEE CASTLE					
5.1	Establish working group of all key stakeholders to implement next phases of visitor experience development.				
	Commence:	2020 – 2025			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	FI			
5.2	Create and implement a Visitor experience plan.				
	Commence:	2020 – 2025			
	Lead:	LCC			
PROJECT 6 - BOYNE VALLEY DRIVE					
6.1	Conduct an audit of the Boyne Valley Drive and key visitor attractions and sites to review effectiveness in delivering great visitor experiences.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	MCC, LCC, OPW, DCHG			
6.2	Identify projects to establish the Boyne Valley Drive route as a best in class visitor experiential route.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	MCC, LCC, OPW, DCHG			
6.3	Prepare an experience development action plan to create a world leading 'Ancient Experience Trail'.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	MCC, LCC, OPW, DCHG			
6.4	Assess site requirements to grow visitor numbers at key sites along the Boyne Valley Drive such as the plans for Oldbridge – Battle of the Boyne Site.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	MCC, LCC, FI			
6.5	Continue the implementation programme for the Boyne Valley Masterplan and miscellaneous works outlined in the Masterplan while working with Fáilte Ireland to identify the key ticketed and non ticketed sites for visitor flow enhancement and inclusion in the visitor numbers monitoring system.				
	Commence:	2020-2023			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	MCC, LCC, FI			
PROJECT 7 - HILL OF TARA					
7.1	Continue to develop the Conservation Management Plan currently in progress for the Hill of Tara.				
	Commence:	2020-2025			
	Lead:	DCHG			
	Partners:	FI, MCC, OPW			
7.2	Create a working group to implement the final recommendations of Hill of Tara Conservation Management Plan when completed.				
	Commence:	2021-2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	FI, MCC			
7.3	Undertake an assessment of the immediate visitor servicing requirements to support the recommendations of the Hill of Tara Conservation Management Plan that will enhance site interpretation and visitor facilities.				
	Commence:	2021 – 2025			
	Lead:	OPW & DCHG			
	Partners:	FI, MCC			

Commentary:

The assessment of the Plan’s provisions for “Pillar 1: Unlocking the Heritage Assets” against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:

- Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and
- Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.

Implementing the DDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The DDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The DDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 “Mitigation Measures” of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:

- The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and
- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.

These Plan provisions would contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors and associated potential adverse effects. Such effects would include in-combination arising from services and infrastructure to service development, including tourism, which are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional DDP measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the DDP or integration of DDP provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

Sustainability and the environment have been integrated into various provisions for “Pillar 1: Unlocking the Heritage Assets”, including those relating to visitor management and site management plans.

Pillar 2: Reveal the Natural Assets

Goal: The creation a necklace of visitor experiences linking the heritage story through the natural assets of the area e.g. River Boyne, integrating the broader geographic area from Drogheda to Carbury, to Monaghan and Cavan. It will create a focal point for visitors to engage with the ancient story through immersive experiences in the ancient land and waterscapes.

Objectives:

1. Develop the potential of the River Boyne as an accessible tourism resource
2. Develop the potential of the destination Blueways and Greenways development differentiated through the Ancient theme.
3. Develop a Source to Mouth Ancient proposition for the River Boyne with key community and access points
4. Activate the River Boyne through the Boyne Greenway and Navigation to create an world class Ancient Trail experience linking Brú na Bóinne and other key Ancient sites.

Actions

--	--	--	--	--	--

PROJECT 8: BOYNE GREENWAY AND NAVIGATION					
8.1	Complete the Boyne Greenway and Navigation planning process through a partnership approach that will include MCC, LCC, FI, OPW, DCHG, Inland Waterways, NPWS – Boyne Navigation Group and local communities.				
	Commence:	2020 – 2025			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	FI, OPW, LCC, DCHG, IWBNG, NPWS			
8.2	Undertake consultations with all stakeholders as part of planning process.				
	Commence:	2020 – 2025			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	FI, OPW, LCC, DCHG			
8.3	Develop a plan to create an innovative interpretative walk on the existing stretch between Drogheda town centre to area adjacent to the Battle of the Boyne site.				
	Commence:	2021 – 2025			
	Lead:	MCC, LCC			
	Partners:	FI			
8.4	Undertake programme of works to upgrade the appropriate elements of the Navan to Boyne Valley Blueway.				
	Commence:	2021 – 2025			
	Lead:	MCC			
PROJECT 9: INTEGRATED ANCIENT TRAILS					
9.1	Review the experience development potential of existing and proposed trails including Greenways and Blueways across the destination with the objective of immersing the visitor in the Ancient story and linking all trails.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC, LCC			
	Partners:	FI, NMS, NPWS, DCHG, OPW			
9.2	Examine the potential of the Boyne Camino to develop as a multi-day experience linking key Ancient sites as a Camino 5000.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	MCC, FI			
9.3	Review of the visitor experience development potential of the Tain March and the enhancement of the existing Tain Trail as an appealing walking and cycling route.				
	Commence:	2022			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	FI			
9.4	Support the development of new and emerging trails that collectively increase the range of options for visitors to extend dwell time and explore new places e.g. Louth Heritage Trail, Cooley Camino.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	FI			
PROJECT 10: RECONNECTING TO THE RIVER BOYNE					
10.1	Undertake audit of directional and interpretation signage for the River Boyne linked to the Boyne Valley Drive review.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	MCC, LCC, FI			
	Partners:	PS, OPW, NPWS			
10.2	Identify River Boyne viewing points to create 'sharable' experiences for visitors through innovative interpretation and place making installations linked to the Boyne Valley Drive Review.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC, LCC			
	Partners:	NPWS			
10.3	Establish a working group to examine the wider experience development opportunities that exist through a River Boyne 'source to mouth' visitor proposition.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC, LCC			
	Partners:	FI			

PROJECT 11: GREENWAYS & BLUEWAYS DEVELOPMENT					
11.1	Develop the Navan to Kingscourt Greenway incorporating the rail line.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	MCC			
11.2	Create an experience plan for the development and usage of the Blueway from Trim to Bective.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC			
11.3	Review the feasibility of extending the Blueway from Bective to Navan creating a trailhead in Navan.				
	Commence:	2023			
	Lead:	MCC			
11.4	Undertake a review of the requirements to create a more accessible and user friendly Blueway trail head in Trim.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	OPW			
11.5	Complete signage and ancillary signage on the Royal Canal Greenway.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	WI, FI			
11.6	Develop the Great Eastern Greenway as a new walking and cycling route starting with the development of the partially constructed elements on the old railway line between Omeath and Carlingford. This will form part of a greenway stretching from Lough Neagh to Dublin. Complete the Cross Border Omeath to Victoria Lock & Carlingford Marina to Carlingford Village element for 2023.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	SEUPB			
11.7	Great Eastern Greenway: Review the feasibility of completion of the greenway from Carlingford – Greenore - Templetown Beach.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	LCC			
11.8	Review the feasibility of incorporating a Greenway into a coastal defence project from Dundalk to Blackrock.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	OPW			
11.9	Review the feasibility of incorporating a Greenway into a coastal defence project in Drogheda				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	OPW			
11.10	Review the feasibility of completion of the greenway from Blackrock to Drogheda.				
	Commence:	2023			
	Lead:	LCC			

<p>11.11</p>	<p>Review the feasibility of extending the Boyne Greenway through Drogheda to link up with Public Transport Hubs and the proposed Drogheda to Mornington Greenway.</p> <p>Commence: 2021</p> <p>Lead: LCC</p> <p>Partners: NTA</p>				
<p>11.12</p>	<p>Review the feasibility of the greenway from Dundalk to Sligo as part of East West Road Project [Dundalk to Sligo (Route 1) National Cycle Strategy]</p> <p>Commence: 2022</p> <p>Lead: CCC</p> <p>Partners: LCC, MCC, SCC</p>				
<p>11.13</p>	<p>Review the feasibility of the proposed Dundalk to Inniskeen Greenway along old rail track.</p> <p>Commence: 2021</p> <p>Lead: LCC</p> <p>Partners: MnCC</p>				
<p>Commentary:</p> <p><i>The assessment of the Plan's provisions for "Pillar 2: Reveal the Natural Assets" against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and</i> • <i>Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.</i> <p><i>Implementing the DDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The DDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The DDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</i></p> <p><i>The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and</i> • <i>The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.</i> <p><i>These Plan provisions would contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors and associated potential adverse effects. Such effects would include in-combination arising from services and infrastructure to service development, including tourism, which are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional DDP measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the DDP or integration of DDP provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.</i></p> <p><i>Sustainability and the environment have been integrated into various provisions for "Pillar 2: Reveal the Natural Assets", including those relating to consultation with stakeholders.</i></p>					
<p>Pillar 3: Introduce the Legends</p> <p>Goal: Build on the intrigue of the local stories, myths and legends, integrating these tales with the delivery of experiences linked to Ancient through activities and sectors such as food and agri-tourism. Provide the industry with an easily accessible narrative and focus for experience development adopting the Ancient legends and stories.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an Experience Innovation Cluster approach focusing on themes that convey the destination narrative and introduce the visitor to Ancient through great experiences. 2. Develop the activity capacity of the area to immerse visitors in the Ancient story through new outdoor experiences 3. Develop accessible Farm to Folk food experiences building on the 5,000-year farming heritage of Ancient to tell the story of Irish food. 4. Explore the Ancient potential of rural / agri tourism to aid visitor dispersion into lesser known Ancient areas. <p>Actions</p> <p>PROJECT 12: EXPERIENCE INNOVATION CLUSTER - ANCIENT ACTIVITY EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT</p>					

12.1	Create an Ancient Activity cluster to become the catalyst for immersive ancient experiences on land and on water.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	LCC, MCC			
12.2	Gap analysis of current experiences, activities, trails and supporting experiences identifying the core experiences for Ancient Activity and Lough of Legends development.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	LCC, MCC			
PROJECT 13: EXPERIENCE INNOVATION CLUSTER - FOOD & DRINK EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT					
13.1	Undertake an audit of current food experiences to identify year round food experiences with growth potential.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	MCC, LCC			
13.2	Develop an Ancient Food Trail route linking year round 'fish and farm to fork' experiences across the entire Ancient destination.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	LCC, MCC			
13.3	Create the Ancient Seafood - <i>Sea Louth</i> based on the Louth coastline linking 'tide to table' experiences and as a basis for development of new seafood experiences.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	FI			
13.4	Develop an agri-tourism visitor experience network to align with the food cluster opportunity.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC, LCC			
	Partners:	FI			
13.5	Examine the heritage of food innovation interpretation opportunity in association with Dowth and Devenish and scope out the story to focus the site experience.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	PS			
	Partners:	FI			
13.6	Support the creation of best in class whiskey experiences through Slane and Boann Distilleries.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	PS			
PROJECT 14: EXPERIENCE INNOVATION CLUSTER - ANCIENT CULTURE & CREATIVE					
14.1	Examine the development of an Ancient Culture & Creative hub in Kells.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	FI, LTN			
14.2	Review the requirements to create a world class visitor experience linking Kells to the story of the Book of Kells integrating St Columcille's House with the broader Kells experiences focused on cultural experiences.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	FI, OPW			
14.3	Examine the development of a strategic alliance between Trinity College Dublin and Kells to link to the Book of Kells story through possible community outreach / engagement model.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	FI			

PROJECT 15: PÚCA - HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL					
15.1	Develop a Puca working group to create, review and implement festival development proposals for the 3 areas of Trim, Drogheda and Athboy.				
	Commence: 2021				
	Lead: FI				
	Partners: MCC, LCC, BVT				
15.2	Devise a growth strategy for the Puca festival incorporating industry opportunities to sustain year-round experiences in Trim, Drogheda and Athboy.				
	Commence: 2021				
	Lead: FI				
	Partners: MCC, LCC, BVT				
15.3	Create an industry training programme to support the growth of Púca through the creation of Halloween experiences throughout the destination.				
	Commence: 2021				
	Lead: FI				
	Partners: MCC, LCC, BVT				
PROJECT 16: LIVING HISTORY					
16.1	Examine the requirements to build on existing living history re-enactments throughout the destination combined with new opportunities for immersive visitor experiences through existing cultural and visual arts facilities.				
	Commence: 2022				
	Lead: MCC, LCC				
	Partners: FI, LTN, BVT				
PROJECT 17: DESTINATION IMAGERY					
17.1	Review gaps in Ireland's content pool for relevant local Ancient content.				
	Commence: 2020				
	Lead: FI				
Commentary:					
<p>The assessment of the Plan's provisions for "Pillar 3: Introduce the Legends" against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and • Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report. <p>Implementing the DDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The DDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The DDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</p> <p>The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and • The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised. <p>These Plan provisions would contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors and associated potential adverse effects. Such effects would include in-combination arising from services and infrastructure to service development, including tourism, which are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional DDP measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the DDP or integration of DDP provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.</p> <p>Sustainability and the environment have been integrated into various provisions for "Pillar 3: Introduce the Legends", including those relating to seasonality.</p>					

Pillar 4: Develop the Industry Base

Goal: Support the development of the tourism industry to enhance their delivery of experiences across all stages of the visitor journey and advance the tourism capacity of key towns to deliver a consistent and quality experience to the international visitor.

Objectives:

1. Developing the conditions to develop the accommodation base between hotel stock and alternative forms of quality accommodation.
2. Develop the tourism industry experience capacity through the required supports and conditions to
3. foster experience development
4. Deliver a best in class destination towns programme and work with emerging towns to develop supporting hubs.
5. Develop a tourism master-planning approach for Drogheda as a key urban gateway to the Ancient story
6. Develop the evening Economy proposition across the destination through event, venue and experience innovation.

