

Upper Shannon, Shannon Erne, Border
Draft Destination and Experience
Development Plan
**SEA Environmental Report Non-
Technical Summary**

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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 or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 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.

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.

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 which 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 which 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 Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment)

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.

SEA 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. SEA coping 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 coordinated and timed objectives for the implementation of the policy; and Programmes, sets of projects in a particular area.

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 Masterplan 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

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

An Environmental Report of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Draft Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border (USSEB) Destination & Experience Development Plan (hereafter referred to the 'Plan' or the 'USSEB DEDP') has been prepared to comply with the provisions of Article 12 of S.I. 435 of 2004 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations – as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.

This document is a non-technical summary (NTS) of the SEA Environmental Report (ER). It shall endeavour, insofar as possible, to present a condensed summary of the ER, using non-technical terms, but without omitting or understating any environmental effects of note.

The Environmental Report and NTS, which should be read in conjunction with the USSEB DEDP, has been prepared by Brady Shipman Martin, environmental, planning and landscape consultants, on behalf of Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority.

1.2 Destination & Experience Development Plans

A Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP) is a five year commercial destination and experience development plan prepared for an area.

The Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border (USSEB) Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP) is a five-year sustainable tourism plan for Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon north of, and including, Roscommon Town (the 'Destination'). The Plan has identified a range of key initiatives that are designed to raise awareness of the destination, increase the length of stay in the area, expand the range and quality of visitor experiences, strengthen the value of tourism to local communities and protect the quality, character and distinctiveness of the local environment, heritage and culture. The Ireland's Hidden Heartlands *Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027* and the *Shannon Tourism Masterplan 2020-2030*, together provide an overarching strategic framework for USSEB DEDP.

1.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) stems from *Directive 2001/42/EC*¹ (the 'SEA Directive') of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. Article 1 of the Directive states that:

"The objective of this directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment."

In effect, SEA comprises a systematic assessment process of predicting and evaluating the 'likely significant environmental effects' of implementing a proposed plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. The overall aim of SEA is to provide for a high level of protection

¹SEA Directive: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish law through two Statutory Instruments (S.I.):

- S.I. No. 435 of 2004 *The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004*, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 *The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011*; and
- S.I. No. 436 of 2004 *Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2004*, as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011 *The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011*.

The former regulations, (S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011), relate to SEA as it applies to plans or programmes prepared for “agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning or land use”, and these provisions are applicable to the USSEB DEDP as a tourism sector plan.

The latter regulations (S.I. No. 436 of 2004 as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011) relate to SEA as it applies to plans or programmes where the context requires, “a development plan, a variation of a development plan, a local area plan (or an amendment thereto), regional planning guidelines or a planning scheme”, and are not applicable to the USSEB DEDP.

1.4 The Requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan

Article 3(2) of the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes:

- 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 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive)³ i.e. requires that SEA is undertaken where Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is being undertaken on the plan or programme.*

The Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border (USSEB) Destination & Experience Development Plan is a non-statutory tourism sector plan that does not set 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 consent of other projects is being granted. Therefore, SEA of the USSEB DEDP is not required under Article 3(2)(a) above of the SEA Directive.

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 requirement to undertake Appropriate Assessment (AA) in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EC). The Screening for AA (BSM, 2024) has found that the Plan has the potential, if unmitigated,

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

³ Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

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to affect the ecological integrity of European sites and that measures to ensure that potential effects are avoided are required. Therefore, in accordance with Article 3(2)(b) above and guidance provided in SEA Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08⁴, a SEA of the USSEB DEDP has been undertaken.

The Environmental Report provides the findings of the SEA and takes account of recommendations contained in submissions from the Environmental Authorities. On finalisation of the Plan, an SEA Statement will be prepared, summarising, *inter alia*, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan.

⁴ <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

2 Outline Description of the Plan

2.1 Introduction

The Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border (USSEB) Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP) is a five-year sustainable tourism plan for Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon north of, and including, Roscommon Town (the 'Destination'). It builds on recent and current capital investment projects including The National Famine Museum at Strokestown Park, the Shannon Pot Discovery Centre and ongoing work at Lough Key Forest and Activity Park, and it identifies new investment opportunities around the Shannon, Shannon-Erne Waterway, and the Beara Breifne Way, as well in the forest parks, lakelands and the heritage and cultural gems.

The topography of the area, with significant lakeland areas and extensive Shannon and Erne River shorelines, lends itself well to slow adventure activities and sports tourism, in particular golf and angling. Angling is recognised as having been of particular value across the Destination, supporting smaller operators, accommodation and hospitality providers in areas outside of the more traditional tourism focal points and outside of the main tourism season, thus contributing significantly to regional and seasonal spread. Key attractions in the area include the Cavan County Museum, Arigna Mining Experience, The Shed Distillery, Lough Key Forest and Activity Park and the National Famine Museum at Strokestown Park. Key activity providers include Cavan Adventure Centre, Lough Allen Adventure, Shannon River Adventures, and the group of slow tourism providers under the umbrella of Slow Adventure Leitrim.

Opportunities are also afforded by the long distance walking route, the Beara Breifne Way, which enters the area on the Suck Valley Way and winds its way through the Destination before ending at Blacklion in Cavan. The Destination has finest forest parks in the country including Dún an Rí and Killykeen in Cavan, Glenfarne Woods in Leitrim, and Lough Key Forest And Activity Park in Roscommon, which provides one of the largest campsites in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. Other notable and popular free attractions include Acres Lake (and the 'Snake on the Lake' boardwalk), Glencar Waterfall, Castle Saunderson, Roscommon Castle and upland amenities such as Sliabh Bawn. There are scenic towns, villages, excellent restaurants and bars, and stunning outdoor activity options in the outlying parts of the region.

The Ireland's Hidden Heartlands *Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027* introduces the principle of regenerative tourism and places it at the heart of the strategy. In the context of an evolving global focus on sustainability and climate action, a regenerative approach to tourism ensures community and place are at the centre of the tourism model, collectively working towards delivering a net positive benefit for all stakeholders – Visitor, Industry, Community and the Environment. A regenerative approach encourages tourism to give back more than it takes through engaging the visitor and industry in protecting and enhancing nature and its habitats, the host communities and local places. Nature will be central to destination development with the environment and sustainability front of mind in all future decision making.

2.2 Vision

The vision for the Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border Destination and Experience Development Plan states that:

"Nature is at the heart of an inspiring sustainable tourism destination, where tourism delivers net positive outcomes to communities and the environment. Ecotourism and slow adventure are the hallmarks of the destination delivered through best in class on and off the water experiences."

The visitor hubs of Carrick-on-Shannon, Cavan and Roscommon Town have developed a year round appeal for tourism. Signature attractions such as the Beara Breifne Way, Shannon Erne Blueway, National Famine Way, Forests Parks and Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark inspire new levels of community and visitor engagement with slow tourism. Best in class water activities from Cruising on the Shannon to exploring our heritage through on water experiences provide inspiring visitor moments. A growing network of accredited Greenways, Blueways and trails have become the catalysts for regenerative tourism and the platform for visitors to connect with our local community delivering a year round economic impact.”

2.3 Strategic Objectives

The Plan is structured around the following strategic objectives:

- **Strategic Objective 1: Development of a Regenerative Tourism Destination:** Establish the Upper Shannon, Shannon Erne and Border region as a leading regenerative tourism destination with high standards in sustainable tourism development and a reduced carbon footprint.
- **Strategic Objective 2: Growth in Destination Awareness:** Grow the profile of the Destination through collectively growing awareness, locally and in the domestic and international markets of Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon as great places to visit, where the visitor is assured of an authentic, place-based experience and which also delivers net positive benefits for the community, the environment, and the tourism industry.
- **Strategic Objective 3: Connection and Integration of land and water-based trails:** Deliver new levels of connectivity between new and existing land and water-based trails across the Destination to create an enhanced scale of outdoor activity provision and development of best-in-class slow tourism hubs.
- **Strategic Objective 4: Development of Place-based, Ecotourism Experiences:** Develop the range and quality of visitor experiences across the Destination drawing on the natural, community and cultural heritage with a focus on ecotourism.
- **Strategic Objective 5: Growth in Sustainable Economic Impact:** Grow the economic impact of tourism and create high quality jobs in the Destination by supporting the industry to enhance its capacity and capability and by developing and enhancing the visitor services’ provision.
- **Strategic Objective 6: Development of New Levels of Collaboration:** Build new levels of tourism industry and stakeholder collaboration through the strengthening of existing and the creation of new tourism networks and clusters.

