

Ireland’s Ancient East – Signage Plan

1. **Introduction**

To offer visitors a compelling motivation to visit the east and south regions of Ireland, Fáilte Ireland has developed a new umbrella destination brand called Ireland’s Ancient East. The Brand is rooted in rich history and a diverse range of cultural heritage experiences that are particularly prevalent in the East and South. It is envisaged that Ireland’s Ancient East will become the key emotional pull and the reason that visitors will travel to this part of the country.

The key strategic objectives of the Ireland’s Ancient East initiative are:

* To increase the number of overnights spent by overseas visitors in the region, and to increase the tourism revenue generated and the associated tourism employment numbers, by delivering world class visitor experiences;
* To move Ireland’s Ancient East from a transit zone to a touring zone by increasing visitor dwell time in the region;
* Disperse visitor traffic across the geography by equally encouraging the exploration of both signature and lesser known sites and experiences. The new destination brand has been designed to ensure that the area is presented in a cohesive and unified manner. On a trip through Ireland’s Ancient East, stories should connect different places, enhancing the experience for the visitor. The new brand will make good use of stronger attractions to cross sell and promote secondary and tertiary attractions and experiences and help disperse visitors into local towns and villages throughout the east and south regions.
1. **Signage**

In order to bring the brand to life on the ground, there are two signage schemes proposed:

1. Branded Orientation Signage at key attractions in Ireland’s Ancient East
2. Upgrade of county boundary signage to incorporate a branded plate with the Ireland’s Ancient East logo
	1. *Branded Orientation Signs*

These signs have been designed to respond to the themes of the Ireland’s Ancient East brand and vision, taking its references from the landscape to develop an iconic and distinctive form which invites the user to orientate themselves in relation to the wider tourism offer of Ireland’s Ancient East. In this way visitors to each site will find details of other sites close by (within a 40 minute drive) to encourage visitors to explore further.

The sign content is double sided. The first side is set out in the form of a spiral wheel showing the sites that are near for orientation and approximately how long it will take to drive to other nearby sites. The second side will give an overview of the Ireland’s Ancient East story of wandering through 5,000 years of history.

The signs will be visually striking and clear, and will be the same style at each site to reinforce the overall Ireland’s Ancient East Brand, however the sign design comes in a range of sizes to allow for the different locations and site requirements with free standing and wall mounted options.

The purpose of the signs is:

* To bring the brand to life on the ground and make it visible to the consumer
* To cross-sell those nearby tourist attractions and points of interest that are part of the Ireland’s Ancient East story, thereby encouraging visitors to explore the area and make connections with other places within the region. Ireland’s Ancient East promises a destination that is easy and enjoyable to explore.
* To present the story of Ireland’s Ancient East and reinforce the core values of the brand

In the first phase, it is intended that to install these signs at nearly 80 key attractions in the Irelands Ancient East region during 2016. (See Appendix 1 for the proposed list of signs). Signs will not be erected within SACs or SPAs.

* 1. *County Boundary Signs*

This is a proposed road signage project which will see the attachment of a branded ‘Ireland’s Ancient East’ sign plate as part of the current county boundary signage on the motorway, national and regional road network across the 17 counties that comprise Ireland’s Ancient East. This branded plate would replace the county website address that currently sits beneath the main county boundary sign plate on these signs.

The purpose of this signage is

* to raise awareness of the Ireland’s Ancient East brand among visitors
* to reinforce the association of each particular county with the Ireland’s Ancient East brand, thus providing the brand with a sense of place. As there is no single signed route at the heart of the Ireland’s Ancient East proposition – as is the case with the Wild Atlantic Way – it was felt that the initiative would benefit from a visible presence for the brand on the ground and visible to motoring visitors in particular.
1. **Implementation**

Failte Ireland has procured a consortium led by Placemarque+ to design the Orientation signs and to help coordinate implementation. A tender to procure a supplier to design the county boundary signage plate and to coordinate the implementation of this project is currently in train.

A wide consultation process with stakeholders for both projects is well underway. A Signage Implementation Group which will include representation from all local authorities and the Office of Public Works is envisaged. This group will act as a forum to discuss all implementation and installation issues.

Fáilte Ireland will design and produce the signage and make it available to developers who may decide to install new signage or upgrade existing signage, subject to the conditions designed into the Signage Plan.

With regard to works related to the signage, the developers are required to comply with the relevant legislative provisions in relation to AA screening. AA screening must be undertaken in advance of proposed developments by the developers.

[Note that: A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application (under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended) to An Bord Pleanála is required. If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought. If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála. Developments or works by other groups or individuals may require planning permission or, if not, may require Ministerial consent in European sites. Local authorities are likely to be responsible for deciding whether there are restrictions on exemptions in the case of exempted development by a group or individual.]