Actions:**PROJECT 18: ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY GROWTH**

18.1	Complete an accommodation needs analysis for the Boyne Valley.	
	Commence:	2020
	Lead:	FI
	Partners:	MCC, LCC
18.2	Prepare an accommodation growth plan.	
	Commence:	2022
	Lead:	FI
	Partners:	MCC, LCC
18.3	Support the development of niche accommodation development (e.g. eco and rural tourism) in line with the outputs of the accommodation needs analysis for the Boyne Valley.	
	Commence:	2022
	Lead:	FI
	Partners:	MCC, LCC
18.4	Develop the capability levels of the accommodation sector to consistently raise product and service quality standards to match the visitor promise of a world leading Ancient destination.	
	Commence:	2022
	Lead:	FI

PROJECT 19: EVENING ECONOMY

19.1	Create an evening economy development plan using existing cultural and heritage venues for destination towns.	
	Commence:	2021
	Lead:	FI, BVT
	Partners:	MCC, LCC, OPW, PS
19.2	Undertake a review to examine existing evening time entertainment provision to create easily accessible schedule of current evening activity.	
	Commence:	2021
	Lead:	MCC, LCC
19.3	Examine the creation of a unique Ancient or regionally themed music evening hosted throughout the destination on agreed evenings. e.g. Boyne Sessions	
	Commence:	2021
	Lead:	FI
	Partners:	MCC, LCC

PROJECT 20: ANCIENT EXPERIENCE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

20.1	Create a dedicated Ancient Experience Industry Development Programme approach for high potential experiences.	
	Commence:	2021
	Lead:	FI
	Partners:	FI, LEADER, MCC, LCC, Údarás, LEO

PROJECT 22: TOURISM DESTINATION TOWN - TRIM					
22.1	Create a tourism destination town development plan for Trim.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC			
22.2	Develop the Porchfields project to create an animated visitor and community space.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	MCC			
22.3	Undertake a capacity review of the tourism trade to identify immediate tourism industry training requirements and accommodation provider capabilities.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	MCC, BVT			
PROJECT 23: TOURISM DESTINATION TOWNS					
23.1	Create a measurement system to assess the impact of the Tourism Destination Town activity through a system of annual review with all stakeholders.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	FI			
	Partners:	MCC, LCC, OPW			
PROJECT 24: DEVELOPING NAVAN AS A TOURISM BASE					
24.1	Devise a destination town approach for Navan initially targeting the day time visitor.				
	Commence:	2022			
	Lead:	MCC			
24.2	Create an industry group to focus on the day time opportunity to attract international visitors through the quality of the food, drink and retail provision.				
	Commence:	2022			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	FI			
24.3	Create a dedicated training supports programme to develop the day time visitor economy opportunity to support the industry group.				
	Commence:	2022			
	Lead:	MCC			
	Partners:	FI			
PROJECT 25: SLANE EXPERIENCE INNOVATION CLUSTER					
25.1	Undertake a review of the experience development requirements for Slane aligned with the review of the Boyne Valley Drive.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	FI, MCC			
PROJECT 26: DEVELOP CARLINGFORD AS A TOURISM HUB					
26.1	Undertake a masterplanning development process to to develop a long term vision and enhance the visitor experience in Carlingford and surrounding area that will support its development as a key activity hub.				
	Commence:	2020			
	Lead:	LCC			
	Partners:	FI			
26.2	Support the advancement of potential destination transformation projects such as the proposed Sky Adventure / Tree Top proposition as an anchor project supporting the creation of the Ancient Activity Cluster, introducing innovative ways of telling the Ancient story.				
	Commence:	2021			
	Lead:	LCC, PS			

PROJECT 27: DEVELOP DUNDALK AS A TOURISM HUB					
27.1	Undertake a review of the experience development requirements for Dundalk to establish it as a visitor base and tourism hub developing the visitor experience through enhancement of existing heritage and cultural assets.				
	Commence: 2023				
	Lead: LCC				
	Partners: FI				
27.2	Support the visitor experience at the County Museum as a 'Designated Museum' association with the National Museum of Ireland examining opportunities to showcase the 'Ancient' theme through the National Collection.				
	Commence: 2022				
	Lead: LCC				
	Partners: FI				
PROJECT 28: MONAGHAN/CAVAN/MEATH/WESTMEATH CLUSTERS					
28.1	Develop a tourism industry cluster strategy to develop new visitor experiences and integrate saleable experiences in Carrickmacross, Virginia/Oldcastle and North Westmeath adopting the themes of the DDP.				
	Commence: 2020				
	Lead: MnCC, CCC, MCC and WCC				
	Partners: Lead - FI Partners - MnCC, CCC				
28.2	Support the enhancement of the visitor experience at the Monaghan and Cavan County Museums through their 'Designated Museum' association with the National Museum of Ireland examining opportunities to showcase the 'Ancient' themes				
	Commence: 2022				
	Lead: MnCC, CCC				
	Partners: FI				
Project 29 "Supporting Our Tourism Partners" provides support for 23 tourism partners, over the short to long term.					
Commentary:					
<p>The assessment of the Plan's provisions for "Pillar 4: Develop the Industry Base" against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and • Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report. <p>Implementing the DDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The DDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The DDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</p> <p>The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and • The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised. <p>These Plan provisions would contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors and associated potential adverse effects. Such effects would include in-combination arising from services and infrastructure to service development, including tourism, which are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional DDP measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the DDP or integration of DDP provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.</p> <p>Sustainability and the environment have been integrated into various provisions for "Pillar 4: Develop the Industry Base", including those relating to regionality.</p>					

8.5.4 Elevation Projects

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs-likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs-unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<p>Elevation Projects are designed to focus on industry capacity development, industry collaboration and developing motivational visitor experiences that will leverage assets in the Plan area:</p> <p>An Industry Ancient Experience Development Programme will be designed to develop the structures to 'incubate' the tourism industry with a particular focus on product providers with significant growth potential. The programme will also work with the local tourism industry to create new saleable experiences relevant to the Ancient themes while enhancing their ability to scale their business, aligned with the objectives of the Programme.</p> <p>Experience Innovation Clusters – the geography of the Ancient DDP predominantly aligns with the River Boyne and a number of natural clusters are formed through the existence of key destination hubs along the river route. A number of clusters are proposed. Central to each cluster area is the location of the destination towns currently in development supported by towns that can emerge as cluster hubs. This targeted cluster focus will also support the industry capacity building process with key alignment with cluster themes.</p> <p>Partnering with the OPW - central to the Ancient theme and contributing to the success of the Ancient DDP is the wide portfolio of OPW managed sites. The existence of the strategic partnership between Fáilte Ireland and OPW provides a communications channel to ensure future projects align with each stakeholder's operational remit and ensure a sustainable approach to delivering the Ancient story.</p>	B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1	B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1		
<p>SEA Commentary:</p> <p><i>The assessment of the Plan's Elevation Projects against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and</i> • <i>Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.</i> <p><i>Implementing the DDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The DDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The DDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</i></p> <p><i>The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and</i> • <i>The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.</i> <p><i>These Plan provisions would contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors and associated potential adverse effects. Such effects would include in-combination arising from services and infrastructure to service development, including tourism, which are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSEs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional DDP measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the DDP or integration of DDP provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.</i></p> <p><i>Sustainability and the environment have been integrated into Elevation Project relating to partnering with the OPW: "ensure a sustainable approach to delivering the Ancient story".</i></p>				

Section 9 Mitigation Measures

9.1 Introduction

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing the Plan. Various environmental sensitivities and issues have been communicated to Fáilte Ireland through the SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes.

By integrating all SEA and AA recommendations into the Plan⁸⁶, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:

- The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan are avoided, reduced or offset; and
- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan are maximised.

Mitigation was achieved through the following:

- Establishing the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework⁸⁷; and
- Integrating Requirements for Environmental Compliance into the Plan⁸⁸.

9.2 Establishing the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework⁸⁹

The SEA team worked with the Plan-preparation team at Fáilte Ireland in order to help establish the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework.

Implementing the VEDP/DDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. **The VEDP/DDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent.**

The VEDP/DDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction for the next 22 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSEs for the Eastern & Midlands and Northern & Western Regions (the Plan area is located within both of these RSE Regions) sets out objectives relating tourism development, that have been subject to environmental assessment, including those relating to: enhancing provision of tourism and leisure amenity; promoting tourism activity; developing a road network and public transport services, facilitating improved visitor access and longer dwell times; developing walking and cycling trails, opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes; and facilitating appropriate tourism development, including that

⁸⁶ All recommendations made by the SEA and AA processes either have been integrated into the Plan

⁸⁷ This framework includes various environmental requirements.

⁸⁸ These requirements include those that have arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

⁸⁹ This framework includes various environmental requirements.

relating to greenways, blueways and peatlands. When adopted, the RSES will inform the review of existing, assessed lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which already include various provisions relating to land use, tourism and infrastructure. Such reviews will also be subject to environmental assessments.

Implementation of the VEDP/DDP shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the VEDP/DDP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the VEDP/DDP is not part and does not contribute towards.

Figure 9.1 provides a schematic of the relationship between Visitor Experience Development Plans/Destination Development Plans and the existing Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework. Also indicated is the hierarchy of accompanying environmental assessment in force. Note that the Overall Findings of this SEA are provided under Section 8.2 of this SEA Environmental Report.

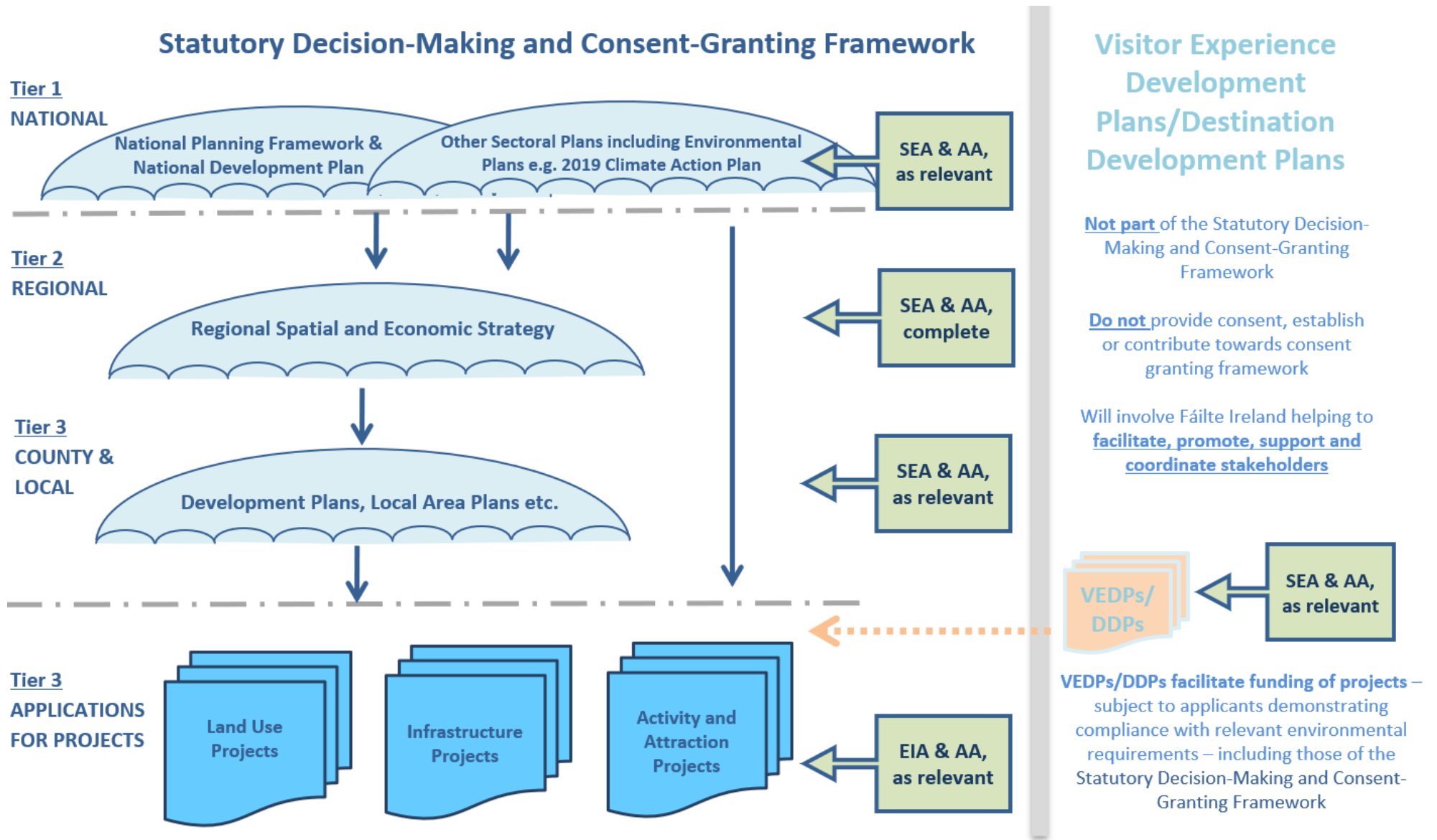


Figure 9.1 Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework, VEDPs/DDPs and Environmental Assessment Requirements

9.3 Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the Plan⁹⁰

The SEA and AA team worked with the Plan-preparation team at Fáilte Ireland in order to integrate requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance⁹¹ with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 "*Site Maintenance Guidelines*" and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 "*Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others*" (and any subsequent replacements).

In order to be realised, projects included in the VEDP/DDP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the VEDP/DDP is not part and does not contribute towards. Such legislation, policies, plans and programmes include:

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- Statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (e.g. Development Plans and Local Area Plans) and that have undergone environmental assessment, as appropriate, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management⁹²; and
- The Climate Action Plan 2019, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions), the National Mitigation Plan (2017 and any subsequent versions) and planning authority Climate Change Action Plans.⁹³

Infrastructure Capacity⁹⁴

With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) the potential impact on existing infrastructure as well as the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourism-related traffic volumes along any routes resulting from the relevant initiative shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate, where relevant. The promotion of developing visitor friendly infrastructure where it is required will also be encouraged.