The accompanying strategic objectives of the USSEB DEDP are set out in **Table 8.1** of this report.

2.4 Destination Catalyst Overview

To achieve the above strategic objectives, the USSEB DEDP focuses on a number of ‘destination catalyst’ and ‘destination enabling’ initiatives. The catalyst initiatives and their key objectives are as follows:

Embed Regenerative Tourism - *To embed regenerative principles into all aspects of tourism development, delivery and measurement.*

Tourism Industry Capability Development - *To develop the capabilities of the tourism industry so that it is more resilient, more commercially viable, and more effective in how it markets the Destination domestically and internationally, and so that proactively collaborates within and across all tourism sectors and stakeholders in the development of the Destination.*

Accredited and Activated Greenways and Blueways - *Grow the number of nationally accredited greenways and blueways in the Destination that focuses on ensuring a quality visitor experience, in order to provide key slow tourism linkages between hubs and key attractions and activity providers.*

The North Shannon and Shannon-Erne Waterways - *Continue to deliver the Shannon Tourism Master Plan 2020-2030 in amplifying the North Shannon, and the Shannon-Erne Waterway, as core to the Destination, [...]*

The Beara Breifne Way - *Deliver the Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon elements of the Beara Breifne Way, the longest way-marked trail in Ireland, introducing new opportunities for visitors to explore places of the beaten track and generate community tourism development.*

Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark - *Grow the awareness of Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark and develop the number of visitor experiences that enable visitors to uncover and explore the uniqueness of the place: the combination of geology, archaeology, folklore, community and landscape.*

The Loughs Tapestry - *Create a tapestry (network) of co-created responsible and regenerative tourism experiences, drawing on the Destination's lakeland topography and its associated 'hidden' natural and cultural heritage. Through this, create a sense of scale and connectivity, encouraging visitors to explore further, and to visit and return at different times of the year. The approach to the development of the tapestry will ensure a greater appreciation by the visitor and host communities of the heritage of the area and how best it can be maintained for the long term benefit of all.*

Forest Adventure - *Building on the success of Lough Key, develop the forest park visitor experience across the USSEB to create a new scale of connected eco-tourism forest-based experiences.*

The catalyst initiatives detailed above will be supported through a significant number of destination enabling initiatives, which are individually listed in the DEDP Action Plan (Appendix 1). The overarching focus of the enabling initiative includes - *Accommodation, Community Tourism Experiences, Developing Attractions and Activity Providers, Connected Cultural Experiences, Connecting Outdoor Trails, Sustainable Transport, Tourism Gateways and Hubs and Festivals and Events.*

The complete list of destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives are provided and assessed in **Appendix 1** of the SEA Environmental Report .

3 Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.1 Introduction

SEA is a process for evaluating, at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental quality and consequences of Plans or Programmes (P/Ps). The purpose is to ensure that the environmental consequences of P/Ps are assessed both during their preparation and prior to their adoption. The SEA process also gives specified environmental authorities, interested parties and the general public, an opportunity to comment on the environmental impacts of the proposed P/P and to be kept informed during the decision-making process.

Directive 2001/42/EC⁵ on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the 'SEA Directive') requires EU Member States to assess the 'likely significant environmental effects' of plans and programmes prior to their adoption. This provides for the assessment of strategic environmental considerations at an early stage in the decision-making process.

The SEA process is designed to ensure that significant environmental effects arising from plans are:

- Properly identified and assessed;
- Subject to public participation;
- Taken into account by decision makers; and
- Regularly monitored.


The SEA Directive and SEA Regulations require that competent authorities determine whether the implementation of plans or programmes, or modifications thereof, will be likely to have significant effects on the environment. This determination process is referred to as an Environmental Assessment and defined as:

"...the preparation of an environmental report, the carrying out of consultations, the taking into account of the environmental report and the results of the consultations in decision-making and the provision of information on the decision..."⁶

3.2 SEA Stages and Process

The key focus of SEA is to take environmental issues, and in particular 'likely significant environmental effects' of a P / P, into consideration during the plan or programme making process. The key stages in the SEA process as they relate to the USSEB DEDP are outlined in **Table 2.1** below.


Table 2.1 Outline of the SEA Process

Stage	Description	Status
1. Screening	<p>The requirement to undertake a SEA is mandatory for certain Plan / Programme (P / P). Where SEA is not a mandatory requirement, the P / Ps is subject to a 'Screening process', to consider if it is <i>likely to have significant effects</i> on the environment, and therefore, if SEA is required.</p> <p>The preparation of the <i>USSEB DEDP</i> has been screened for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and it has been concluded that potential for effects on the integrity of European sites cannot be</p>	Completed 

⁵ SEA Directive: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

⁶ Article 2(b) of Directive 2001/42/EC, European Union, Article 2 (3) of EC (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 S.I No. 435 of 2004

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Stage	Description	Status
	<p>excluded beyond all reasonable scientific doubt and is required to undergo Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>Therefore, in accordance with <i>Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08</i> the <i>Draft USSEB DEDP</i> is also required to undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with <i>Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment</i> (known as the SEA Directive).</p>	
2. Scoping	<p>Preparation of a SEA Scoping Report highlighting that the Environmental Report is required to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ methods of assessment; ■ contents and level of detail in the Plan / Programme; ■ the stage in the Plan or Programme-making process; and ■ the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process in order to avoid duplication of environmental assessment. <p>Scoping provides for consultation with the Environmental Authorities specified in Article 13 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011, and the process allows for incorporation of the views of the environmental authorities within the P / P and the SEA Environmental Report.</p>	<p>Completed</p> 
3. Environmental Report	<p>Preparation of a systemic identification and evaluation of alternatives and assessment of the <i>likely significant environmental effects</i> of implementing the P / P.</p> <p>The findings of the assessment, which is carried out at various stages in the P / P making (<i>e.g.</i> Draft, Amended Draft <i>etc.</i>), are provided in the SEA Environmental Report in accordance with Article 12 (including Schedule 2) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011.</p> <p>The output from this stage is an Environmental Report which accompanies the draft P / P required on public display.</p>	Current Stage
4. SEA Statement	<p>Completion / adoption of the Final USSEB DEDP, taking account of <i>likely significant environmental effects</i>, any submissions or observations received from consultations and integration of mitigation and monitoring measures within the Plan.</p> <p>The Environmental Report is concluded and an SEA Statement is prepared in accordance with Article 16(2)(b) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011, summarising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan / Programme; ■ how the environmental report, and any submissions /observations or consultations have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan / Programme; ■ the reasons for choosing the Plan / Programme in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and ■ the measures decided for monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan / Programme. 	Final (Future) Stage

3.3 SEA Screening and Requirement for SEA

The requirement to undertake a SEA is mandatory for certain P / Ps that are above specified thresholds. Where SEA is not a mandatory requirement, the P / P is subject to a 'Screening process', (Stage 1) to consider if it is likely to have significant effects on the environment, and therefore, if SEA is required.

Screening for the purposes of SEA is defined as "*the determination of whether implementation of a P / P [Plan or Programme] would be likely to have significant environmental effects on the environment. The process of deciding whether a P / P [Plan or Programme] requires SEA.*"⁷ The criteria for screening, i.e. determining whether a particular plan is likely to have significant environmental effects are set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. These criteria are reproduced in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011. The criteria are set out under two principal headings, each of which have a number of sub-criteria:

- Characteristics of a Plan / Programme; and
- Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected.

It is also noted that in accordance with Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08⁸, SEA for a P / P is also a mandatory requirement where the P / P requires Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The *Draft USSEB DEDP* has been screened for Appropriate Assessment (AA) in accordance with Article 6(3) of the *Habitats Directive* (92/43/EEC) and Regulation 42 of the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011*, as amended. The AA Screening has concluded that potential for effects on the integrity of European sites cannot be excluded beyond all reasonable scientific doubt and therefore appropriate assessment and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is required.

Therefore, in accordance with *Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08*⁹ the *Draft USSEB DEDP* was also required to undergo Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with *Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment*¹⁰ (the *SEA Directive*).

3.4 SEA Scoping

Scoping allowed for consultation with the Environmental Authorities specified in Article 9(5) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011 and for incorporation of the views of the Environmental Authorities within the Plan or Programme and the SEA Environmental Report.