In order to be issued with signage and associated grants, the developers Fwill be required to comply with the Overarching Ecological Measures detailed on Table 1. Such measures will in some cases overlap with and in some cases will be in addition to both the requirements of environmental and planning legislation and the provisions contained within various plans and programmes including the various County Development Plans.

**Table 1 Overarching Ecological Measures from the Signage Plan**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title**  | **Requirement[[1]](#footnote-1)** |
| **Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network** |  The developer shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); Ramsar Sites; Salmonid Waters; Shellfish Waters; Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; Flora Protection Order sites; Wildlife Sites (including Nature Reserves); certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas; Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs); Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979) ; and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). The developer shall demonstrate compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents:* EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)[[2]](#footnote-2), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)[[3]](#footnote-3), the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)[[4]](#footnote-4), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC).
* National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976[[5]](#footnote-5), the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008[[6]](#footnote-6) and the Flora Protection Order 1999.
* Catchment and water resource management Plans, including River Basin District Management Plans 2009-2015 (including any superseding versions of same).
* Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: Ireland’s 2nd National Biodiversity Plan (including any superseding version of same).
 |
|  **Appropriate Assessment** |  Decision making processes will include project level Appropriate Assessment (AA) as appropriate. Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42).  [Note that: A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application to An Bord Pleanála is required. If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought[[7]](#footnote-7). If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.] A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:1. The Plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or
2. The Plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or
3. The Plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

 The methodology followed by the Appropriate Assessment should follow, as relevant and appropriate, that outlined in DEHLG (2009) *Appropriate Assessment of Plans & Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities*. |
|  **Protection of Natura 2000 Sites** | No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of the Signage Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects[[8]](#footnote-8)). |
|  **NPWS & Integrated Management Plans** | Regarding, integrated management plans, Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for Special Area of Conservation involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans. The NPWS’s current priority is to identify site specific conservation objectives; management plans may be considered after this is done. Where Integrated Management Plans are being prepared for Natura sites (or parts thereof), Fáilte Ireland and developers shall engage with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Signage Plan and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations and with special regard to local communities. |
|  **Coastal Zone Management** | Developers shall demonstrate that any works in coastal zones will be undertaken in accordance with best practice and developers shall, as appropriate: support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats; and facilitate an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone. |
|  **Biodiversity and Ecological Networks**  | Developers shall demonstrate, as appropriate, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive. |
|  **Protection of Riparian Zone and Waterbodies and Watercourses** | Developers shall demonstrate that waterbodies and watercourses are protected from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in riverine, wetland and coastal areas, as appropriate. |
|  **Non-Designated Sites**  | Developers shall demonstrate the appropriate protection of non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve the biological diversity. |
|  **Non-native invasive species** | Developers shall support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service’s efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water. |

In addition to requiring compliance with the Overarching Ecological Measures, the developers will also be required to comply with the Specific Ecological Control Measures detailed on Table 2 below.

**Table 2 Specific Ecological Control Measures from the Signage Plan**

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| --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Specific Ecological Control Measure to be applied where relevant** |
| **ECM1** | All waste material shall be segregated and removed to prevent contamination, stored appropriately and covered where required. Removal of waste materials from site shall be undertaken by an approved contractor for treatment/disposal. Hazardous waste material shall be stored separately from other inert waste materials and kept covered in an appropriate area/container(s) to ensure that the material does not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network materials. The hazardous waste materials shall be removed from site by an approved contractor for treatment at a licenced facility.Particular care shall be taken in the removal of stockpiles of material such as gravel and chippings. (Such stockpiles are frequently sources of non-native invasive plants, such as Japanese knotweed). Disposal of contaminated material may require transport to an approved, licensed facility.  |
| **ECM2** | Prior to removal, all vegetation shall be free of non-native invasive species, such as Japanese knotweed. Should any such species be encountered, the area shall be treated as directed by expert advice on the management of invasive species.  |
| **ECM3** | Works involving the removal or clearing of vegetation that would have any impacts on nesting birds shall be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (i.e. outside the period 1st March to 31st August). In addition, the possible presence of roosting bats shall be considered prior to the undertaking any works that may disturb the roosts.  |
| **ECM4** | Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be: stored on-site in a secure, dry and contained area and isolated from drainage connections to any existing surface water drainage network; and used in a manner that ensures that contamination of other materials does not occur and that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network. |
| **ECM5** | Where possible, machinery shall only operate from existing parking or built surfaces, and shall not enter any sensitive or designated ecological habitat. |
| **ECM6** | All resurfacing and other minor construction or demolition works (including removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables) should be undertaken in a manner that ensures that no materials can inadvertently enter any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat, and in a manner that ensures there are no impacts on fauna such as birds and bats. |
| **ECM7** | Prior to use, resurfacing materials, including hardcore and sub-surface fill material will be stored in a manner that ensures that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network, or any sensitive ecological habitat. |
| **ECM8** | Removal and consolidation of existing signage shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat. |
| **ECM9** | Signage shall be placed within existing hard standing areas where possible and installed in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat. |