⁹⁰ These requirements include those that have arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

⁹¹ Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

⁹² For more information please refer to Appendix II of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

⁹³ For more information please refer to Section 4.10 and/or Appendix II of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

⁹⁴ This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

Visitor Management⁹⁵

Those receiving funding shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities.

Extensive research by Fáilte Ireland has shown improved environmental outcomes (including improved attainment of conservation objectives) in areas with visitor management strategies. Visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.

Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services⁹⁶

Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services, taking into account the output of the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services project being undertaken by the NPWS. Proposals for the development of any green infrastructure should demonstrate the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the: provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

⁹⁵ This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

⁹⁶ This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

Section 10 Monitoring Measures

10.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. This section details the measures that have been selected in order to monitor the likely significant effects of implementing relevant Fáilte Ireland Plans, Programmes, etc.

The monitoring programme is flexible to take account of specific environmental issues and unforeseen adverse impacts should they arise. It monitors all potential effects, including positive and negative ones (including cumulative effects – refer also to Section 7.3). Monitoring can demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the Plan and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

The occurrence of persistent significant adverse environmental effects which are directly attributable to tourism would necessitate consideration of the effects in the context of the Plan and a possible review of part(s) of the Plan.

10.2 Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around indicators that allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives identified in Section 5 and used in the evaluation. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the target(s) that were identified with regard to the relevant strategic actions.

Table 10.1 overleaf shows the current indicators and targets that have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing relevant Fáilte Ireland Plans, Programmes, etc. These monitoring measures are updated on an ongoing basis.

Monitoring is an ongoing process and the programme allows for flexibility and further refinement of indicators and targets.

10.3 Sources

Confirmation of compliance with relevant environmental measures (see Section 9) will be a source of information for the Monitoring Programme. This documentation may include monitoring undertaken by beneficiaries to demonstrate compliance with the environmental requirements.

Other existing monitoring sources will be used, including:

- Sources maintained by planning authorities (such as those arising from the SEA of land use plans) and the relevant authorities e.g. the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Central Statistics Office; and
- Lower-tier environmental assessment and decision making – including a review of project approvals granted and associated documents – will also be utilised as part of the Monitoring Programme.

10.4 Reporting and Responsibility

Reporting on environmental monitoring will address the indicators set out below. Fáilte Ireland 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 corrective action, in combination with the relevant authorities.

Environmental monitoring for the VEDP/DDP and other existing/future Fáilte Ireland plans, programmes, etc. may be undertaken and reported on at the same time. The findings of monitoring will be reported on periodically with frequencies to be determined during implementation.

Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources

Environmental Component	Indicators	Targets	Source and (where available) Frequency
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive	B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under National and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan ⁹⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years) • Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years) • Consultations with the NPWS • CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from Plan	B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from the Plan	
	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan	B3i: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan	
	B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of listed species	B3ii: No significant impacts on the protection of listed species resulting from the Plan	
Population and Human Health	PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency	PHH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Consultations with the HSE and EPA • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
Soil	S1: Artificial surfaces land cover extent	S1: Contribute towards the target of the National Planning Framework's SEA (2018) to "Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes

⁹⁷ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) No alternative solution available; (b) Imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the programme to proceed; and (c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Environmental Component	Indicators	Targets	Source and (where available) Frequency
Water	<p>W1i: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009)</p> <p>W1ii: Mandatory and Guide values as set by the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008)</p> <p>W2: Interactions with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC resulting from development adhering to the Plan</p> <p>W3: Compliance of relevant lower tier assessments and decision making with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines</p>	<p>W1i: No deterioration in the status of any surface water or adverse effect upon the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the Plan</p> <p>W1ii: No deterioration in the value of bathing waters or adverse effect upon the ability of any bathing water to achieve Mandatory values and, where possible, Guide values as a result of the Plan</p> <p>W2: Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC, subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD</p> <p>W3: For lower tier assessments and decision making to comply with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual) • EPA <i>The Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland</i> reports • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
Air and Climatic Factors	<p>AC1: Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation have been integrated into the Plan.</p>	<p>C1: To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
Material Assets	<p>M1: Number of instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity is unavailable</p> <p>M2: Number of significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure</p> <p>M3: Preparation and implementation of construction and environmental management plans</p>	<p>M1: No instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity that does not present a danger to human health are unavailable</p> <p>M2: No significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure</p> <p>M3: For construction and environmental management plans to be prepared and implemented for relevant projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Consultations with the partners such as the EPA, Irish Water and/or planning authorities • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Environmental Component	Indicators	Targets	Source and (where available) Frequency
Cultural Heritage	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH1: No unauthorised adverse effects on archaeological heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
	CH2: Percentage of entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH2: No unauthorised adverse effects on architectural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
Landscape	L1: Number of unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	L1: No unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes

Appendix I SEA Determination

SEA Determination

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Determination

for the:

Draft Ancient Visitor Experience Development Plan

Article 3 para. 2 of the SEA Directive¹, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes, or modifications to these:


- a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive², or
- b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive³ i.e. the Directive requires that SEA is undertaken where Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)⁴ is being undertaken on plans, programmes etc.

The tourism sector Plan does not contribute towards the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive and does not contain provisions or define rules that must be complied with when administrative consent of other projects is being granted.

The Plan does, however, fall under the definition of a "plan" contained within the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and therefore must be screened for the need to undertake AA. The Screening for AA has found that the Plan has the potential, if unmitigated, to affect the ecological integrity European Sites and that measures to ensure that potential effects are avoided are required. Taking into account the requirements of the Habitats Directive and recent case law (including, European Court of Justice Judgement C323-17), Stage 2 AA must therefore be carried out for the Plan. As Stage 2 AA is being undertaken on the Plan, SEA must also be undertaken for this Plan - see requirement at b) above.

This determination has been made having regard to the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument Number (SI No. 435 of 2004), as amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011).

Signatory:



Date:

12/12/2019

¹ Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27th June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment

² Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011, on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification), as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU

³ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

⁴ AA is provided for by the Habitats Directive and is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a European Site in view of its conservation objectives.