The consultation was undertaken with the following Environmental Authorities specified in Article 9(5) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended, on 07 November 2023:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- The Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications;
- The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine;
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media;
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Natural Ireland Environmental Agency).

⁷ EPA: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/SEA%20Pack%202018.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

¹⁰ DIRECTIVE 2001/42/EC: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

Submissions / observations on the scoping of the Environmental Report were received from the environmental authorities and comments have been incorporated into the Plan and Environmental Report as set out in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1 SEA Scoping Submissions / Observation from Environmental Authorities

Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	The submission from EPA includes the following comments and recommendations: Governance and implementation – The Plan should set out the implementation arrangements and governance structures including lines of responsibility for implementation, delivery, interim review and progress reporting. The Plan should address the relationship with the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, existing Local Authority plans/ programmes.	The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.
	Synergies with key national plan – EPA recommends that the Plan documents the synergies with the key national plans and programmes. The relevant actions of the Climate Action Plan 2023 (and Climate Action Plan 2024 under preparation) and the objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework, River Basin Management Plan, and the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy should be aligned with and considered, as appropriate.	
	Integration of the SEA and the Plan – EPA highlights that the integration of the SEA process into the Plan should reflect the overall objective of the SEA Directive. It is essential for SEA to address climate and biodiversity issues and take account of the Ireland’s climate crisis and biodiversity emergency. Recommendations from the SEA & AA including mitigation measures and monitoring proposals should be integrated into the Plan. SEA Environmental Report and the Plan should include a chapter on how the recommendations and mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Plan.	
	EPA recommend that the SEA Environmental Report includes summary tables outlining the key findings of the SEA and linking the significant environmental effects identified to the proposed mitigation measures, monitoring programme and Plan policies/measures.	
	EPA highlight their recently published guidance note to help provide guidance and ideas on how to carry out strategic environmental assessments (SEA) of tourism sectoral plans and	

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SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p>programmes in Ireland - 'Good Practice Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Tourism Sector' (EPA, 2023).</p> <p>The submission describes the key findings and chapters of the 'State of the Environment Report- Ireland's Environment An Integrated Assessment 2020'. The report recognises the need for full implementation of existing environmental legislation and review of governance/coordination on environmental protection across public bodies.</p> <p>EPA highlights the requirement under the SEA Regulations to consult with Environmental Authorities (EPA, Minister of Housing, Local Government & Heritage, Department of Environment, Climate & Communications, Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine)</p> <p>Appendix I to the EPA submission includes comments on the SEA Scoping Report - scope of the SEA, data and knowledge gaps, range of effects, monitoring, implementation & reporting, SEA statement, integration with other key Plans and Programmes, available guidance & resources, webtools.</p>	
Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)	GSI encourage use of and reference to their datasets attached to their submission. These include geoheritage (county geological sites), culture & tourism (Cuilcagh lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark, PROJECT Belturbet), Dimension Stone / Stone built Ireland, groundwater, geological mapping, geohazards, historic mines, marine and coastal unit, physiographic units. GSI also includes a list of publicly available datasets relevant to planning, EIA & SEA processes.	The information and datasets provided have informed the preparation of the Environmental Report.
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Department recommends to have regard to the following in the preparation of the SEA report – The National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014, Record of Monuments and Places, Sites and Monuments Record, Register of Historic Monuments (established under section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987), Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, International Conventions. The Department also includes a list of publicly available GIS datasets relevant to environmental assessments. This includes Historic Environment Viewer, Wreck Viewer, RMP, List of National Monuments in Ownership or Guardianship of the	The information and datasets provided have informed the preparation of the Environmental Report.

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SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	Minister, List of Preservation Orders, World Heritage in Ireland website and Irish excavation reports.	
Department for Communications – Historic Environment Division (HED)	<p>The submission from HED in reference to transboundary effects and discusses inter-relationship of sites, buildings and places, potential effects with regard to impacts on their setting. The submission lists the following Northern Ireland (NI) legislation and national plans for consideration –</p> <p>National Legislation -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 • Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 • Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 <p>National / Plans Programmes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Development Strategy 2035 (infrastructure -ni.gov.uk) • Archaeology 2030 A strategic approach for Northern Ireland • Strategic Planning Policy Statement 2015 <p>The submission also lists GIS datasets for recorded, designated and non-designated heritage assets and also marine historic environment. Consideration of potential transboundary impacts in relation to cultural heritage should include consideration of impacts on setting, also considering potential impacts on intangible heritage, i.e. folklore, customs, beliefs, traditions and knowledge. Where appropriate the report should consider potential effects on non-designated heritage assets, such as vernacular and industrial heritage.</p>	The information and datasets provided have informed the preparation of the Environmental Report.
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)	The submission from DAERA recommends to include within the ER a dedicated section providing information on the background of the plan, environmental baseline of the geographical area, relationship between other plans and programs including appropriate objectives, indicators and targets. An appraisal of the Plan should be undertaken to include only those elements of it that are likely to have significant environmental effects should be included in the next stages of the ER.	The information and datasets provided have informed the preparation of the Environmental Report.

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Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	Transboundary issues arising from this plan should be considered including the potential disturbance to/impact on NI/RoI migratory/mobile species. Cross border designated sites, European sites in Northern Ireland adjacent to or with pathways to/from the Republic of Ireland, priority habitats, river basins, and other landscape types also require special attention as ecological functionality and 'views' of landscape cross political boundaries. The SEA should consider all potential impacts including those which may impact Northern Ireland both directly and indirectly. Consideration should be given to all potential impacts on NI habitats (particularly designated sites, priority habitats and those important for migratory species and NI populations) including habitat quality and conservation status.	
	NED notes that the plan boundary includes or is close proximity to Lough Melvin (designated as a Special Area of Conservation, SAC, and an Area of Special Scientific Interest, ASSI) and Upper Lough Erne (ASSI, SAC and Special Protection Area, SPA). The submission highlights that the collective term of "Natura 2000" sites, the network of European protected sites, are now known as "National Site Network" sites within the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland.	
	<p>The submission highlights the following useful information sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 (as amended) • Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) 2011 • The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) • The Environment (NI) Order 2002 • The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 • The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) for Northern Ireland • Planning Policy Statements • Biodiversity Strategy for NI to 2020 https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/biodiversity-strategy-northern-ireland-2020-0 • Draft Environment Strategy https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/esni-public-discussion-document 	

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SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Draft NI peatland policy: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/ni-peatland-strategy-consultation. The Draft Green Growth Strategy Consultation on the draft Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk) Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 2050 Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 2050 Department for the Economy (economy-ni.gov.uk) Northern Ireland State of the Environment Reports: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/state-environment-report-2013 Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Reports: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-environmental-statistics-report Designated Scientific Sites: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/protected-areas Regional Landscape Character Map viewer: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/regional-landscape-character-areas-map-viewer DAERA have a map browser for NI protected sites and known priority habitat: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/natural-environment-map-viewer Our natural environment datasets are available at the link below: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/download-digital-datasets 	
	The submission recommends that the Appropriate Assessment should refer to the status of habitats and species in the relevant reports available on the JNCC website as follows: UK Article 17 report for the Habitats Directive and the UK Article 12 report for the Birds Directive	
	The submission recommends that the SEA should consider transboundary impacts on the Northern Ireland landscape, especially in relation to Landscape Character Areas and the Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark. The NIEA Map Viewer may be of use in identifying Landscape Character Assessment locations.	
	The submission recommends that the SEA should consider all issues in relation to the aquatic environment impacts that should be considered include, those relating to water quality, water quantity, hydromorphology, and in addition any impact on NI/RoI migratory/mobile species such as salmon. Assessment should consider all potential impacts both direct and indirect. It	

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SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	is important that cross border river basins are given special attention as ecological functionality cross jurisdictional boundaries.	
	The submission advises that the NI River Basin Management Plans must be considered during the SEA process. The submission further highlights and links several key pieces of environmental legislation relating to the Water Environment and its protection in NI.	
	The submission highlights further useful information sources such as Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report the latest of which currently is dated May 2023, Significant Water Management Issues to inform the development of the third cycle River Basin Management Plan (2021-2027), Water Information Request Web Viewer and NIEA Catchment Data Map Viewer etc.	
	The submission states that the mitigation measures and monitoring regimes should be clearly identified in the SEA ER.	

3.5 SEA Environmental Report

The current stage of the SEA process (Stage 3) involves the preparation of the Environmental Report for the identification, description, evaluation and mitigation of the potential environmental impacts associated with the USSEB DEDP and the alternatives taking account of the geographical scope of the Plan.