**Appendix 1 – List of Sites for Branded Orientation Signage Phase 1**

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|  | **IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST ORIENTATON SIGNAGE LISTING** |  |  |
|  | **Attraction** | **County** | **Proposed Type** | **Developer** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | Altamont Gardens | Carlow | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Duckett's Grove Walled Gardens | Carlow | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Cavan Burren Park and Visitor Centre | Cavan | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Cavan County Museum | Cavan | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Camden Fort Meagher | Cork | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Fota Arboretum & Gardens | Cork | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | The Jameson Experience | Cork | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Youghal Heritage Centre  | Cork | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | CIT Blackrock Castle Observatory | Cork City | Large  | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | Cork City Gaol  | Cork City | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Cork Public Museum | Cork City | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Shandon Butter Museum & St Annes | Cork City | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | St Fin Barre's Cathedral | Cork City | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | Shackleton Museum, Athy (TBC) | Kildare | tbc | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | Castletown House | Kildare | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | Irish National Stud & Japanese Gardens | Kildare | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17 | Kildare Town Heritage Centre  | Kildare | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18 | Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park | Kildare | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 | Castlecomer Discovery Park | Kilkenny | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 | Jerpoint Abbey | Kilkenny | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21 | Jerpoint Park | Kilkenny | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | Nicholas Mosse Pottery | Kilkenny | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23 | Medieval Mile - St. Canices Cathedral | Kilkenny | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24 | Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum | Kilkenny | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25 | Medieval Mile - Castle Plaza | Kilkenny | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 26 | Abbeyleix Heritage House | Laois | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 27 | Emo Court House & Gardens | Laois | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 28 | Heywood Gardens | Laois | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29 | Timahoe Round Tower | Laois | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 30 | Rock of Dunamase | Laois  | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 31 | Lough Gur | Limerick | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 32 | Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre | Longford | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 33 | St. Mels Cathedral | Longford | Medium |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 34 | Market Square, Dundalk (Tourist Office)  | Louth | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 35 | Drogheda Museum & Martello Tower | Louth | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 36 | King John's Castle Carlingford (Tourist Office) | Louth | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 37 | Monasterboice High Crosses | Louth | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 38 | Old Mellifont Abbey | Louth | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 39 | Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre | Meath | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 40 | Bru na Boinne Visitor Centre  | Meath | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 41 | Kells High Crosses, (Headfort Place) | Meath | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 42 | Monaghan County Museum | Monaghan | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 43 | Carrickmacross Lace Gallery | Monaghan | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 44 | Birr Castle & Museum | Offaly | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 45 | Clonmacnoise | Offaly | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 46 | Lough Boora Mesolithic Site  | Offaly | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 47 | Tullamore D.E.W. Herritage Centre | Offaly | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 48 | Cahir Castle | Tipperary | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 49 | Nenagh Castle | Tipperary | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 50 | Ormond Castle | Tipperary | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 51 | Rock of Cashel  | Tipperary | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 52 | Roscrea Castle and Damer House | Tipperary | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 53 | Copper Coast UNESCO Geopark, Bunmahon | Waterford | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 54 | Dungarvan Castle  | Waterford | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 55 | Lismore Castle Gardens | Waterford | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 56 | Ardmore Cathedral & Round Tower | Waterford | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 57 | Viking Triangle  | Waterford | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 58 | Athlone Castle Visitor Centre | Westmeath | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 59 | Belvedere House and Gardens | Westmeath | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 60 | Kilbeggan Distillery Experience | Westmeath | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 61 | Tullynally Castle Gardens | Westmeath | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 62 | Dunbrody Abbey and Visitor Centre | Wexford | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 63 | Dunbrody Famine Ship Experience  | Wexford | Medium  | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 64 | Ferns Castle | Wexford | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 65 | Hook Lighthouse | Wexford | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 66 | Irish National Heritage Park | Wexford | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 67 | John F. Kennedy Memorial Park | Wexford | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 68 | Johnstown Castle Gardens | Wexford | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 69 | Kennedy Homestead | Wexford | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 70 | Loftus Hall | Wexford | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 71 | Wells House & Gardens | Wexford | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 72 | Kilruddery House | Wicklow | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 73 | Mount Usher Gardens | Wicklow | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 74 | National Botanic Gardens - Kilmacurragh | Wicklow | Wall | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 75 | Powerscourt Estate | Wicklow | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 76 | Russborough House & Parklands | Wicklow | Medium | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 77 | Wicklow's Historic Gaol | Wicklow | Large | LA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. The provisions listed under this column are the requirements which the developers will have to comply with in order to get funding. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Including protected species and natural habitats. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Including protected species and natural habitats. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

a) no alternative solution available,

b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and

c) Adequate compensatory measures in place. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)