Appendix II Relationship with Legislation and Other Plans and Programmes

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
European Level SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. Provide for a high level of protection of the environment by carrying out an environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out an environmental assessment for plans or programmes referred to in Articles 2 to 4 of the Directive. Prepare an environmental report which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme and reasonable alternatives that consider the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme. Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission. Consult other Member States where the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have transboundary environmental effects. Inform relevant authorities and stakeholders on the decision to implement the plan or programme. Issue a statement to include requirements detailed in Article 9 of the Directive. Monitor and mitigate significant environmental effects identified by the assessment. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires the assessment of the environmental effects of public and private projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. Aims to assess and implement avoidance or mitigation measures to eliminate environmental effects, before consent is given of projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects. Those projects are defined in Article 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All projects listed in Annex I are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require an EIA. For projects listed in Annex II, a "screening procedure" is required to determine the effects of projects on the basis of thresholds/criteria or a case by case examination. This should take into account Annex III. The environmental impact assessment shall identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in the light of each individual case and in accordance with Articles 4 to 12, the direct and indirect effects of a project on the following factors: human beings, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, climate and the landscape, material assets and the cultural heritage, the interaction between each factor. Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission before a decision is made. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Maintain or restore to favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of community interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose and protect sites of importance to habitats, plant and animal species. Establish a network of European sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, to enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. Carry out comprehensive assessment of habitat types and species present. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a system of strict protection for the animal species and plant species listed in Annex IV. 	
Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state including their eggs, nests and habitats. Protect, manage and control these species and comply with regulations relating to their exploitation. The species included in Annex I shall be the subject of special conservation measures concerning their habitat in order to ensure their survival and reproduction in their area of distribution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Annex 1. Preserve, maintain and establish biotopes and habitats to include the creation of protected areas (Special Protection Areas). Ensure the upkeep and management in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats inside and outside the protected zones, re-establish destroyed biotopes and creation of biotopes. Measures for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I is required as regards their breeding, moulting and wintering areas and staging posts along their migration routes. The protection of wetlands and particularly wetlands of international importance. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and - preventing further such pollution. 	Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is designed to prevent pollution of surface waters and ground water from agricultural sources and to protect and improve water quality. Ireland's third NAP came into operation in 2014. Each Member State's NAP must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a limit on the amount of livestock manure applied to the land each year set periods when land spreading is prohibited due to risk set capacity levels for the storage of livestock manure 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive (2008/1/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this Directive is to achieve integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from the activities listed in Annex I. It lays down measures designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions in the air, water and land from the abovementioned activities, including measures concerning waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole, without prejudice to Directive 85/337/EEC and other relevant Community provisions. 	The IPPC Directive is based on several principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an integrated approach best available techniques, flexibility; and public participation 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Plant Protection (products) Directive 2009/127/EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Directive aims at reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment by introducing different targets, tools and measures such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or National Action Plans (NAPs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Framework Directive applies to pesticides which are plant protection products. Regarding pesticide application equipment already in professional use, the Framework Directive introduces requirements for the inspection and maintenance to be carried out on such equipment. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
EU Renewables Directive (2009/28/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Renewable Energy Directive establishes an overall policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU. It requires the EU to fulfil at least 20% of its total energy needs with renewables by 2020 – to be achieved through the attainment of individual national targets. All EU countries must also ensure that at least 10% of their transport fuels come from renewable sources by 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Directive promotes cooperation amongst EU countries (and with countries outside the EU) to help them meet their renewable energy targets. The Directive specifies national renewable energy targets for each country, taking into account its starting point and overall potential for renewables. EU countries set out how they plan to meet these targets and the general course of their renewable energy policy in national renewable energy action plans. Progress towards national targets is measured every two years when EU countries publish national renewable energy progress reports. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Indirect Land Use Change Directive (2012/0288(COD))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 3(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (3) requires Member States to ensure that the share of energy from renewable energy sources in all forms of transport in 2020 is at least 10 % of their final energy consumption. The blending of biofuels is one of the methods available for Member States to meet this target, and is expected to be the main contributor. Other methods available to meet the target are the reduction of energy consumption, which is imperative because a mandatory percentage target for energy from renewable sources is likely to become increasingly difficult to achieve sustainably if overall demand for energy for transport continues to rise, and the use of electricity from renewable energy sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit the contribution that conventional biofuels (with a risk of ILUC emissions) make towards attainment of the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive; Improve the greenhouse gas performance of biofuel production processes (reducing associated emissions) by raising the greenhouse gas saving threshold for new installations subject to protecting installations already in operation on 1st July 2014; Encourage a greater market penetration of advanced (low-ILUC) biofuels by allowing such fuels to contribute more to the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive than conventional biofuels; Improve the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by obliging Member States and fuel suppliers to report the estimated indirect land-use change emissions of biofuels. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (2014/94/EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Directive establishes a common framework of measures for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Union in order to minimise dependence on oil and to mitigate the environmental impact of transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Directive sets out minimum requirements for the building-up of alternative fuels infrastructure, including recharging points for electric vehicles and refuelling points for natural gas (LNG and CNG) and hydrogen, to be implemented by means of Member States' national policy frameworks, as well as common technical specifications for such recharging and refuelling points, and user information requirements. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a set of binding measures to help the EU reach its 20% energy efficiency target by 2020. Under the Directive, all EU countries are required to use energy more efficiently at all stages of the energy chain, from production to final consumption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy distributors or retail energy sales companies have to achieve 1.5% energy savings per year through the implementation of energy efficiency measures EU countries can opt to achieve the same level of savings through other means, such as improving the efficiency of heating systems, installing double glazed windows or insulating roofs The public sector in EU countries should purchase energy efficient buildings, products and services Every year, governments in EU countries must carry out energy efficient renovations on at least 3% (by floor area) of the buildings they own and occupy 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy consumers should be empowered to better manage consumption. This includes easy and free access to data on consumption through individual metering • National incentives for SMEs to undergo energy audits • Large companies will make audits of their energy consumption to help them identify ways to reduce it • Monitoring efficiency levels in new energy generation capacities. 	
EU Seveso Directive (2012/18/EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Directive lays down rules for the prevention of major accidents which involve dangerous substances, and the limitation of their consequences for human health and the environment, with a view to ensuring a high level of protection throughout the Union in a consistent and effective manner. 	<p>The Seveso Directive is well integrated with other EU policies, thus avoiding double regulation or other administrative burden. This includes the following related policy areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals; • The Union's Civil Protection Mechanism; • The Security Union Agenda including CBRN-E and Protection of critical infrastructure; • Policy on environmental liability and on the protection of the environment through criminal law; • Safety of offshore oil and gas operations. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European Union Biodiversity Strategy to 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to halt or reverse biodiversity loss and speed up the EU's transition towards a resource efficient and green economy. • Halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines six targets and twenty actions to aid European Union in halting the loss to biodiversity and eco-system services. • The six targets cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Full implementation of EU nature legislation to protect biodiversity ◦ Maintaining, enhancing and protecting for ecosystems, and green infrastructure ◦ Ensuring sustainable agriculture, and forestry ◦ Sustainable management of fish stocks ◦ Reducing invasive alien species ◦ Addressing the global need to contribute towards averting global biodiversity loss 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU Green Infrastructure Strategy	<p>Aims to create a robust enabling framework in order to promote and facilitate Green Infrastructure (GI) projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting GI in the main EU policy areas. • Supporting EU-level GI projects. • Improving access to finance for GI projects. • Improving information and promoting innovation. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
UN Kyoto Protocol (2nd Kyoto Period), the Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II), Paris climate conference (COP21) 2015 (Paris Agreement)	<p>The UN Kyoto Protocol set of policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II) aims to identify and develop all the necessary elements of an EU strategy to implement the Kyoto Protocol.</p> <p>At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kyoto Protocol is implemented through the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II). • EU member states implement measures to improve on or complement the specified measures and policies arising from the ECCP. • Under COP21, governments agreed to come together every 5 years to set more ambitious targets as required by science; report to each other and the public on how well they are doing to implement their targets; track progress towards the 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	binding global climate deal. The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C.	long-term goal through a robust transparency and accountability system.	environmental protection and management.
EU 2020 Climate and Energy Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Binding legislation which aims to ensure the European Union meets its climate and energy targets for 2020. Aims to achieve a 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels. Aims to raise the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%. Achieve a 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency. 	<p>Four pieces of complimentary legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reform of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) to include a cap on emission allowances in addition to existing system of national caps. Member States have agreed national targets for non-EU ETS emissions from countries outside the EU. Meet the national renewable energy targets of 16% for Ireland by 2020. Preparing a legal framework for technologies in carbon capture and storage. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030 that has been agreed by European countries. Targets include a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels, at least a 27% share of renewable energy consumption and at least 27% energy savings compared with the business-as-usual scenario. 	<p>To meet the targets, the European Commission has proposed the following policies for 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reformed EU emissions trading scheme (ETS). New indicators for the competitiveness and security of the energy system, such as price differences with major trading partners, diversification of supply, and interconnection capacity between EU countries. First ideas for a new governance system based on national plans for competitive, secure, and sustainable energy. These plans will follow a common EU approach. They will ensure stronger investor certainty, greater transparency, enhanced policy coherence and improved coordination across the EU. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<p>The Clean Air for Europe Directive (2008/50/EC) (EU Air Framework Directive)</p> <p>Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CAFE Directive merges existing legislation into a single directive (except for the fourth daughter directive). Sets new air quality objectives for PM_{2.5} (fine particles) including the limit value and exposure related objectives. Accounts for the possibility to discount natural sources of pollution when assessing compliance against limit values. Allows the possibility for time extensions of three years (PM₁₀) or up to five years (NO₂, benzene) for complying with limit values, based on conditions and the assessment by the European Commission. The Fourth Daughter Directive lists pollutants, target values and monitoring requirements for the following: arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole. Aims to assess the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria. Obtains information on ambient air quality in order to help combat air pollution and nuisance and to monitor long-term trends and improvements resulting from national and community measures. Ensures that such information on ambient air quality is made available to the public. Aims to maintain air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases. Aims to promote increased cooperation between the Member States in reducing air pollution. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)	The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide	The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw up strategic noise maps for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators and use these maps to assess the number of 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction from source.	<p>people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and • Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise. <p>The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities.</p>	bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks • Reduce adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess all water courses and coast lines at risk from flooding through Flood Risk Assessment • Prepare flood hazard maps and flood risk maps outlining the extent or potential of flooding and assets and humans at risk in these areas at River Basin District level (Article 3(2) (b)) and areas covered by Article 5(1) and Article 13(1) (b) in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3. • Implement flood risk management plans and take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce flood risk for the areas covered by the Articles listed above. • Inform the public and allow the public to participate in planning process. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a framework for the protection of water bodies to include inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater and their dependent wildlife and habitats. • Preserve and prevent the deterioration of water status and where necessary improve and maintain “good status” of water bodies. • Promote sustainable water usage. • The Water Framework Directive repealed the following Directives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Drinking Water Abstraction Directive ○ Sampling Drinking Water Directive ○ Exchange of Information on Quality of Surface Freshwater Directive ○ Shellfish Directive ○ Freshwater Fish Directive ○ Groundwater (Dangerous Substances) Directive ○ Dangerous Substances Directive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect, enhance and restore all water bodies and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Directive. • Achieve "good status" for all waters. • Manage water bodies based on identifying and establishing river basins districts. • Involve the public and streamline legislation. • Prepare and implement a River Basin Management Plan for each river basin districts identified and a Register of Protected Areas. • Establish a programme of monitoring for surface water status, groundwater status and protected areas. • Recover costs for water services. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect, control and conserve groundwater. • Prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater. • Implements measures to prevent and control groundwater pollution, including criteria for assessing good groundwater chemical status and criteria for the identification of significant and sustained upward trends and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet minimum groundwater standards listed in Annex 1 of Directive. • Meet threshold values adopted by national legislation for the pollutants, groups of pollutants and indicators of pollution which have been identified as contributing to the characterisation of bodies or groups of bodies of groundwater as being at risk, also taking into account Part B of Annex II. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and maintain the quality of water intended for human consumption. • Protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set values applicable to water intended for human consumption for the parameters set out in Annex I. • Set values for additional parameters not included in Annex I, where the protection of human health within national territory or part of it so requires. The values set should, as a minimum, satisfy the requirements of Article 4(1) (a). • Implement all measures necessary to ensure that regular monitoring of the quality of water intended for human consumption is carried out, in order to check that the water available to consumers meets the requirements of this Directive and in particular the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5. • Ensure that any failure to meet the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5 is immediately investigated in order to identify the cause. • Ensure that the necessary remedial action is taken as soon as possible to restore its quality and shall give priority to their enforcement action. • Undertake remedial action to restore the quality of the water where necessary to protect human health. • Notify consumers when remedial action is being undertaken except where the competent authorities consider the non-compliance with the parametric value to be trivial. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water and the treatment and discharge of waste water from certain industrial sectors. • The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of waste water discharges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban waste water entering collecting systems shall before discharge, be subject to secondary treatment. • Annex II requires the designation of areas sensitive to eutrophication which receive water discharges. • Establishes minimum requirements for urban waste water collection and treatment systems in specified agglomerations to include special requirements for sensitive areas and certain industrial sectors. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) as amended by Directive 2006/21/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC and Directive 2013/30/EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a framework of environmental liability based on the 'polluter-pays' principle, to prevent and remedy environmental damage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates to environmental damage caused by any of the occupational activities listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities; damage to protected species and natural habitats caused by any occupational activities other than those listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities, whenever the operator has been at fault or negligent. • Where environmental damage has not yet occurred but there is an imminent threat of such damage occurring, the operator shall, without delay, take the necessary preventive measures. • Where environmental damage has occurred the operator shall, without delay, inform the competent authority of all relevant aspects of the situation and take all practicable steps to immediately control, contain, remove or otherwise manage the relevant contaminants and/or any other damage 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<p>factors in order to limit or to prevent further environmental damage and adverse effects on human health or further impairment of services and the necessary remedial measures, in accordance with Article 7.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The operator shall bear the costs for the preventive and remedial actions taken pursuant to this Directive. • The competent authority shall be entitled to initiate cost recovery proceedings against the operator. • The operator may be required to provide financial security guarantees to ensure their responsibilities under the directive are met. • The Environmental Liability Directive has been amended through a number of Directives that are not of significant relevance to the SEA for the Guidelines. Implementation of the Environmental Liability Directive is contributed towards by a Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) 'Making the Environmental Liability Directive more fit for purpose' that is updated annually to changing developments, growing knowledge and new needs. 	
<p>European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta 1992)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aim of this (revised) Convention is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study. 	<p>The Valletta Convention makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It also deals with public access, in particular to archaeological sites, and educational actions to be undertaken to develop public awareness of the value of the archaeological heritage. It also constitutes an institutional framework for pan-European co-operation on the archaeological heritage, entailing a systematic exchange of experience and experts among the various States.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Convention of the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada 1995)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reinforcement and promotion of policies for protecting and enhancing the heritage within the territories of the parties. • The affirmation of European solidarity with regard to the protection of the heritage and the fostering of practical co-operation between states and regions. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time. • A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. • Recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage. • Emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<p>within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the necessary steps to apply the provisions of this Convention concerning the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society. • Greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned. 	
<p>European Landscape Convention 2000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The developments in agriculture, forestry, industrial and mineral production techniques, together with the practices followed in town and country planning, transport, networks, tourism and recreation, and at a more general level, changes in the world economy, have in many cases accelerated the transformation of landscapes. The Convention expresses a concern to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment. It aims to respond to the public's wish to enjoy high quality landscapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote protection, management and planning of landscapes. • Organise European co-operation on landscape issues. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>The Seventh Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the European Community (2013-2020)</p>	<p>It identifies three key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital • to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy • to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing 	<p>Four so called "enablers" will help Europe deliver on these objectives (goals):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better implementation of legislation. • Better information by improving the knowledge base. • More and wiser investment for environment and climate policy. • Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies. <p>Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make the Union's cities more sustainable. • To help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats)</p>	<p>The convention has three main aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats • to promote cooperation between states • to give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species including endangered and vulnerable migratory species 	<p>The Parties under the convention recognise the intrinsic value of nature, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations, they also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to ensure the conservation of nature in their countries, paying particular attention to planning and development policies and pollution control. • Look at implementing the Bern Convention in central Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. • Take account of the potential impact on natural heritage by other policies. • Promote education and information of the public, ensuring the need to conserve species is understood and acted upon. • Develop an extensive number of species action plans, codes of conducts, and guidelines, at their own initiative or in co-operation with other organisations. • Created the Emerald Network, an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Bali Road Map (2007)	<p>The overall goals of the project are twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase national capacity to co-ordinate ministerial views, participate in the UNFCCC process, and negotiate positions within the timeframe of the Bali Action Plan; and To assess investment and financial flows to address climate change for up to three key sectors and/or economic activities. 	<p>The Bali Action Plan is centred on four main building Blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mitigation adaptation technology financing 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Cancun Agreements (2010)	<p>Set of decisions taken at the COP 16 Conference in Cancun in 2010 which addresses a series of key issues in the fight against climate change. Cancun Agreements' main objectives cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation Transparency of actions Technology Finance Adaptation Forests Capacity building 	<p>Among the most prominent agreements is the establishment of a Green Climate Fund to transfer money from the developed to developing world to tackle the impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Doha Climate Gateway (2012)	<p>Set of decisions taken at the COP 18 meeting in Doha in 2012 which pave the way for a new agreement in Paris in 2015.</p>	<p>The following actions were committed to by governments at this conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set out a timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015 (to come into effect in 2020); Complete the work under Bali Action Plan and to focus on new completing new targets; Strengthen the aim to cut greenhouse gases and help vulnerable countries to adapt; Amend Kyoto Protocol to include a new commitment period for cutting down the greenhouse gases emissions; and Provide the financial and technology support and new institutions to allow clean energy investment and sustainable growth in developing countries. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU Common Agricultural Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve agricultural productivity, so that consumers have a stable supply of affordable food; and To ensure that EU farmers can make a reasonable living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring viable food production that will contribute to feeding the world's population, which is expected to rise considerably in the future; Climate change and sustainable management of natural resources; Looking after the countryside across the EU and keeping the rural economy alive. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU REACH Regulation (EC 1907/2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to improve the protection of human health and the environment through the better and earlier identification of the intrinsic properties of chemical substances. 	<p>The aims are achieved by applying REACH, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation; and Restriction of chemicals. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		REACH also aims to enhance innovation and competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.	bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Stockholm Convention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibit and/or eliminate the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A to the Convention Restrict the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B to the Convention Reduce or eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C to the Convention Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner To target additional POPs Other provisions of the Convention relate to the development of implementation plans, information exchange, public information, awareness and education, research, development and monitoring, technical assistance, financial resources and mechanisms, reporting, effectiveness evaluation and non-compliance 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Ramsar Convention	The Convention’s mission is “the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world”.	<p>Under the “three pillars” of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards the wise use of all their wetlands; Designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the “Ramsar List”) and ensure their effective management; Cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
OSPAR Convention	The mission of OSPAR is to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health in the North-East Atlantic by preventing and eliminating pollution; by protecting the marine environment from the adverse effects of human activities; and by contributing to the sustainable use of the seas.	<p>OSPAR’s work is organised under six strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity and Ecosystem Strategy Eutrophication Strategy Hazardous Substances Strategy Offshore Industry Strategy Radioactive Substances Strategy Strategy for the Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme <p>These six strategies fit together to underpin the ecosystem approach. For each strategy a programme of work is designed and implemented annually.</p>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
European 2020 Strategy for Growth	<p>Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; • Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; • Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion. 	<p>In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed; 2. 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D; 3. the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right); 4. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree; 5. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Level			
Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework, (replacing the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020) and the National Development Plan (2018-2027)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between. • The National Development Plan sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the successful implementation of the new National Planning Framework. This will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions in Ireland over the next two decades, to cater for an expected population increase of over 1 million people. 	<p>The National Planning Framework published alongside the National Development Plan yields ten National Strategic Outcomes as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compact Growth 2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility 3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities 4. Sustainable Mobility 5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills 6. High-Quality International Connectivity 7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage 8. Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society 9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources 10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Planning, Land Use and Transport Outlook 2040 [in preparation]	<p>The PLUTO will take account of forecasted future economic and demographic scenarios, affordability considerations and relevant Government policies and will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quantify in broad terms the appropriate scale of financial investment in land transport over the long term; 2. Consider how fiscal, environmental and technological developments might impact on this investment; and, 3. Identify strategic priorities for future investment to ensure land transport infrastructure provision facilitates the objectives of Project Ireland 2040. 	<p>In preparation</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The core principal objectives of this Act are to amend the Planning Acts of 2000 – 2009 with specific regard given to supporting economic renewal and sustainable development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development, with certain exceptions, is subject to development control under the Planning Acts and the local authorities grant or refuse planning permission for development, including ones within protected areas. • There are, however, a range of exemptions from the planning system. Use of land for agriculture, peat extraction and afforestation, subject to certain thresholds, is generally exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission. • Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for a range of classes and large-scale projects. • Under planning legislation, Development Plans must include mandatory objectives for the conservation of the natural 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of these Regulations is to transpose into Irish law Directive 2001/42/EC of 27 June 2001 (O.J. No. L 197, 21 July 2001) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment — commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. 	<p>heritage and for the conservation of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed. There are also discretionary powers to set objectives for the conservation of a variety of other elements of the natural heritage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regulations cover plans and programmes in all of the sectors listed in article 3(2) of the Directive except land-use planning. These Regulations also amend certain provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide the statutory basis for the transposition of the Directive in respect of land-use planning. Transposition in respect of the land-use planning sector is contained in the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004). 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011, as amended)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These Regulations provide a new for the implementation in Ireland of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on habitats and protection of wild fauna and flora (as amended) and for the implementation of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of wild birds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They provide, among other things, for: the appointment and functions of authorized officers; identification, classification and other procedures relative to the designation of Community sites. The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the CJEU against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Waste Management Act 1996, as amended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make provision in relation to the prevention, management and control of waste; to give effect to provisions of certain acts adopted by institutions of the European communities in respect of those matters; to amend the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, and to repeal certain enactments and to provide for related matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Waste Management Act contains a number of key legal obligations, including requirements for waste management planning, waste collection and movement, the authorisation of waste facilities, measures to reduce the production of waste and/or promote its recovery. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European Communities Environmental Objectives (FPM) Regulations 2009 (S.I 296 of 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of these Regulations is to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for freshwater pearl mussels 	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set environmental quality objectives for the habitats of the freshwater pearl mussel populations named in the First Schedule to these Regulations that are within the boundaries of a site notified in a candidate list of European sites, or designated as a Special Area of Conservation, under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94/1997). Require the production of sub-basin management plans with programmes of measures to achieve these objectives. Set out the duties of public authorities in respect of the sub-basin management plans and programmes of measure 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
<p>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 9 of 2010), as amended (S.I. No. 366 of 2016)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To amend the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) to make further provision to implement Commission Directive 2014/80/EU of 20 June 2014 amending Annex II to Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration. 	<p>The substances and threshold values set out in Schedule 5 to S.I. No. 9 of 2010 have been reviewed and amended where necessary, based on existing monitoring information and international guidelines on appropriate threshold values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part A of Schedule 6 has been amended to include changes to the rules governing the determination of background levels for the purposes of establishing threshold values for groundwater pollutants and indicators of pollution. Part B of Schedule 6 has been amended to include nitrites and phosphorus (total) / phosphates among the minimum list of pollutants and their indicators which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must consider when establishing threshold values Part C of Schedule 6 amends the information to be provided to the Minister by the EPA with regard to the pollutants and their indicators for which threshold values have been established 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 31 of 2014)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These Regulations, which give effect to Irelands 3rd Nitrates Action Programme, provide statutory support for good agricultural practice to protect waters against pollution from agricultural sources 	<p>The Regulations include measures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periods when land application of fertilisers is prohibited Limits on the land application of fertilisers Storage requirements for livestock manure; and Monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures in terms of agricultural practice and impact on water quality. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (2014/89/EU)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Directive establishes a framework for maritime spatial planning aimed at promoting the sustainable growth of maritime economies, the sustainable development of marine areas and the sustainable use of marine resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each Member State shall establish and implement maritime spatial planning. In doing so, Member States shall take into account land-sea interactions. The resulting plan or plans shall be developed and produced in accordance with the institutional and governance levels determined by Member States. This Directive shall not interfere with Member States' competence to design and determine the format and content of that plan or those plans. Maritime spatial planning shall aim to contribute to the objectives listed in Article 5 and fulfil the requirements laid down in Articles 6 and 8. When establishing maritime spatial planning, Member States shall have due regard to the particularities of the marine regions, relevant existing and future activities and uses and their impacts on the environment, as well as to natural resources, and shall also take into account land-sea interactions. <p>Member States may include or build on existing national policies, regulations or mechanisms that have been or are being established before the entry into force of this Directive, provided they are in conformity with the requirements of this Directive.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
UK Marine Policy Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving a sustainable marine economy • Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society • Living within environmental limits • Promoting good governance • Using sound science responsibly 	<p>The MPS will facilitate and support the formulation of Marine Plans, ensuring that marine resources are used in a sustainable way in line with the high-level marine objectives and thereby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote sustainable economic development; • Enable the UK's move towards a low-carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects; • Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and heritage assets; and <p>Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to provide the legal mechanism to help ensure clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas by putting in place a new system for improved management and protection of the marine and coastal environment. 	<p>The Marine Act comprises eight key elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Management Organisation (MMO) • Strategic Marine Planning System • Streamlined Marine Licensing System • Marine Nature Conservation • Fisheries Management and Marine Enforcement • Migratory and Freshwater Fisheries • Coastal Access • Coastal and Estuarine Management 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Marine (Northern Ireland) Act 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to provide for marine plans in relation to the Northern Ireland inshore region; to provide for marine conservation zones in that region; to make further provision in relation to marine licensing for certain electricity works in that region; and for connected purposes. 	<p>The Marine Act sets out a new framework for Northern Ireland's seas based on: a system of marine planning that will balance conservation, energy and resource needs; improved management for marine nature conservation and the streamlining of marine licensing for some electricity projects. The main provisions of the Act are outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Planning • Nature Conservation <p>Marine Licensing</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Act to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy. 	<p>When considering a plan or framework, for approval, the Government shall endeavour to achieve the national transition objective within the period to which the objective relates and shall, in endeavouring to achieve that objective, ensure that such objective is achieved by the implementation of measures that are cost effective and shall, for that purpose, have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ultimate objective specified in Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change done at New York on 9 May 1992 and any mitigation commitment entered into by the European Union in response or otherwise in relation to that objective, • The policy of the Government on climate change, • Climate justice, • Any existing obligation of the State under the law of the European Union or any 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		international agreement referred to in section 2; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most recent national greenhouse gas emissions inventory and projection of future greenhouse gas emissions, prepared by the Agency. 	
The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan (2018 – 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020 is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Plan provides a 'SDG Matrix' which identifies the responsible Government Departments for each of the 169 targets. It also includes a 'SDG Policy Map' indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets. 	The Plan identifies four strategic priorities to guide implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness: raise public awareness of the SDGs; Participation: provide stakeholders opportunities to engage and contribute to follow-up and review processes, and further develop national implementation of the Goals; Support: encourage and support efforts of communities and organisations to contribute towards meeting the SDGs, and foster public participation; and Policy alignment: develop alignment of national policy with the SDGs and identify opportunities for policy coherence. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan (2016-2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> €27 billion multi-annual Exchequer Capital Investment Plan, which is supported by a programme of capital investment in the wider State sector, and which over the period 2016 to 2021 will help to lay the foundations for continued growth in Ireland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Capital Plan reflects the Government's commitment to supporting strong and sustainable economic growth and raising welfare and living standards for all. It includes allocations for new projects across a number of key areas and funding to ensure that the present stock of national infrastructure is refreshed and maintained. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Aquaculture Acts 1997 to 2006: (Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 1(3)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997 (23/1997) Fisheries and Foreshore (Amendment) Act 1998 (54/1998), ss. 2, 3 and 4 Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2001 (40/2001) Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006) 	The Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division ensures the efficient and effective management of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities.	The Strategic Objectives of the Aquaculture & Foreshore Management Division are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to develop and manage an efficient and effective regulatory framework in respect of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; to secure a fair financial return from the State's foreshore estate in the context of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; to progressively reduce arrears in the clearing of licence applications. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Foreshore Acts 1933 to 2011	The Foreshore Acts require that a lease or licence must be obtained from the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government for the carrying out of works or placing structures or material on, or for the occupation of or removal of material from, State-owned foreshore, which represents the greater part of the foreshore. Construction of permanent structures on privately owned foreshore also	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments on the foreshore require planning permission in addition to a Foreshore Lease/Licence/Permission. All Foreshore Leases, Licences and Permissions are without prejudice to the powers of the local planning authority. Applicants should, therefore, consult initially with the local planning authority regarding their proposal. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	required the prior permission of the Minister under the Foreshore Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the case of developments on foreshore for, by or on behalf of a Local Authority where an EIS is required, applications should be made to An Bord Pleanála under Part XV, Planning and Development Act 2000. 	environmental protection and management.
European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea-Fisheries) Regulations 2013 (S.I. 290 of 2013)	<p>These regulations have been drafted to implement the responsibilities of the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine in relation to sea fisheries in Natura 2000 sites, in accordance with the Habitats and Birds Directives as transposed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 3 provides for the submission of a Fisheries Natura Plan in relation to planned fisheries; Regulation 4 provides for a screening of a Fisheries Natura Plan to determine whether or not an appropriate assessment is required; Regulation 5 provides for an appropriate assessment of a Fisheries Natura Plan and also provides for public and statutory consultation; Regulation 6 provides for the Minister to make a determination to adopt a Fisheries Natura Plan. The Minister may amend, withdraw or revoke a plan; Regulation 7 provides for publication of the adopted Fisheries Natura Plan; Regulation 8 provides for a Risk Assessment of unplanned fisheries and also provides for public and statutory consultation on the assessment; Regulation 9 provides for the issue of a Natura Declaration to prohibit, restrict including restricting by permit, control, etc. of sea fishing activities; Regulation 10 provides for Natura Permits to be issued where required by Natura Declarations; and Regulations 11 to 31 deal with functions of authorised officers and related matters, offences, etc. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Seafood Operational Programme (20104-2020)	<p>The Operational Programme (OP) supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in Ireland aims at achieving key national development priorities along with the EU's "Europe 2020" objectives. The OP supports the general reform of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the development of its Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) in Ireland.</p> <p>The OP strategy is designed around the Irish national priorities in the agri-food sector: 'Act Smart' by encouraging knowledge and innovation, 'Think Green' through a responsible and sustainable use of resources, 'Achieve Growth' in order to maintain and create jobs.</p>	<p>e Irish OP is organised around the following priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Union Priority 1 (UP1): €67 million (28% of the total allocation) aim at assuring the sustainable development of fishing activities, while protecting the marine environment Union Priority 2 (UP2): €30 million (12% of the total allocation) will support the Irish National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture that aims at boosting the competitiveness of the aquaculture sector. Union Priority 3 (UP3): €84.8 million (35.4% of the total allocation) will go towards compliance with CFP rules regarding control and data collection. Union Priority 4 (UP4): €12 million (5% of the total allocation) will support local development initiatives — a substantial, eleven-fold increase compared to the 2007-2013 funding period. Union Priority 5 (UP5): €33 million (13.8% of the total allocation) will go towards creating scale in the Irish marketing and processing sectors, starting from the base of very small-scale businesses. Union Priority 6 (UP6): €10.6 million (4% of the total allocation) will be used on measures to improve the 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland (in/pending preparation)	It is intended that the Marine Spatial Plan will be finalised in 2020, and forwarded to the European Commission at that time, ahead of the due date for submission by Member States of their plans in March 2021.	<p>knowledge on the state of the marine environment and the level of protection of marine areas</p> <p>The Marine Spatial Plan will be a succinct strategic document that will deal with, inter alia, the following environmental, social and economic issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key marine activities such as fisheries, tourism, transport, offshore renewable energy generation, oil and gas exploration and production, aquaculture, and how they interact; • Climate change and related impacts; • Communities and health; • Cultural heritage; • Marine environment and biodiversity; • Transboundary interactions with other jurisdictions. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Northern Ireland’s Planning Service’s “Renewable Energy: Wind Farm Development Information Leaflet”	The high-level aim of this information leaflet is to provide information of the planning legislation, policy context and the requirements for the renewable energy and wind farm development in Northern Ireland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is essential that the Environmental Statement meets the legislative requirements, as listed in this information leaflet. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Northern Ireland’s Environmental Authority’s Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland’s Landscapes (Supplementary Planning Guidance to accompany Planning Policy Statement 18 ‘Renewable Energy’) (2008)	This document describes the specific sensitivity to wind energy development of Northern Ireland’s 130 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), by reference to the characteristics and values associated with each LCA, and assesses the capacity of the LCAs to accommodate wind energy development in landscape terms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidance is aimed at domestic, community and commercial wind energy developers and their planning and landscape consultants and at those determining planning applications for wind energy development. • It is intended to assist developers in identifying appropriate sites for wind energy development and in defining the type(s) of wind energy development that may be most suitable in landscape and visual terms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will also be used by the Department in determining planning applications for wind energy development, to inform judgements on the impacts and acceptability of proposed developments in landscape and visual terms. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Ireland’s National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010 (Irish Government submission to the European Commission)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) sets out the Government’s strategic approach and concrete measures to deliver on Ireland’s 16% target under Directive 2009/28/EC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NREAP sets out the Member State’s national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Strategy for Renewable Energy (2012-2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government’s overarching strategic objective is to make renewable energy an increasingly significant component of Ireland’s energy supply by 2020, so that at a minimum it will achieve its legally binding 2020 	<p>This document sets out five strategic goals, reflecting the key dimensions of the renewable energy challenge to 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing on and offshore wind, 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<p>target in the most cost-efficient manner for consumers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of critical importance is the role which the renewable energy sector plays in job creation and economic activity as part of the Government's action plan for jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building a sustainable bioenergy sector, Fostering R&D in renewables such as wave & tidal, Growing sustainable transport; and Building out robust and efficient networks. 	<p>combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Climate Mitigation Plan 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the deep decarbonisation required in Ireland by mid-century in line with the Government's policy objectives. 	<p>The National Mitigation Plan focuses on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Action Policy Framework Decarbonising Electricity Generation Decarbonising the Built Environment Decarbonising Transport An Approach to Carbon Neutrality for Agriculture, Forest and Land Use Sectors 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Policy Position provides a high-level policy direction for the adoption and implementation by Government of plans to enable the State to move to a low carbon economy by 2050. Statutory authority for the plans is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. 	<p>National climate policy in Ireland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises the threat of climate change for humanity; Anticipates and supports mobilisation of a comprehensive international response to climate change, and global transition to a low-carbon future; Recognises the challenges and opportunities of the broad transition agenda for society; and Aims, as a fundamental national objective, to achieve transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Clean Air Strategy [in preparation]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Clean Air Strategy will provide the strategic policy framework necessary to identify and promote integrated measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner air while delivering on wider national objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a National Strategy will provide a policy framework by which Ireland can develop the necessary policies and measures to comply with new and emerging EU legislation. The Strategy should also help tackle climate change. The Strategy will consider a wider range of national policies that are relevant to clean air policy such as transport, energy, home heating and agriculture. In any discussion relating to clean air policy, the issue of people's health is paramount and this will be a strong theme of the Strategy. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan need to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EirGrid's Grid25 Strategy and associated Grid25 Implementation Programme 2017-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EirGrid's mission is to develop, maintain and operate a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system for Ireland; <i>"Our vision is of a grid developed to match future needs, so it can safely and reliably carry power all over the country to the major towns and cities and onwards to every home, farm and business where the electricity is consumed and so it can meet the needs of consumers and generators in a sustainable way."</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grid25, EirGrid's roadmap to uprate the electricity transmission grid by 2025, continues to be implemented so as to increase the capacity of the grid, to satisfy future demand, and to help Ireland meet its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable energy by 2020. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan as varied needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans, programmes, etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objective of this Strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Strategic Greenway network of national and regional routes, with a number of high capacity flagship routes that can be extended and/or link with local Greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure; 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<p>constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenways users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over the next 10 years with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to Ireland and are regularly used by overseas visitors, domestic visitors and locals thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity; Greenways that provide a substantially segregated off road experience linking places of interest, recreation and leisure in areas with beautiful scenery of different types with plenty to see and do; and Greenways that provide opportunities for the development of local businesses and economies, and Greenways that are developed with all relevant stakeholders in line with an agreed code of practice. 	<p>combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Water Resources Plan [in preparation]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NWRP is a plan on how to provide a safe, secure and reliable water supply to customers for the next 25 years, without causing adverse impact on the environment. The objective of the NWRP is to set out how we intend to maintain the supply and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term whilst minimising the impact on the environment. 	<p>The key objectives of the plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify areas where there are current and future potential water supply shortfalls, taking into account normal and extreme weather conditions Assess the current and future water demand from homes, businesses, farms, and industry Consider the impacts of climate change on Ireland’s water resources Develop a drought plan advising measures to be taken before and during drought events Develop a plan detailing how we deal with the material that is produced as a result of treating drinking water Identify, develop and assess options to help meet potential shortfalls in water supplies Assess the water resources available at a national level including lakes, rivers and groundwater 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development (2014-2020)	<p>Vision: <i>“Aquaculture in RC is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable, with a developed infrastructure, strong human potentials and an organized market. The consumption of aquaculture products is equal or above EU average, while the technological development of the sector is among the best in the EU.”</i></p>	<p>General development and growth objectives of marine and freshwater aquaculture (2014 – 2020):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the social, business and administrative environment for aquaculture development Increase in the total production to 24,050 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability Improvement of the perception and increase in the national consumption of National products 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Construction 2020, A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction 2020 sets out a package of measures agreed by the Government and is aimed at stimulating activity in the building industry. The Strategy aims both to increase the capacity of the sector to create and maintain jobs, and to deliver a sustainable sector, operating at an appropriate level. It seeks to learn the lessons of the past and to ensure that the right structures and mechanisms are in place so that they are not repeated. 	<p>This Strategy therefore addresses issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic approach to the provision of housing, based on real and measured needs, with mechanisms in place to detect and act when things are going wrong; Continuing improvement of the planning process, striking the right balance between current and future requirements; The availability of financing for viable and worthwhile projects; Access to mortgage finance on reasonable and sustainable terms; 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring we have the tools we need to monitor and regulate the sector in a way that underpins public confidence and worker safety; Ensuring a fit for purpose sector supported by a highly skilled workforce achieving high quality and standards; and Ensuring opportunities are provided to unemployed former construction workers to contribute to the recovery of the sector. 	
Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall aim of this Strategy is to ensure that economy and society in Ireland can develop to their full potential within a well-protected environment, without compromising the quality of that environment, and with responsibility towards present and future generations and the wider international community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategy addresses all areas of Government policy, and of economic and societal activity, which impact on the environment. It seeks to re-orientate policies as necessary to ensure that the strong growth Ireland enjoys and seeks to maintain will be environmentally sustainable. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 and National Landscape Character Assessment (pending preparation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Landscape Strategy will be used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing the landscape while positively managing its change. It will provide a high-level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape by way of supporting actions. Landscape Strategy Vision: <i>"Our landscape reflects and embodies our cultural values and our shared natural heritage and contributes to the well-being of our society, environment and economy. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning."</i> 	<p>The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into the approach to sustainable development; Establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape; Provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of the landscape; Ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (EPA) 2014-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Plan sets out the priorities to be pursued over the next six years and beyond to improve the management of hazardous waste, taking into account the progress made since the previous plan and the waste policy and legislative changes that have occurred since the previous plan was published. <p>Section 26 of the Waste Management Act 1996 as amended, sets out the overarching objectives for the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. In this context, the following objectives are included as priorities for the revised Plan period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste by industry and society generally; 	<p>The revised Plan makes 27 recommendations under the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevention Collection Self-sufficiency Regulation Legacy issues North-south cooperation Guidance and awareness Implementation 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maximise the collection of hazardous waste with a view to reducing the environmental and health impacts of any unregulated waste; To strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export; To minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management. 		
Ministerial Guidelines such as Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and Flood Risk Management Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department produces a range of guidelines designed to help planning authorities, An Bord Pleanála, developers and the general public and cover a wide range of issues amongst others, architectural heritage, child care facilities, landscape, quarries and residential density. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Minister issues statutory guidelines under Section 28 of the Act which planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are obliged to have regard to in the performance of their planning functions. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
HSE Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vision is: <i>"A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility."</i> 	<p>These four goals are interlinked, interdependent and mutually supportive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Our Sustainable Future: A framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012	<p>A medium to long term framework for advancing sustainable development and the green economy in Ireland. It identifies spatial planning as a key challenge for sustainable development and sets a series of measures to address these challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets out the challenges facing us and how we might address them in making sure that quality of life and general wellbeing can be improved and sustained in the decades to come. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020 (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines a policy for how a sustainable travel and transport system can be achieved. Sets out five key goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce overall travel demand. To maximise the efficiency of the transport network. To reduce reliance on fossil fuels. To reduce transport emissions. To improve accessibility to transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Others lower level aims include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce distance travelled by private car and encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in areas of employment and to encourage people to live in close proximity to places of employment ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies ○ strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets 	