Article 5(1) and Annex I of the *SEA Directive* provides detail on the information to be included in an Environmental Report.

3.6 SEA Statement

Following approval of the Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border Destination & Experience Development Plan, an SEA Statement (Stage 4) will be prepared which includes information on:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the USSEB DEDP, highlighting the main changes to the USSEB DEDP which 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 USSEB DEDP in the light of the other alternatives, identifying the other alternatives considered, commenting on their potential effects and explaining why the USSEB DEDP, as adopted, was selected; and
- The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing the USSEB DEDP.

3.7 SEA Guidance

The SEA Environmental Report reflects the requirements of *Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment* (the *SEA Directive*) and the national implementing Regulations S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, and by the PDR 2001, as amended.

The following principal sources of guidance were used in the SEA process including in the preparation of this Environmental Report:

- Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of certain plans and programmes on the environment.
- S.I. No. 435 of 2004 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004.
- S.I. No. 200 of 2011 -Environmental Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.
- Guidance on Implementation of Directive 2001/42/EC, European Commission, 2004, at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/eia/pdf/030923_sea_guidance.pdf
- SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans - EPA Recommendations and Resources. EPA, Updated October 2024.
- SEA Pack. EPA, Updated January 2023.
- SEA Spatial Information Sources Inventory. EPA, Updated April 2024.
- SEA Resource Manual for Local and Regional Planning Authorities. EPA, 2015.

- Good Practice Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Tourism Sector. EPA, June 2023.
- Good Practice Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Landscape. EPA, December 2023.
- Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statements and Monitoring. EPA, March 2023.
- Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental Impact Assessment Tiering, EPA, 2021.
- Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines. Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, March 2023.
- EPA Mapping. Environmental Mapping / Geographical Information System (GIS) tools are available at: <http://gis.epa.ie/SeeMaps>
- EPA Water and Air Quality Reports at: <https://www.epa.ie/pubs/legislation/air/quality/>
EPA Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2024, <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/state-of-environment-report-/>
- EPA Ireland's Environment – An Integrated Assessment 2020 at: <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/irelands-environment/state-of-environment-report-/#>
- SEA (EPA) Spatial Information Sources at: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/>
- Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment, EPA 2015 at: https://www.epa.ie/publications/research/biodiversity/EPA-157_web.pdf
- Integrating Climate Change into Strategic Environmental Assessment in Ireland - A Guidance Note. EPA, 2015.
- Climate Action Plan 2024. Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, 2024.
- Circular Letter PL 9/2013: Article 8 (Decision Making) of EU Directives 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as amended. Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2013.
- Circular Letter PSSP 6/2011: Further Transposition of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2011.
- Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08: Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2008.
- Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment - Streamlining AA, SEA and EIA Processes: Practitioner's Manual. Strive Report Series No. 106. Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2013.
- Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment. European Commission 2013.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites - The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission, 2000, at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/provision_of_art6_en.pdf
- Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission, 2002, at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_assess_en.pdf

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2009, at: http://www.npws.ie/publications/archive/NPWS_2009_AA_Guidance.pdf

3.8 Appropriate Assessment

The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) requires an Appropriate Assessment (AA) to be carried out where a plan or project is *likely to have a significant impact* on a Natura 2000 site. Natura 2000 sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA).

Stage 1 is to establish whether AA is required for the particular plan or project. This stage is referred to as ‘screening for the requirement for AA’, and its purpose is to determine, on the basis of a preliminary assessment and objective criteria, whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, could have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site, in view of the site’s conservation objectives.

As set out in Department Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08¹¹ (15 February 2008), Screening for AA is of relevance to SEA screening in that *“where following screening, it is found that the draft plan or amendment may have an impact on the conservation status of a Natura 2000 site or that such an impact cannot be ruled out, adopting the precautionary approach:*

- An AA of the plan must be carried out, and
- In any case where SEA would not otherwise be required, it must also be carried out.”

Hence, where a plan requires AA, it shall also require SEA.

A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the USSEB DEDP and the SEA Environmental Report.

The AA has concluded that the USSEB DEDP will not affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.

¹¹ NPWS SEA letter: <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

4 Relationship with Plans and Programmes

Fáilte Ireland has prepared this Upper Shannon, Shannon Erne, Border (USSEB) Destination & Experience Development Plan to enhance the visitor experience, promote tourism and support economic growth. The plan is designed to build on the ambition of the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Tourism Development Strategy. Regional Tourism Development Plans, 2023- 2027 (RTDS) have been developed for each of Fáilte Ireland's four Regional Experience Brands (Ireland's Ancient East, Wild Atlantic Way, Dublin and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands). These plans provide the strategic framework for other tourism development strategies, most notably, Destination and Experience Development Plans (DEDPs) and County Tourism Strategies. The USSEB DEDP has been developed to contribute to the overarching regional objectives for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

As part of the SEA process, it is necessary to consider the environmental protection objectives, established at the international; European and national level which are relevant to the USSEB DEDP and how they have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan. In its making, the USSEB DEDP sits at the lower level of the hierarchy and must comply with relevant higher-level strategic actions / plans. These documents include plans and programmes, which have also been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, are detailed below.

There is a legislative framework for the protection of the environment and our natural resources relevant to the USSEB DEDP. **Table 4.1** below provides a list of the principle legislative framework.

Table 4.2 and **Table 4.3** below provide a working list of the principal plans and programmes influencing the formulation of the USSEB DEDP and the Environmental Report, either directly or through European, National and / or County level policy. The relationship with other plans and programmes is discussed, as appropriate, under the Current State of the Environment in **Section 5** of this Report.

Table 4.1 Legislative Framework

Legislative Framework	
Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended	Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)
Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended	Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EEC)	Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)
Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU) as amended by (2014/52/EU)	Renewable Energy Directive (2018/2001/EU) as amended by (EU/2023/2413)
Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)	European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations) 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) (as amended)
Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) on the Conservation of Wild Birds, 1979	Renewable Energies in the 21 st Century: Building a More Sustainable Future
Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC)	EU 2020 climate and energy package
Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	EU Renewable Energy Road Map
Flood Directive (2007/60/EC)	European Landscape Convention 2000
Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC)	Wildlife Acts 1976-2023
Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC)	The Water Services Act (2007 – 2017)
Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC)	Foreshore Act 1933-2022

Legislative Framework	
Urban Wastewater Directive (91/271/EEC)	Aquaculture Act 1997-2006
Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)	Sea Fisheries & Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006
Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)	The National Monuments Act 1930-2014
EU Landfill Directive (1999/31/EC)	Roads Act 1993, as amended
Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)	European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea Fisheries) Regulations 2013

Table 4.2 Relevant National & Regional Plans and Programmes

National & Regional Plans and Programmes	
Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (NPF)	National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development
Draft First Revision to the National Planning Framework (July 2024)	Climate Action Plan 2024
National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030	National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)
Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022	Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012)
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region	The Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (2014)
Ireland's Environment - An Integrated Assessment 2020	Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042
National Mitigation Plan 2017	Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019)
Our Sustainable Future - A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland (2012)	Ireland's First National Cycle Policy Framework 2009
Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)	National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024 - 2030
Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2022)	The National Renewable Energy Action Plan
Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness - 2016	National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2017-2020
National 4 th Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030	Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways 2018
Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland 2012	The National Broadband Plan 2020
National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development 2014- 2020	National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025
Draft National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development 2030	Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011)
National CFRAMS Programme	Heritage Ireland 2030
River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021	Food Harvest 2020

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National & Regional Plans and Programmes	
Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027	National Adaptation Framework Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland 2018 and Review of the National Adaptation Framework 2022
The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009)	Climate Action Plan 2024
South Eastern Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study	Water Services Strategic Plan / Capital Investment Programme (Uisce Éireann)
People, Place and Policy Growing Tourism to 2025	Regional Tourism Development Strategies (2023-2027) & Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Tourism Development Strategy 2023 - 2027
Fáilte Ireland Corporate Plan	Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025
Tourism Action Plan 2019 – 2021	Actions to Promote Sustainable Tourism Practices 2021 - 2023
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways	The Shannon, Mighty River of Ireland, A Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon 2020 – 2030
National Physical Activity Plan 2013 – 2025	Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2024

Table 4.3 Relevant Local Plans and Programmes

Local Plans and Programmes	
Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028	Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029
Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028	

5 Current State of the Receiving Environment (Environmental Baseline)

5.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the information on the baseline environment is focused upon the relevant aspects of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected and the likely evolution of the current environment in the absence of the USSEB DEDP. Being consistent with the strategic provisions of the USSEB DEDP, this section provides a strategic description of aspects of environmental components which have the greatest potential to be affected by implementation of the USSEB DEDP, if unmitigated.

5.2 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of the Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border Destination & Experience Development Plan

The development plans for Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon promote the development and strengthening of the overall value of tourism in this region as stated below.

The Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028 states that:

T 15 - The Council will support the preparation of Destination Experience Development Plans (DEDP) and other tourism masterplans both within the county and also those which crosses from the county into neighbouring counties in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and other tourism stakeholders. The Council will work with Fáilte Ireland to prepare and implement The Ancient Destination Experience Development Plan (ADEPD) as it extends into parts of the county.

The Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 states that:

TOUR OBJ 11 - To support the preparation of Destination Experience Development Plans (DEDP) and other tourism masterplans both within the county and also those which crosses from the county into neighbouring counties in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and other tourism stakeholders.

The Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028 states that:

ED 6.24 - Support the preparation and implementation of Regional Tourism Plans in the County Development Plan, to support the continued collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and tourism stakeholders to ensure successful implementation and delivery of these tourism plans.

It is a requirement of the SEA Directive to consider – ‘the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.’ In the absence of the USSEB DEDP it is envisaged that the baseline environment would primarily evolve in line with the policies and objectives of the *Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028*, *Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029* and *Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028* (CDPs) and Local Area Plans (LAPs) for the Counties. The CDPs detail policies and objectives specific to tourism, however, the standalone USSEB DEDP provides significant opportunities for specific set of tourism-related mitigation measures and the associated likely positive environmental effects.

The USSEB DEDP will play an important role in promoting and developing tourism in Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon, help to attract visitors to the counties, enhance the visitor experience and support the growth and sustainability of the tourism industry.

Therefore, while higher level environmental protection objectives – such as those of County Development Plans and various EU Directives and transposing Irish Regulations – would still apply, the absence of the USSEB DEDP would mean that new development would be less coordinated and controlled. Less coordinated and controlled development would be less certain to result in the positive effects provided for by the USSEB DEDP.

5.3 Description of the Environmental Baseline

The baseline data helps to assess the current state of the environment, facilitate the identification, evaluation and subsequent monitoring of the effects of the Plan. Thus, this information creates a platform whereby existing issues relevant to the study area can be quantified, where possible, or qualified thereby ensuring that the implementation of USSEB DEDP does not exacerbate identifiable problems.

Baseline data collection is a first step in the process of evaluating the sensitivity of the environment. The *SEA Directive* requires that information is provided on ‘*any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the Plan or programme...*’. Information is therefore provided on existing environmental problems which are relevant to the Plan, thus helping to ensure that the Plan does not exacerbate any existing environmental problems in the study area.

The environmental aspects are described in line with the legislative requirements, under the following headings:

- Biodiversity (including Flora & Fauna);
- Population and Human Health;
- Land, Soils and Geology;
- Water Quality;
- Air Quality, Noise and Climate;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Landscape & Visual;
- Material Assets;
- Interaction of the foregoing; and
- Cumulative Impacts.

The Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027 published by Fáilte Ireland provide a framework for sustainable tourism development across Ireland and include Regional Tourism Strategies for Ireland’s Ancient East, Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands and Dublin. The Regional Tourism Development Strategies will be activated across every region through a series of local area action plans, referred to as Destination and Experience Development Plans (DEDPs). Under the Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands *Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027*, there is a requirement to prepare DEDP for the Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border (USSEB).

5.3.1 Biodiversity

Within the study area, there are a number of areas designated for protection under the Natura 2000 network. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are legally protected under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats and Annex II species. Special Protection Areas are protected under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 2009/147/EC.

There are 32no. SACs and 11no. SPA within the study area. There are a further 23no. SPAs and 71no. SACs within the ZoI of the USSEB DEDP. Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs have been set for

the habitats and species for which the sites have been selected. Site specific detailed conservation objectives are available on the NPWS website¹² for Republic of Ireland and on Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural affairs website¹³ for Northern Ireland. Any potential for impact on European Sites have been fully addressed in the NIS that accompanies the USSEB DEDP and SEA Environment Report.

Nationally Designated Sites include *Natural Heritage Areas* (NHAs) and *Proposed Natural Heritage Areas* (pNHAs) located in the study area and within the zone of influence of the study area are detailed in the SEA ER.

Under the requirements of the *Water Framework Directive* (WFD) a number of waterbodies (or parts of) 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). A number of these protected areas are present within the study area and these are as follows:

- WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive Areas (Lake, Coastal & Transitional waterbodies) – Lough Oughter, County Cavan (NW_36_657) & Lough Ree on the River Shannon (SH_26_750a)
- WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive Areas (Rivers) - Cavan River (IEGBNIRI_NW_2001_0013) & Shannon River (IERI_SH_2001_0018)
- WFD RPA Shellfish Areas – Drumcliff Shellfish Area and Sligo Bay Shellfish Area, c. 8.7km to the west of the study area
- Salmonid Rivers – Owengrave Sligo (IE_WE_340030100)

The *EU Shellfish Waters Directive* (2006/113/EC) aims to protect and improve shellfish waters in order to support shellfish life and growth. There is no area of Shellfish waters within the study area. The closest ones are Drumcliff Shellfish Area and Sligo Bay Shellfish Area, c. 8.7km to the west of the study area.

5.3.1.1 Biodiversity Issues

Existing biodiversity issues / pressures and threats on Ireland's habitats and species, which are also relevant to the study area, include:

- Direct habitat loss within European Sites e.g. developments occurring on undeveloped sites, recreational activity works.
- Indirect effects on the ecological networks supporting European Sites e.g. linear developments forming barriers to movements of mobile species or loss of sites that support an overall population of species.
- Construction and use of commercial and recreational infrastructure and areas. For example development within watercourses.
- Indirect threat to water quality including changes to surface and groundwater quality and volumes.
- Direct / indirect disturbance of sensitive habitats / species e.g. recreation at coastal sites, riverside walkways, pressure from increased visitor numbers etc.
- Direct / indirect threats to European Sites by invasive species.
- Direct / indirect threats to native flora and fauna from pathogens / diseases.
- Invasive Species and problematic species - continued control and management of invasive species. For example the loss of biodiversity as native species are shaded out, but also diseases and pathogens.

¹² NPWS website 2019: <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives>

¹³ DAERA website - <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/special-areas-conservation>

5.3.2 Population and Human Health

The study area includes Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon north of, and including, Roscommon Town. The study area is surrounded by Northern Ireland on the north, Monaghan on north-east, Meath to the east, Longford and Westmeath to the south, Sligo to the north-west, Mayo to the west and Galway to the south-west. The *National Planning Framework* (NPF) outlines that by 2040 there will be roughly an extra one million people living in Ireland.

The 2022 Census results showed that the percentage in population change for County Cavan was 7.3%, Leitrim was 9.8% and Roscommon was 8.9%. There has been an increase in the population of the Counties from 2016 to 2022.

The tourism industry has long been recognised as an important economic driver for the economy of the State. Tourism is particularly important in that it can assist in providing business and employment opportunities across regions and leads to jobs across the spectrum of skills requirements. The quality and diversity of tourism in the study area is particularly strong in relation to its rich heritage, quality rural landscape and many towns and villages, meaning the study area has a lot to offer as a tourist destination. The development plan for Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon promote the development and strengthening of the overall value of tourism in this region as previously stated. The counties have an objective to enhance the potential for economic development in the tourism sector.

5.3.2.1 Existing Population and Human Health Issues

Existing population and human health issues / pressures on the population of the study area, include:

- Health and Well-being - continue the development of recreation and leisure facilities.
- Support cycle and walking tourism initiatives, in tandem with the development of greenways and blueways in the study area.
- Radon - Radon risk map levels in the study area have been collated from the EPA Radon Risk Map of Ireland.
- Flooding - Over the past number of years there have been significant instances where flooding has occurred in areas of the study area causing damage to homes and businesses. Refer to Section 5.3.4.
- Information on the status of drinking water, wastewater and climate change are provided in other sections of this Report.

5.3.3 Land, Soils & Geology

Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to their heritage and economic benefits. They are also important as links in the green infrastructure network. Coillte¹⁴ have provided access to many of their forests and support the use of the forests for recreational uses, and provide access to the following forests in the study area – Glenfarne Wood, Bawnboy, Killykeen Forest Park, Cavan Burren Park, Deerpark Virginia, Knockranny, Bailieborough, Dún an Rí Forest Park, Derryvunny, Lough Key Forest Park, Oakport/Bluebell Wood.