<p>Investing in our Future: A Strategic Framework for Investment in Land Transport (SFILT) – Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFILT sets out a set of priorities to guide the allocation of the State’s investment to best develop and manage Ireland’s land transport network over the coming decades. 	<p>The three priorities stated in SFILT are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority 1: Achieve steady state maintenance (meaning that the maintenance and renewal of the existing transport system is at a sufficient level to maintain the system in an adequate condition); • Priority 2: Address urban congestion; and • Priority 3: Maximise the value of the road network. <p>In delivering on the steady state maintenance objective set out in SFILT, the Plan includes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned replacement programme for the bus fleet operated under Public Service Obligation (“PSO”) contracts; • Tram refurbishment and asset renewal in the case of light rail; and • To the extent within the Authority’ remit, support for the operation of the existing rail network within the GDA. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework 2007 – 2020 (2007)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White paper setting out a framework for delivering a sustainable energy future in Ireland. • Outlines strategic Goals for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Security of Supply ○ Sustainability of Energy ○ Competitiveness of Energy Supply 	<p>The underpinning Strategic Goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that electricity supply consistently meets demand • Ensuring the physical security and reliability of gas supplies to Ireland • Enhancing the diversity of fuels used for power generation • Delivering electricity and gas to homes and businesses over efficient, reliable and secure networks • Creating a stable attractive environment for hydrocarbon exploration and production • Being prepared for energy supply disruptions 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2018 and forthcoming regional, local and sectoral adaptation plans (including marine)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAF specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities in their administrative areas in order to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation under this Framework should seek to minimise costs and maximise the opportunities arising from climate change. • Adaptation actions range from building adaptive capacity (e.g. increasing awareness, sharing information and targeted training) through to policy and finance-based actions. • Adaptation actions must be risk based, informed by existing vulnerabilities of our society and systems and an understanding of projected climate change. • Adaptation actions taken to increase climate resilience must also consider impacts on other sectors and levels of governance 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Governments White Paper ‘Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future’ (2015 – 2030)</p>	<p>The White Paper sets out a vision and a framework to guide Irish energy policy between now and 2030. A complete energy policy update informed by the vision to transform Ireland into a low carbon society and economy by 2050.</p>	<p>2030 will represent a significant milestone, meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced GHG emissions from the energy sector by between 80% and 95% • Ensuring that secure supplies of competitive and affordable energy remain available to citizens and businesses. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
			regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Renewable Energy Action Plan (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out the Member State’s national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive. 	Including Ireland’s 16% target of gross final consumption to come from renewables by 2020.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland (2009 – 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan reviews the original 90 actions outlined in the first Plan and updates/renews/removes them as appropriate. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Wildlife Act of 1976 Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The act provides protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides protection for certain species, their habitats and important ecosystems • Give statutory protection to NHAs • Enhances wildlife species and their habitats • Includes more species for protection 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Actions for Biodiversity (2017-2021) Ireland’s National Biodiversity Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out strategic objectives, targets and actions to conserve and restore Ireland’s biodiversity and to prevent and reduce the loss of biodiversity in Ireland and globally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To mainstream biodiversity in the decision-making process across all sectors. • To substantially strengthen the knowledge base for conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity. • To increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystems services. • To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside. • To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the marine environment. • To expand and improve on the management of protected areas and legally protected species. • To substantially strengthen the effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Broadband Plan (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out the strategy to deliver high speed broadband throughout Ireland. 	The Plan sets out:	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear statement of Government policy on the delivery of High-Speed Broadband. • Specific targets for the delivery and rollout of high-speed broadband and the speeds to be delivered. • The strategy and interventions that will underpin the successful implementation of these targets. • A series of specific complementary measures to promote implementation of Government policy in this area. 	<p>legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 722 of 2003)</p> <p>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 350 of 2014)</p> <p>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface waters) Regulations of 2009 (SI 272 of 2009)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transpose the Water Framework Directive into legislation. • Outlines the general duty of public authorities in relation to water. • Identifies the competent authorities in charge of water policy (amended to Irish Water in 2013) and gives EPA and the CER the authority to regulate and supervise their actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements River basin districts and characterisation of RBDs and River Basin Management Plans. • Requires the public to be informed and consulted on the Plan and for progress reports to be published on RBDs. • Implements a Register of protected areas, Classification systems and Monitoring programmes for water bodies. • Allows the competent authority to recover the cost of damage/destruction of status of water body. • Outlines environmental objectives and programme of measures and environmental quality standards for priority substances. • Outlines criteria for assessment of groundwater. • Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for surface water bodies. • Outlines surface water quality standards. • Establishes threshold values for the classification and protection of surface waters against pollution and deterioration in quality. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations of 2010 (SI 9 of 2010)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transpose the requirements of the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC into Irish Legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for groundwater bodies of groundwater against pollution and deterioration in quality. • Sets groundwater quality standards. • Outlines threshold values for the classification and protection of groundwater. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Water Pollution Acts 1977 to 1990</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Water Pollution Acts allow Local Authorities the authority regulate and supervise actions relating to water in their division. 	<p>The Water Pollution Acts enable local authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecute for water pollution offences. • Attach appropriate pollution control conditions in the licensing of effluent discharges from industry, etc., made to waters. • Issue notices ("section 12 notices") to farmers, etc., specifying measures to be taken within a prescribed period to prevent water pollution. • issue notices requiring a person to cease the pollution of waters and requiring the mitigation or remedying of any effects of the pollution in the manner and within the period specified in such notices; • Seek court orders, including High Court injunctions, to prevent, terminate, mitigate or remedy pollution/its effects. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
<p>Water Services Act 2007</p> <p>Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012</p> <p>Water Services Act (No. 2) 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the water services infrastructure. Outlines the responsibilities involved in delivering and managing water services. Identifies the authority in charge of provision of water and waste water supply. Irish Water was given the responsibility of the provision of water and wastewater services in the amendment act during 2013, therefore these services are no longer the responsibility of the 34 Local Authorities in Ireland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare water quality management plans for any waters in or adjoining their functional areas. <p>Key strategic objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring Irish Water delivers infrastructural projects that meet key public health, environmental and economic objectives in the water services sector. Ensuring the provision of adequate water and sewerage services in the gateways and hubs listed in the National Spatial Strategy, and in other locations where services need to be enhanced. Ensuring good quality drinking water is available to all consumers of public and group water supplies, in compliance with national and EU drinking water standards Ensuring the provision of the remaining infrastructure needed to provide secondary wastewater treatment, for compliance with the requirements of the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. Promoting water conservation through Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan, the Rural Water Programme and other measures. Monitoring the on-going implementation of septic tanks inspection regime and the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems. Ensuring a fair funding model to deliver water services. Overseeing the establishment of an economic regulation function under the CER. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan will need to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan (2014-2016)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term. 	<p>Six strategic objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet Customer Expectations. Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply. Provide Effective Management of Wastewater. Protect and Enhance the Environment. Support Social and Economic Growth. Invest in the Future. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Raised Bog SAC Management Plan and Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to meet nature conservation obligations while having regard to national and local economic, social and cultural needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the implications of management choices for water levels, quantity and quality are fully explored, understood and factored into policy making and land use planning. Review the current raised bog NHA network in terms of its contribution to the national conservation objective for raised bog habitats and determine the most suitable sites to replace the losses of active raised bog habitat and high bog areas within the SAC network and to enhance the national network of NHAs. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Food Harvest 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Harvest 2020 is a roadmap for the Irish food industry, as it seeks to innovate and expand in response to increased global demand for quality foods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks for the improvement of all agricultural sectors at all levels in terms of sustainability, environmental consideration and marketing development. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	It sets out a vision for the potential growth in agricultural output after the removal of milk quotas.		cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Agri-vision 2015 Action Plan	Outlines the vision for agricultural industry to improve competitiveness and response to market demand while respecting and enhancing the environment	not applicable	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS) Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS) Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agri-environmental funding schemes aimed at rural development for the environmental enhancement and protection. • GLAS is the new replacement for REPS and AEOS which are both expiring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish best practice farming methods and production methods in order to protect landscapes and maximise conservation. • Protect biodiversity, endangered species of flora and fauna and wildlife habitats. • Ensure food is produced with the highest regard to the environment. • Implement nutrient management plans and grassland management plans. • Protect and maintain water bodies, wetlands and cultural heritage. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Rural Development Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Rural Development Programme, prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, sets out a national programme based on the EU framework for rural development and prioritises improving the competitiveness of agriculture, improving the environment and improving the quality of life in rural areas 	<p>At a more detailed level, the programme also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports structural change at farm level including training young farmers and encouraging early retirement, support for restructuring, development and innovation; • Aims to improve the environment, biodiversity and the amenity value of the countryside by support for land management through funds such as Natura 2000 payments etc.; and • Aims to improve quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity through the implementation of local development strategies such as non-agricultural activities 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Forestry Programme (2014-2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents Ireland's proposals for 100% State aid funding for a new Forestry Programme for the period 2014 – 2020. 	<p>Measures include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afforestation and Creation of Woodland • NeighbourWood Scheme • Forest Roads • Reconstitution Scheme • Woodland Improvement Scheme • Native Woodland Conservation Scheme • Knowledge Transfer and Information Actions • Producer Groups • Innovative Forest Technology 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
River Basin Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River Basin Management Plans set out the measures planned to maintain and improve the status of waters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest Genetic Reproductive Material Forest Management Plans Aim to protect and enhance all water bodies in the RBD and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive. Identify and manages water bodies in the RBD. Establish a programme of measures for monitoring and improving water quality in the RBD. Involve the public through consultations. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Peatlands Strategy (2015-2025)	<p>This Strategy aims to provide a long-term framework within which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution to the well-being of this and future generations.</p>	<p>Objectives of the Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give direction to Ireland’s approach to peatland management. To apply to all peatlands, including peat soils. To ensure that the relevant State authorities and state-owned companies that influence such decisions contribute to meeting cross-cutting objectives and obligations in their policies and actions. To ensure that Ireland’s peatlands are sustainably managed so that their benefits can be enjoyed responsibly. To inform appropriate regulatory systems to facilitate good decision making in support of responsible use. To inform the provision of appropriate incentives, financial supports and disincentives where required. To provide a framework for determining and ensuring the most appropriate future use of cutover and cutaway bogs. <p>To ensure that specific actions necessary for the achievement of its objectives are clearly identified and delivered by those involved in or responsible for peatlands management or for decisions affecting their management.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Flood Risk Management Plans arising from National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme commenced in Ireland in 2011 and is being overseen by the Office of Public Works. The CFRAM Programme is intended to deliver on core components of the National Flood Policy, adopted in 2004, and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive. 	<p>CFRAM Studies have been undertaken for all River Basin Districts. The studies are focusing on areas known to have experienced flooding in the past and areas that may be subject to flooding in the future either due to development pressures or climate change. Flood Risk and Hazard mapping, including Flood Extent Mapping, was finalised in 2017. The final outputs from the studies are the CFRAM Plans, finalised in 2018. The Plans define the current and future flood risk in the River Basin Districts and set out how this risk can be managed.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Draft National Bioenergy Plan 2014 - 2020	<p>The Draft Bioenergy Plan sets out a vision as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bioenergy resources contributing to economic development and sustainable growth, generating jobs for citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner. 	<p>Three high level goals, of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development are identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To harness the market opportunities presented by bioenergy in order to achieve economic development, growth and jobs. To increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing bioenergy. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that bioenergy developments do not adversely impact the environment and its living and non-living resources. 	achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE) 2016	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017- 2030	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFV forecasts Electricity targets Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets Hydrogen targets Biofuels targets LPG targets Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)	Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten-year plan for the agri-food sector. It underlines the sector's unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.	Food Wise 2025 identifies ambitious and challenging growth projections for the industry over the next ten years including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% increase in exports to €19 billion. 70% increase in value added to €13 billion. 60% increase in primary production to €10 billion. The creation of 23,000 additional jobs all along the supply chain from producer level to high-end value-added product development. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines objectives and actions aimed at developing a strong cycle network in Ireland Sets out 19 specific objectives, and details the 109 actions, aimed at ensuring that a cycling culture is developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets a target where 10% of all journeys will be made by bike by 2020 Proposes the planning, infrastructure, communication, education and stakeholder participations measures required to implement the initiative 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
<p>National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport represents the first step in communicating our longer-term national vision for decarbonising transport by 2050, the cornerstone of which is our ambition that by 2030 all new cars and vans sold in Ireland will be zero-emissions capable. By 2030 it is envisaged that the movement in Ireland to electrically-fuelled cars and commuter rail will be well underway, with natural gas and biofuels developing as major alternatives in the freight and bus sectors. 	<p>This policy set out to achieve five key goals in transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce overall travel demand Maximise the efficiency of the transport network Reduce reliance on fossil fuels Reduce transport emissions Improve accessibility to transport <p>These goals remain the cornerstone of transport policy and are fully aligned to the objectives of this National Policy Framework.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021</p>	<p>The Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021 sets out actions that the Tourism Leadership Group has identified as priorities to be progressed until 2021 in order to maintain sustainable growth in overseas tourism revenue and employment. Each action involves specific tourism stakeholders, both in the public and private sectors, all of whom we expect to proactively work towards the completion of actions within the specified timeframe.</p>	<p>The Plan contains 27 actions focusing on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Context Marketing Ireland as a Visitor Destination Enhancing the Visitor Experience Research in the Irish Tourism Sector Supporting Local Communities in Tourism Wider Government Policy International Context Co-ordination Structures 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Tourism Policy Statement: People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025</p>	<p>The main goal of this policy statement is to have a vibrant, attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country; is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; helps promote a positive image of Ireland overseas, and is a sector in which people want to work.</p>	<p>The Tourism Policy Statement sets three headline targets to be achieved by 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseas tourism revenue of €5 billion per year net of inflation excluding carrier receipts; 250,000 people employed in tourism; and 10 million overseas visitors to Ireland per year. 	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE)</p>	<p>Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.</p>	<p>Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.</p> <p>Methodology: Development of the Policy and Development Framework is to be informed by the carrying out of an SEA, including widespread consultation with stakeholders and public, and with AA under the Habitats Directive.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017-2030	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFV forecasts • Electricity targets • Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets • Hydrogen targets • Biofuels targets • LPG targets Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) NI	The SPPS consolidates some twenty separate policy publications into one document and sets out strategic subject planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. It also provides the core planning principles to underpin delivery of the two-tier planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development.	The overall objective of the planning system is to further sustainable development and improve well-being for the people of the North.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Regional/ County/Local Level			
Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies, replacing Regional Planning Guidelines [in preparation]	The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy provides a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the Eastern and Midlands Region in order to support the implementation of the National Planning Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Eastern and Midlands Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy includes provisions for its 12 constituent local authorities: Fingal County Council; Dublin City Council; South Dublin County Council; Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council; Louth County Council; Kildare County Council; Meath County Council; Wicklow County Council; Longford County Council; Laois County Council; Offaly County Council; and Westmeath County Council. • The Northern and Western Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy includes provisions for its nine constituent local authorities: Galway City Council; Galway County Council; Roscommon County Council; Leitrim County Council; Sligo County Council; Donegal County Council; Monaghan County Council; Mayo County Council; and Cavan County Council). 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Northern Ireland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial strategy for the future development of Northern Ireland. Strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide public and private sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to provide long-term policy direction with a strategic spatial perspective. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Integrated Implementation Plan 2019-2024	The Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035, which established an overall framework for transport investment over the next two decades and was subject to full SEA and Stage 2 AA, is a key policy shaping the six-year Integrated Infrastructure Plan. The priorities in the	The Implementation Plan identifies investment proposals for a number of areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus; • Light Rail; • Heavy Rai; 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	Integrated Infrastructure Plan align with the objectives and priorities set out in the Transport Strategy, focused on improving public and sustainable transport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration Measures and Sustainable Transport Investment; Integrated Service Plan; and Integration and Accessibility. 	bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets out a ten-year cycling strategy for Counties Dublin, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow Plan to increase regions cycle network dramatically <p>The Plan refers to the EuroVelo International Cycle Route Network of the European Cyclists Federation is a network of 15 long distance cycle routes connecting and uniting the whole European continent. Two of these routes are in Ireland including EV2 from Galway through Dublin to London, Berlin, Warsaw and Moscow.</p>	<p>Aims to identify and determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Urban Cycle Network at the Primary, Secondary and Feeder level. The Inter-Urban Cycle Network linking the relevant sections of the Urban Network including the elements of the National Cycle Network within the Greater Dublin Area including linkages to key transport locations outside of urban areas such as airports and ports. <p>The Green Route Network being cycle routes for development of tourist, recreational and leisure purposes.</p>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans, programmes, etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs	<p>Management planning for nature conservation sites has a number of aims. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify and evaluate the features of interest for a site To set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest To describe the site and its management To identify issues (both positive and negative) that might influence the site To set out appropriate strategies/management actions to achieve the objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs (i.e. sites within the Natura 2000 network) have to be set for the habitats and species for which the sites are selected. These objectives are used when carrying out appropriate assessments for plans and projects that might impact on these sites. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NI Regional Landscape Character Assessment	In recognising the importance of sustaining local identity, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has commissioned Landscape Character Assessments of Northern Ireland from environmental consultants, which resulted in the identification of distinct character areas within Northern Ireland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment provides a strategic overview of the landscape in Northern Ireland and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NI Regional Seascape Character Assessment	The aim of this study is to provide a strategic understanding of different areas of regional seascape character along the entire Northern Ireland coast, complementing similar assessments undertaken elsewhere in the UK. This will contribute to the aims of the European Landscape Convention through promoting the protection, management and planning of the seascape, and to support the European cooperation in landscape issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and map the different regional seascape character areas. Describe the key features and characteristics of each seascape character area. Relate the description of each seascape character area to its neighbouring terrestrial landscape character areas (as described in the NI Landscape Character Assessment, 2000) and take account of boundaries identified in relation to neighbouring seascape areas for the British and Irish coastline. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Groundwater Protection Schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidelines for the planning and licensing authorities in carrying out their functions, and a framework to assist in decision-making on the location, nature and control of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Groundwater Protection Scheme aims to maintain the quantity and quality of groundwater, and in some cases improve it, by applying a risk assessment-based approach to groundwater protection and sustainable development. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.		combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overarching vision for each LECP is: “to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Land Use Plans (Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Northern Ireland Areas Plans etc.) of planning authorities within and adjacent to the Plan area including those of Meath, Louth Cavan, Monaghan, Westmeath, Offaly and Kildare County Councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline planning objectives for land use development (including transport and tourism objectives). Strategic framework for planning and sustainable development including those set out in National Planning Framework and Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies. Set out the policies and proposals to guide development in the specific Local Authority area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify future infrastructure, development and zoning required. Protect and enhances amenities and environment. Guide planning authority in assessing proposals. Aim to guide development in the area and the amount of nature of the planned development. Aim to promote sustainable development. Provide for economic development and protect natural environmental, heritage. 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Green Infrastructure Plans/Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes the maintenance and improvement of green infrastructure in an area. Aims to protect and enhance biodiversity and habitats. 	not applicable	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Heritage and Biodiversity Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim to highlight the importance of heritage at a strategic level. Aim to protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services across all spectrums. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and promote heritage as well as increase awareness. Aim to conserve and protect heritage. Outline the status of biodiversity and identifies species of importance. Outline objectives and targets to be met to maintain and improve biodiversity. Aims to increase awareness 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Eastern & Midlands and Connaught & Ulster Regional Waste Management Plans 2015-2021	These plans give effect to national and EU waste policy, and address waste prevention and management (including generation, collection and treatment) over the period 2015-2021.	To manage wastes in a safe and compliant manner, a clear strategy, policies and actions are required.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
			combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Noise Action Plans	Noise Action Plans are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, Statutory Instrument 140 of 2006. These Regulations give effect to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. This Directive sets out a process for managing environmental noise in a consistent manner across the EU and the Noise Regulations set out the approach to meeting the requirements of the Directive in Ireland.	The main purpose of Noise Action Plans is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects and the measures which may be considered to address noise problems • Address strategic noise issues by requiring competent authorities to draw up action plans to manage noise issues and their effects • Reduce noise, where possible, and maintain the environmental acoustic quality where it is good 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection.
Climate Change Action Plans	Respond to the impact that climate change is having, and will continue to have. Attempt to climate change adaptation and mitigation.	These Plans include actions for: Energy and Buildings, Transport, Flood Resilience, Nature-Based Solutions and Resource Management.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans, programmes, etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Fáilte Ireland plans, strategies etc. relating to the Ireland’s Ancient East or other brands or initiatives	Fáilte Ireland’s work includes preparing various plans and strategies for the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland’s Ancient East and other brands and initiatives. These plans are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment.	Some of Fáilte Ireland’s plans and strategies include various projects relating to land use and infrastructural development, including those relating to development of land or on land and the carrying out of land use activities. Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence. The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection.
Various existing, planned and emerging projects provided for by the above plans and programmes	These projects have been provided for by higher-level plans and programmes.	These projects will contribute towards the development of the area to which the Plan relates and/or wider area and will contribute towards environmental protection and management.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Appendix III Designated Sites