The study area contains a range of soils that support various habitats and land uses and provide valuable mineral resource potential, which are described in detail in the SEA ER. These soils can be impacted upon by development, land use changes and water quality.

According to Geological Survey, Ireland landslide susceptibility mapping, the vast majority of the study area has been rated as having ‘low’ landslide susceptibility, with the risk rising to ‘moderately low’ to ‘moderately high’ in isolated patches throughout the study area, especially in County Leitrim.

¹⁴ <https://www.coillte.ie/our-forests/recreation-map/>

5.3.3.1 Existing Land, Soils, Geology & Hydrogeology Issues

Existing land, soil and geology issues / pressures with environmental considerations include:

- Soil - the loss / damage of soil from the construction of greenfield sites for development.
- Land Management - conversion of land / sites can release CO₂ into the atmosphere and further reduce areas of 'carbon sinks'.
- Land- management of woodlands for recreational purposes.
- Geological Heritage - the protection of sites of geological importance within the study area.

5.3.4 Water Quality (including Flooding)

The *EU Water Framework Directive* (WFD) (2000/60/EC) establishes a framework for the protection of both surface water and groundwater waterbodies. The monitoring programme, as part of the WFD, assesses water quality but also water trends of rivers in relation to ecological and physio-chemical quality. The WFD status of rivers ranges from 'high' to 'bad'. The EPA also undertakes water quality surveys for transitional and coastal waterbodies.

The latest *Water Quality in Ireland* report 2016-2021 was published by the EPA in 2022. The status of the **river waterbodies** within the study area ranges from 'poor' to 'high'. The status of the **lake waterbodies** within the study area ranges from 'bad' to 'high'. Groundwater Quality Status between 2016 and 2021 was generally 'good'¹⁵ across the groundwater bodies within the study area. The groundwater vulnerability of study area ranges from 'low' to 'extreme'.

As part of the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028 Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs) have been prepared.

5.3.4.1 Existing Hydrogeology and Water Quality Issues

The principal threat to water is pollution which can adversely impact on all parts of the water cycle from groundwater to rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters. The Plan must comply with the requirements of the WFD and the Groundwater Directive and aim to drive improvement to water quality in both the short and long-term. Existing water quality issues / pressures with environmental considerations include:

- Water - the surface waterbodies within the study area need to be improved to achieve 'good' ecological status in waterbodies by 2027.
- Water - pressure on water sources include excessive nutrient enrichment which leads to eutrophication;
- Water - pressure on water sources also comes from land-use changes, water-based recreational sports, erosion, industry and urbanisation.
- Sustainable management of waterways and water-based recreation activities to ensure a balance between tourism development and conservation of natural resources and heritage areas.
- Water - water contamination arising through poor working practices, leakages or accidental spillage of materials if efficient pollution control measures are not fully implemented and maintained.
- Surface, ground & transitional waters - are at risk of pollution from septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems in the vicinity of waterbodies, potential pressures and impacts on water body status, water usage and flood risk from the construction projects i.e. increased sedimentation, groundwater recharge and accidental spillages. There is growing pressures from increasing population and increasing and sometimes conflicting social, economic and recreational uses.

¹⁵ EPA Groundwater Quality Data - <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

- Flooding - flood risk to be considered as a key environmental criteria.

5.3.5 Air Quality, Noise & Climate

The current trends in air quality in Ireland are reported in the EPA publication '*2022 Annual Report on Air Quality in Ireland*' which is currently the most up to date analysis of air quality data for Ireland. The study area is located within Zone D, within the 'Rural Ireland' zone. The designated zones have been defined to meet the criteria for air quality monitoring, assessment and management as defined in the aforementioned regulations. The air quality monitoring sites within the study area are located in Cavan Town (CN1), Carrick-on-Shannon (LM1) and Roscommon Town (RN01).

Air Quality Map show whether air quality is 'good', 'fair', 'poor' or 'very poor' in each region. The current air quality across the study area is 'good'. Monitoring is done using continuous monitors for ozone and nitrogen oxides in various locations around Ireland. The pollutants of most concern are those whose main source is traffic such as Particulate Matter (PM) and Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

The Noise Directive - Environmental Noise Directive (END) 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 community policy on noise reduction from source. During the implementation of the USSEB DEDP, consideration should be given to protect, where relevant, any designated quiet areas in open country.

The recent *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021* was established to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change. This aims at pursuing the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich and climate neutral economy by no later than the end of the year 2050. Ireland's *Climate Action Plan 2024* builds on national and sectoral targets by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings in this regard. The purpose of the Climate Action Plan is to lay out a roadmap of actions which will ultimately lead us to meeting our national climate objective of pursuing and achieving, by no later than the end of the year 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. It aligns with the legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings that were agreed by Government in July 2022.¹⁶

5.3.5.1 Existing Issues

In urban areas, concern has clearly shifted to a range of pollutants associated with road traffic which may be considered relatively new in the context of air quality control. The most important of these pollutants are NO₂, particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM₁₀), carbon monoxide (CO) and a wide variety of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), including carcinogens such as benzene. Therefore, it is important that a good quality road infrastructure is provided and alternatives to the private car are encouraged as much as possible.

Tourists contribute to greenhouse gas emissions across the same sources/sectors as local and national populations, e.g. transport, heating and electricity, agriculture/food production and waste generation.

The potential effects of climate change resulting in an increase in the frequency and severity of weather events, including flooding, storms, heavy snowfall, and variation in temperature. Severe rainfall events, or very cold events with or with snowfall could adversely impact upon town's and people in the study area leading to water shortages, residential flooding and disruption to infrastructure and to movement.

¹⁶ Climate Action Plan 2024- <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/79659-climate-action-plan-2024/>

Therefore, it will be important to improve resilience of existing and planned critical infrastructure, systems and procedures to the effects and variability of climate change.

5.3.6 Material Assets

The latest *Drinking Water Quality in Public Supplies 2023*¹⁷ was published by the EPA in 2024. The report provides a summary of assessment of drinking water quality in public supplies and public group water schemes in Ireland during 2023.

EU and National waste management policy can be summarised by the waste hierarchy of prevention, recycling, energy recovery and disposal. For the purposes of waste management planning, Ireland is now divided into three regions: Southern, Eastern-Midlands and Connacht-Ulster. The study area is located within the Southern Region. The Regional Waste Management Planning Offices have issued the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy (NWMPCE) 2024 - 2030 in March 2024, which supersedes the Regional waste management plan. The NWMPCE does not however dissolve the three regional waste areas. The NWMPCE sets the ambition of the plan to have a 0% total waste growth per person over the life of the Plan with an emphasis on non-household wastes including waste from commercial activities and the construction and demolition sector.

The European Commission's Circular Economy Action Plan: A New Circular Economy Action Plan for a Cleaner More Competitive Europe, March 2020, forms one of the main blocks of the European Green Deal. A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy¹⁸ was published in 2020 and outlines Ireland's National Waste Policy for 2020-2025.

The 'National Sustainable Mobility Policy Action Plan 2022-2025' is a national document which seeks to achieve a shift to more sustainable means of transport by setting actions and timeline for Modal Change. The area to which the Strategy relates is served by rail, bus, cycle network, regional and strategic roads. Public transport to Ireland's Hidden Heartlands from Dublin and Galway Cities is strong with regular train and bus services operating. Public transport to facilitate circulation within the region, however, is weaker with relatively poor linkages between towns and the principal visitor attractions. It is very difficult for a visitor to tour the region by public transport. Some Local Link services are currently expanding their routes during the summer months to provide access to key visitor attractions from some towns.

The improved provision of alternatives to the private car should bring about a reduction in demand for private car journeys and a commensurate increase in public transport, walking and cycling. Providing public transport and a network of safe, well-lit and convenient footpaths and cycleways within local neighbourhood centres, public transport stops and workplaces will encourage walking and cycling.

The development of public transport is critical in achieving more sustainable travel patterns and a reduced reliance on the car. Bus Éireann and a number of private operators operate services throughout the study area.

ESB Networks and EirGrid are the utility providers responsible for the electricity distribution and transmission systems. Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) are the utility provider responsible for the supply, transmission and distribution of natural gas.

¹⁷ EPA Drinking Water Quality - <https://www.epa.ie/publications/compliance--enforcement/drinking-water/annual-drinking-water-reports/>

¹⁸ DCCA (2020).

5.3.6.1 Existing Material Asset Issues

The increased tourism at the Country level will result in increasing demand for water, wastewater treatment, waste management, transport infrastructure / links and energy and telecommunications services.

Existing material assets issues / pressures within the study area, include:

- Water Supply and Wastewater Services - increased tourist numbers will generate pressure on existing water and wastewater sources to meet demands. Inadequate infrastructure, including inadequate capacity, contribute to the contamination of receiving surface water and groundwater waterbodies.
- Energy - there is a need to phase out the reliance on fossil fuels, with a shift to renewable energy resources. Identifying and enabling indigenous renewable energy will also support Ireland's energy security. New developments require excellent energy and power services which create direct and indirect emissions, particularly CO₂, methane and dioxins.
- Transport - the movement of people is key to the success of new development and areas, where adequate transport infrastructure (i.e. road, rail, cycle and pedestrian routes) to these developments and accessibility throughout the development / area (safe footpath and cycle paths) is fundamental to development. Sustainable development of blueways and greenways is essential to promote recreation and tourism.
- Waste - increased tourist numbers will pose challenge in providing sustainable recycling infrastructure and will put pressure on the local authorities to provide better waste management and access to waste services.
- Light Pollution - can arise when external lighting is not properly designed or managed which can in turn lead to inappropriate or excessive light spillage.
- Utilities - provide, protect and maintain adequate utilities to support existing and envisaged development.

5.3.7 Cultural Heritage

The archaeological heritage of an area includes structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, moveable objects, monuments of other types as well as their context, whether situated on or under land or water.

The *National Monuments Acts 1930-2014* provide for the protection of archaeological heritage. The *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) was established under *Section 12* of the *National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994* and structures, features, objects or sites listed in this Record are known as Recorded Monuments.

The record of protected structures within the study area are presented in SEA ER.

5.3.7.1 Cultural Heritage Issues

Increased tourist activities have the potential for direct negative impacts on heritage features and their setting. Development of infrastructure, in addition to development resulting from economic growth and increasing population, can potentially impact on the integrity of sites or features of architectural, archaeological or cultural heritage interest. This could directly impact upon the cultural amenity resource and tourism potential of the study area.

Existing cultural heritage issues / pressures include:

- Development of infrastructure -increased visitor numbers can potentially impact on the integrity of sites or features and their views to / from architectural, archaeological or cultural heritage interest.

- Development in close proximity to sites and areas of cultural heritage may adversely impact upon the cultural landscape setting.
- Development has the potential to impact archaeological heritage which is sub-surface. This includes the insertion of services (e.g. cycleways), landscaping works, ground levelling and tree planting.
- Architecture - impact on heritage streetscapes of regional and local importance.
- Archaeology - impact on archaeological monuments and their settings including undiscovered sites / features.
- Risk - protection of built and archaeological heritage to identify the heritage assets at risk.

5.3.8 Landscape & Visual

A National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025¹⁹ was published, in line with Ireland's obligations under the European Landscape Convention. The key objectives of this Strategy are the recognition of landscape in law and the provision of a policy framework to put measures in place for the management and protection of landscape, the production of a national Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) through data gathering and an evidence based description of character assessment, raising awareness and public consultation.

The landscape character areas and values are detailed in the SEA ER.

There is a need to protect and conserve views and prospects adjoining public roads and river valleys throughout the study area where these views are of high amenity value. Landscape objectives of the current Development Plans aims to preserve the views and prospects and to protect views from development which would interfere unduly with the visual amenity and character of the landscape, so far as practically possible.

Many of these views are associated with heritage and tourism sites and provide vantage points over high quality landscapes. These scenic views are of an amenity and tourism value and contribute to our quality of life.

The protected views and prospects with the study area are detailed in the SEA ER.

5.3.8.1 Existing Problems

Landscape can be considered a dynamic rather than static asset. It is constantly changing, and its changes are driven by nature itself, by direct human intervention, and indirectly through the consequences of human activity, notably Climate Change. All physical development undertaken by human impacts on the landscape.

Areas of a highly sensitive landscape have a low capacity to absorb new development and this can be a challenge to locate new development in these areas without it becoming unduly obtrusive.

Existing landscape and visual issues / pressures include:

- New development having adverse and visual impacts on the landscape.
- Green Infrastructure - protecting the existing green infrastructure network from fragmentation and loss due to pressures of urban development within and adjoining the network.
- Ecosystem Services - recognising and promoting the value of ecosystem services that the green infrastructure network provides to the study area.
- Protected views – development has potential to obstruct protected views and scenic routes

¹⁹ National Landscape Strategy: <https://www.chg.gov.ie/app/uploads/2015/07/N-Landscape-Strategy-english-Web.pdf>

6 Strategic Environmental Objectives

The SEA Directive requires that ‘the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.’ Given the position of the USSEB DEDP beneath the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028 in the land use planning hierarchy, the measures identified in the SEA for the Development Plans have also been considered in this assessment, with some modification where appropriate.

A series of Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) have been prepared in line with current guidance and also with specific reference to the SEA for the USSEB DEDP (refer to **Table 6.1**). The SEOs provide a basis for the assessment of the environmental effects of the USSEB DEDP and are framed in such a manner as to enable the USSEB DEDP to be fully assessed in environmental terms.

SEOs are distinct from the strategic objectives within the USSEB DEDP, although they often overlap and are developed from international, national and regional policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives.

Table 6.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) for USSEB DEDP

Theme	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)	B_1	Ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites (and transboundary National Site Network) and Annex habitats and species ²⁰ and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.
	B_2	Preserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, including internationally, EU and nationally designated sites, habitats and protected species.
	B_3	Ensure USSEB DEDP does not contradict biodiversity protection, restoration and rehabilitation objectives in the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028
Population & Human Health (PHH)	PHH_1	Promote sustainable high-quality tourism within the County that supports economic development and maximises potential for employment and investment.
	PHH_2	Improve health and wellbeing by provision of recreational and tourism-related activities.
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG)	LSG_1	Minimise green field development and protect land and soil resources from pollution and degradation.
Water Quality (WQ)	WQ_1	Protect, maintain and where necessary improve water quality and the management of watercourses, groundwater and the marine environment, in compliance with the requirements of the WFD objectives and measures.
	WQ_2	Implement and comply with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management and Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidelines to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.

²⁰ ‘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.

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Theme	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective
Air Quality, Noise & Climate (ANC)	ANC_1	Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality and noise emissions through the reduction of emissions.
	ANC_2	Contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with National targets, including Ireland's commitment to realising a climate neutral economy by 2050.
Material Assets (MA)	MA_1	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, ensure new developments are served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health.
	MA_2	Promote sustainable waste management, minimisation and recovery.
	MA_3	Promote sustainable transportation including increased use of public transport and active travel measures.
Cultural Heritage (CH)	CH_1	Protect and avoid impact on places, features and landscapes of cultural and archaeological importance, including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).
	CH_2	Protect and avoid impact on places, features, buildings and landscapes of architectural heritage, (including entries to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAHs)).
Landscape & Visual (LV)	LV_1	To protect landscape character, minimise the loss of historic landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows and scenic views.
	LV_2	Avoid impacts on the statutory landscape & visual designations as identified in the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028.

7 Assessment of Alternatives

7.1 Introduction

Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive requires the Environmental Report to consider reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme and the significant environmental effects of the alternatives selected.

Alternatives put forward should be reasonable, realistic and capable of implementation. They should also be in line with the appropriate strategic level at which the plan will be implemented within the national planning hierarchy. As preparation of the USSEB DEDP is a non-statutory plan, the 'do-nothing' or 'do-minimum' scenarios are viable alternatives, as is the 'do-something' scenario.

7.2 Alternative 1: Do-nothing / Do-Minimum

Tourism operations in Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon would continue to operate as at present outside of a plan, whose objective is to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate the various stakeholders involved in tourism activities and interest.

7.3 Do-something (Alternatives 2A and 2B: Prepare a Plan)

The do-something scenario sees the preparation of a Plan that seeks to better manage tourism in Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon. The Plan will facilitate, promote, support and coordinate the various stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment.