Ireland European Sites			
Ireland SACs		Ireland SPA	
Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name
000006	Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally) SAC	004014	Rockabill SPA
000007	Lough Oughter And Associated Loughs SAC	004015	Rogerstown Estuary SPA
000208	Rogerstown Estuary SAC	004026	Dundalk Bay SPA
000440	Lough Ree SAC	004043	Lough Derravaragh SPA
000448	Fortwilliam Turlough SAC	004044	Lough Ennell SPA
000453	Carlingford Mountain SAC	004045	Glen Lough SPA
000455	Dundalk Bay SAC	004046	Lough Iron SPA
000584	Cuilcagh - Anierin Uplands SAC	004047	Lough Owel SPA
000679	Garriskil Bog SAC	004049	Lough Oughter SPA
000685	Lough Ennell SAC	004061	Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA
000688	Lough Owel SAC	004064	Lough Ree SPA
000692	Scragh Bog SAC	004065	Lough Sheelin SPA
001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC	004078	Carlingford Lough SPA
001459	Clogher Head SAC	004080	Boyne Estuary SPA
001626	Annaghmore Lough (Roscommon) SAC	004091	Stabannan-Braganstown SPA
001786	Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC	004101	Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA
001810	White Lough, Ben Loughs And Lough Doo SAC	004102	Garriskil Bog SPA
001818	Lough Forbes Complex SAC	004122	Skerries Islands SPA
001831	Split Hills And Long Hill Esker SAC	004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA
001957	Boyne Coast And Estuary SAC	004167	Slieve Beagh SPA
002120	Lough Bane And Lough Glass SAC	004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA
002121	Lough Lene SAC		
002201	Derragh Bog SAC		
002202	Mount Jessop Bog SAC		
002203	Girley (Drewstown) Bog SAC		
002205	Wooddown Bog SAC		
002299	River Boyne And River Blackwater SAC		
002306	Carlingford Shore SAC		
002313	Ballymore Fen SAC		
002340	Moneybeg And Clareisland Bogs SAC		
002341	Ardagullion Bog SAC		
002342	Mount Hevey Bog SAC		
002346	Brown Bog SAC		
002348	Clooneen Bog SAC		
002349	Corbo Bog SAC		
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC		
Natural Heritage Areas			
Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name
000009	Slieve Rushen Bog NHA	001388	Carbury Bog NHA
000422	Aghnamona Bog NHA	001405	Cashel Bog (Leitrim) NHA
000570	Black Castle Bog NHA	001420	Corracramph Bog NHA
000605	Derrycanan Bog NHA	001423	Cloonageeher Bog NHA
000674	Ballynagrenia And Ballinderry Bog NHA	001448	Forthill Bog NHA
000677	Cloncrow Bog (New Forest) NHA	001450	Mount Jessop Bog NHA
000684	Lough Derravaragh NHA	001580	Girley Bog NHA
000691	Rinn River NHA	001582	Molerick Bog NHA
000694	Wooddown Bog NHA	001603	Eshbrack Bog NHA
000985	Lough Kinale And Derragh Lough NHA	001725	Nure Bog NHA
001218	Skerries Islands NHA	001812	Lough Garr NHA
001324	Jamestown Bog NHA	002072	Lisnarnriagh Bog NHA
002323	Milltownpass Bog NHA		
Proposed Natural Heritage Areas			
Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name
000001	Dromore Lakes	000681	Hill Of Mael And The Rock Of Curry
000002	Bruse Hill	000685	Lough Ennell
000003	Cootehill Church	000686	Lough Glore
000006	Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally)	000687	Lough Iron
000007	Lough Oughter And Associated Loughs	000688	Lough Owel
000008	Lough Ramor	000689	Lough Sewdy

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

000208	Rogerstown Estuary	000690	Lough Sheever Fen/Slevin's Lough Complex
000390	Ballina Bog	000692	Scragh Bog
000424	Clooncoe Wood And Lough	000974	Annagh Lough (Ballyconnell)
000440	Lough Ree	000976	Blackrock's Cross
000442	Brown Bog	000977	Clonty Lough
000445	Cloneen Bog	000978	Cordonaghy Bog
000447	Derrymore Bog	000980	Drumkeen House Woodland
000448	Fortwilliam Turlough	000983	Glasshouse Lake
000449	Lough Bannow	000984	Lough Garrow And Lough Gubdoo
000452	Carlingford Lough	000987	Lough Sheelin
000453	Carlingford Mountain	000988	Madabawn Marsh
000455	Dundalk Bay	000992	Lough Gowna
000456	Stabannan-Braganstown	001203	Knock Lake
000552	Corstown Loughs	001204	Bog Of The Ring
000553	Crewbane Marsh	001268	Cordoo Lough
000554	Laytown Dunes/Nanny Estuary	001293	Blackhall Woods
000556	Lough Shesk	001357	Trim
000557	Rathmoylan Esker	001391	Donadea Wood
000558	Emy Lough	001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton
000559	Glaslough Lake	001407	Corduff Lough
000560	Lough Fea Demesne	001413	Garadice Lough Wood
000561	Lough Naglack	001417	Lough Rinn
000562	Monmurray Grassland	001443	Lough Slawn
000563	Muckno Lake	001444	Derry Lough
000584	Cuicagh - Anierin Uplands	001449	Lough Naback
000602	Corbo Bog	001451	Liscarragh Marsh
000608	Kilglass And Grange Loughs	001454	Ardee Cutaway Bog
000672	Aghalasty Fen	001458	Castlecoo Hill
000673	Ballynafid Lake And Fen	001459	Clogher Head
000679	Garriskil Bog	001461	Darver Castle Woods
000681	Hill Of Mael And The Rock Of Curry	001462	Drumcah, Toprass And Cortial Loughs
000685	Lough Ennell	000977	Clonty Lough
000686	Lough Glore	000978	Cordonaghy Bog
000687	Lough Iron	000980	Drumkeen House Woodland
000688	Lough Owel	000983	Glasshouse Lake
000689	Lough Sewdy	000984	Lough Garrow And Lough Gubdoo
000690	Lough Sheever Fen/Slevin's Lough Complex	000987	Lough Sheelin
000692	Scragh Bog	000988	Madabawn Marsh
000974	Annagh Lough (Ballyconnell)	000992	Lough Gowna
000976	Blackrock's Cross	001203	Knock Lake
Proposed Natural Heritage Areas			
Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name
001204	Bog Of The Ring	001606	Rafinny Lough
001268	Cordoo Lough	001607	Lough Smiley
001293	Blackhall Woods	001608	Monalty Lough
001357	Trim	001611	Ulster Canal (Aghalisk)
001391	Donadea Wood	001612	Wright's Wood
001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton	001616	Louth Hall And Ardee Woods
001407	Corduff Lough	001626	Annaghmore Lough (Roscommon)
001413	Garadice Lough Wood	001642	Lough Boderg And Lough Bofin
001417	Lough Rinn	001666	Tassan Lough
001443	Lough Slawn	001671	Spring And Corcrin Loughs
001444	Derry Lough	001687	Glen Lough
001449	Lough Naback	001721	Lough Bane
001451	Liscarragh Marsh	001731	Walshestown Fen
001454	Ardee Cutaway Bog	001781	Lisarily Bog
001458	Castlecoo Hill	001782	Killyhoman Marsh
001459	Clogher Head	001783	Corcreeghy Lake And Woodland
001461	Darver Castle Woods	001784	Rosefield Lake And Woodland
001462	Drumcah, Toprass And Cortial Loughs	001785	Mullaghmore Lake (South)
001464	Mellifont Abbey Woods	001786	Kilroosky Lough Cluster
001465	Woodland At Omeath Park	001801	Barmeath Woods
001468	Trumpet Hill (Louth)	001803	Stephenstown Pond
001495	Lough Ross	001804	King William's Glen
001558	Breakey Loughs	001805	Ravensdale Plantation
001573	Ballynabarny Fen	001806	Kildemock Marsh

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

001576	Cromwell's Bush Fen	001807	Lough Errew
001578	Duleek Commons	001808	Lough Sallagh
001579	Balrath Woods	001810	White Lough, Ben Loughs And Lough Doo
001584	Mount Hevey Bog	001814	Lough Naneagh
001587	Mentrim Lough	001818	Lough Forbes Complex
001589	Rossnaree Riverbank	001819	Lough Bawn
001591	Slane Riverbank	001821	Cordara Turlough
001592	Boyne Woods	001822	Carrickglass Demesne
001593	Thomastown Bog	001828	Reaghstown Marsh
001594	Ballyhoe Lough	001831	Split Hills And Long Hill Esker
001595	Loughbawn House Loughs	001835	Lisabuck Lough
001596	Black And Derrygoony Loughs	001836	Annagheane Lough
001599	Creevy Lough	001837	Mullaglassan Lough
001600	Drumakill Lough	001838	Kilcorran Lough
001601	Drumgole Lough	001839	Killyvilly Lough
001602	Drumreaske Lough	001840	Lislannan Bog
001604	Gibson's Lough	001841	Drumcor Lough
001605	Lough Egish	001856	Dunany Point
001862	Boyne River Islands	001861	Dowth Wetland
001957	Boyne Coast And Estuary	002069	Ardagullion Bog
002000	Loughshinny Coast	002077	Nafarty Fen
002103	Royal Canal	002104	Grand Canal
Northern Ireland European Sites			
Northern Ireland SACs		Northern Ireland SPA	
Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name
UK0016603	Cuilcagh Mountain	UK9020071	Upper Lough Erne
UK0016614	Upper Lough Erne	UK9020091	Slieve Beagh-Mullaghfad-Lisnaskea
UK0016615	Eastern Mourmes	UK9020161	Carlingford Lough
UK0016620	Derryleckagh		
UK0016621	Magheraveely Marl Loughs		
UK0016622	Slieve Beagh		
UK0030116	Cladagh (Swanlinbar) River		
UK0030212	Moninea Bog		
UK0030268	Rostrevor Wood		
UK0030277	Slieve Gullion		
Ramsar sites			
Northern Ireland Ramsar sites within 15 km		Ireland Ramsar sites within 15 km	
Site Code	Site Name	Site No.	Site Name
UK12017	Magheraveeey Marl Loughs Ramsar site	850	Lough Iron
UK12004	Carlingford Lough Ramsar site	849	Lough Glen
UK12020	Slieve Beagh Ramsar site	841	Lough Owel
UK12024	Upper Lough Erne Ramsar site	853	Lough Oughter
UK12005	Cuilcagh Mountain Ramsar site	834	Dundalk Bay
		848	Lough Ennell
		847	Lough Derravaragh
Northern Ireland ASSIs			
Site Code	Site Name	Site Code	Site Name
ASSI122	Drumacrittin Lough	ASSI198	Slieve Gullion
ASSI054	Inishroosk	ASSI090	Upper Lough Erne - Galloon
ASSI048	Corraslough Point	ASSI239	Black Lough (Tyrone)
ASSI224	Fymore Lough	ASSI103	Carlingford Lough
ASSI366	Gortalughany	ASSI238	Fathom Upper
ASSI381	Ballagh	ASSI237	Derrycloony Lough
ASSI398	Cavan	ASSI206	Loughaveely
ASSI397	Roeveagh	ASSI215	Carrickastickan
ASSI346	Kilkeel Steps	ASSI204	Lurgan Lough
ASSI368	Gruggandoo	ASSI214	Levallymore
ASSI382	Carnmore	ASSI069	Cuilcagh Mountain
ASSI365	Benburb - Milltown	ASSI200	Cladagh (Swanlinbar) River
ASSI416	Aughnagon Quarry	ASSI014	Knockballymore Lough
ASSI351	Western Mourmes and Kilfeaghan Upper	ASSI078	Kilroosky Lough
ASSI423	Carrivemaclone	ASSI182	Drumcarn
ASSI422	Goraghwod Quarry	ASSI183	Crossbane Lough
ASSI404	Drumarg	ASSI080	Summerhill Lough
ASSI392	Cloghcor Lough	ASSI081	Burdautien Lough
ASSI352	White Water River	ASSI071	Upper Lough Erne - Crom

SEA Environmental Report for the Ancient Destination Development Plan

ASSI409	Clermont & Anglesey Mountain	ASSI158	Greenan Lough
ASSI261	Lough McCall	ASSI015	Moninea Bog
ASSI262	Lough na blaney bane	ASSI095	Eastern Mournes
ASSI293	Cloghinny	ASSI094	Upper Lough Erne - Trannish
ASSI289	Camlough Quarry	ASSI041	Dernish Island
ASSI249	Lough Corry	ASSI160	Greenan
ASSI231	Cam Lough	ASSI079	Derryleckagh
ASSI268	Round Lough and Lough Fadda	ASSI077	Slieve Beagh
ASSI255	Rehaghy Wood	ASSI223	Cullentra Lough
ASSI364	Tempo River	ASSI031	Kiltubbrid Loughs
ASSI342	Caledon and Tynan	ASSI146	Tullybrick Lough
ASSI367	Kilbroney River	ASSI057	Glenmore Wood
ASSI373	Drummond Quarry	ASSI141	Fardross Stream
ASSI292	Glendesha	ASSI100	Benburb
ASSI290	Lislea	ASSI179	Straghans Lough
ASSI307	Knocknacloy	ASSI093	Upper Lough Erne - Belleisle
ASSI291	Mullaghbane	ASSI166	Knockninny Hill
ASSI205	Drumlougher Lough	ASSI121	Annachullion Lough
ASSI189	Cashel Loughs	ASSI157	Castle Enigan
ASSI216	Tullyard	ASSI110	Finn Floods
ASSI178	Rostrevor Wood	ASSI076	Killymackan Lough