While the Plan would co-ordinate activities and stakeholders in the tourism area, it 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). Therefore, any projects arising from the Plan would be required to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of documents that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

In essence the Plan would present a five year sustainable tourism development plan for Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon. The key opportunities to consider for the Plan would be:

- *Raise awareness of the Destination by leading out with the signature experiences that make it distinctive.*
- *Build on destination leadership in eco-tourism activity and Slow Adventure by embracing sustainability and eco-tourism as the platform for experience innovation and new levels of collaboration.*
- *Expand the appeal of tourism hubs and gateways into the Destination such as Carrick on Shannon, Cavan and Roscommon Towns and other key towns and villages.*
- *Development of a signature water-based experience trail, rural and immersed in nature, that builds on work to date in linking water and community experiences and works together with centres of excellence for Slow Adventure to create a new level and scale of product.*
- *Encourage tours operators that are already programming the Destination to extend their dwell time by at least one night.*
- *Grow the appeal of cruising on the Shannon and the Shannon-Erne beyond the German-speaking and domestic markets, into southern Europe and other parts of northern Europe.*

- *Development of cross border experiences linking heritage, culture and the outdoors to stimulate new levels of visitor flows across the Destination.*
- *Grow international recognition of the Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark and using it as the platform for eco-tourism excellence and community tourism experience development.*
- *Develop the Beara Breifne Way as a long-distance trail of international stature and the basis for immediate community engagement.*
- *Complete and connect greenways and blueways across the Destination to create integrated clusters of accredited trails.*
- *Expanding destination accommodation stock to include building on niche 'in nature' style accommodation already associated with the Destination.*
- *The opportunity to respond to the emerging tourism trends of off-the-beaten-track / in nature experiences through responsible tourism and new forms of wellbeing.*
- *Grow the multi-generational destination appeal due to the diversity of activities and attractions, particularly for the family market.*
- *Create niche destination festivals and events linked to the outdoors, in-nature activity and Slow Adventure.*
- *Strengthen the profile of local food provenance through food networks and link food tourism experiences with agri- and regenerative farming experiences.*
- *Create additional cruise boat hubs and facilities.*

There are two separate alternatives under the 'do-something' (prepare a Plan) scenario.

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

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for 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, Alternative 2A would require stakeholders to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the relevant Fáilte Ireland published guidance and documents.

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.

7.4 Assessment of Alternatives

Three reasonable alternatives for the USSEB DEDP have been identified and assessed as set out in **Table 7.1**. The potential effects of the reasonable alternatives on the SEOs categorised as follows:

- Potential Positive Environmental Impact (indicated by '+')
- Potential Negative Environmental Impact (indicated by '-')

- Potential Positive and Negative Environmental Impacts (indicated by '+/-').
- Uncertain Environmental Impact ((indicated by '?').
- Neutral, No or Insignificant Environmental Impact (indicated by '0')

7.5 Reasoning for Selection of the Preferred Alternative

Whilst unlikely to have negative environmental effects, Alternative 1 does not deliver positive benefits for tourism in Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon.

Alternative 2A will deliver effective benefit and response for tourism in Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon, whilst at the same providing for sustainable development and environmental protection.

Alternative 2B will deliver effective benefit and response for tourism in Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon, but without ensuring environmental protection.

Given the tourism and environmental benefits, Alternative 2A is selected as the preferred approach.

8 Assessment of Effects of the Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border (USSEB) Destination & Experience Development Plan

8.1 Introduction

The USSEB DEDP has been subject to an assessment for potential effects arising from the implementation of the Plan on the baseline environment as characterised and described in **Section 5** of this Report. The assessment is carried out having regard to the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) established for the aspects of the baseline environment which have potential to be impacted by the USSEB DEDP. These Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are detailed in **Section 6** of this Report.

Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028²¹, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029²² and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028²³ all support the delivery of Destination Experience Development Plans through continued collaboration with Fáilte Ireland. It is noted that during its preparation the aforementioned development plans, were subject to full SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

The environmental assessment of the ‘Strategic Objectives’ and of the ‘destination catalyst’ and ‘destination enabling’ initiatives of the USSEB DEDP are set out separately in the following sections of this Report. The SEA Directive requires the Environmental Report to include information on the likely significant effects on the environment, including 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.

8.2 Environmental Assessment of the Strategic Objectives of the Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border (USSEB) Destination & Experience Development Plan

The finding of the environmental assessment of the overall Vision, Strategic Objectives of the USSEB DEDP is presented in **Table 8.1**.

²¹ <https://www.cavancoco.ie/file-library/planning/development-plans/development-plan-2022-2028/>

²² https://www.leitrimcoco.ie/eng/services_a-z/planning-and-development/development-plans/leitrim-county-development-plan-2023-2029/

²³ <https://www.rosdevplan.ie/>

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Table 8.1 Environmental Assessment of Strategic Objectives of the USSEB DEDP

(SEO Key: B – Biodiversity, PHH – Population & Human Health, LSG – Land, Soils & Geology, WQ – Water Quality, ANC – Air Quality, Noise & Climate Change, MA – Material Assets, CH – Cultural Heritage, LV – Landscape & Visual)

Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
<p>Vision</p> <p>The vision for the USSEB DEDP states that:</p> <p><i>“Nature is at the heart of an inspiring sustainable tourism destination, where tourism delivers net positive outcomes to communities and the environment. Ecotourism and slow adventure are the hallmarks of the destination delivered through best in class on and off the water experiences. The visitor hubs of Carrick-on-Shannon, Cavan and Roscommon Town have developed a year round appeal for tourism. Signature attractions such as the Beara Breifne Way, Shannon Erne Blueway, National Famine Way, Forests Parks and Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark inspire new levels of community and visitor engagement with slow tourism. Best in class water activities</i></p>	<p>This vision statement sets an overall context for destination experience and tourism in USSEB. This will support and underpin the local tourism economy, industry and associated workers. No specific projects are associated with the statement, and therefore the effect on the remaining environmental themes and SEOs will be neutral.</p>	<p>PHH (PHH1, PHH2)</p>			<p>B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2), LV (LV_1, LV2)</p>	<p>No</p>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
<i>from Cruising on the Shannon to exploring our heritage through on water experiences provide inspiring visitor moments. A growing network of accredited Greenways, Blueways and trails have become the catalysts for regenerative tourism and the platform for visitors to connect with our local community delivering a year round economic impact."</i>						
Strategic Objective 1 : Development of a Regenerative Tourism Destination <i>Establish the Upper Shannon, Shannon Erne and Border region as a leading regenerative tourism destination with high standards in sustainable tourism development and a reduced carbon footprint.</i>						
1.1 Maximise the potential of the Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark to grow community-based tourism opportunities and demonstrate how visitors can engage with place-based eco-tourism experiences.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health by provision of enhanced visitor experience. The development of eco-tourism has the potential to contribute to better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefiting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the objective could have the potential to result in uncertain</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		CH (CH1, CH2), B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), MA (MA1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)		Yes

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SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

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	environmental effect on cultural heritage, land, soils, geology and biodiversity. Increased tourism in these sensitive locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management. The development could also potentially result in disturbance due to an increase in human activity and visitor numbers in the vicinity of European sites.					
1.2 Develop the capability of the tourism industry and community tourism groups to develop new regenerative and ecotourism experiences for visitors, profiling the Destination's commitment to sustainability and embracing the principle of regeneration as a platform for innovation.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health by provision of enhanced visitor experience. The development of eco-tourism has the potential to contribute to better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefiting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, both the construction and operation of new experiences could have the potential to result in uncertain environmental effect on cultural heritage, land, soils, geology</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		CH (CH1, CH2), B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA 1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)		Yes

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	and biodiversity. Increased tourism in these sensitive locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management.					
1.3 Enable responsible visitor engagement with nature through sustainable in nature amenities such as the boardwalk at Acres Lake and developing viewing points and other appropriate interventions that highlight water and nature assets and the unique geology of Leitrim, Cavan and Roscommon.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health by provision of enhanced visitor experience.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, both the construction and operation of new interventions could have the potential to result in negative or uncertain environmental effect on cultural heritage, land, soils, geology, hydrology and biodiversity. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast. These works can also potentially result in the spread of invasive species. Increased tourism in these sensitive locations would also require provision of welfare</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)	CH (CH1, CH2), B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), MA (MA1)	ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA2, MA3)		Yes

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	facilities, wastewater and waste management.					
1.4 Optimise the opportunities presented by the Just Transition Fund and, in particular, the Regenerative Tourism and Placemaking Scheme 2023-2027, to deliver new sustainable visitor experiences within communities in Roscommon.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health by provision of sustainable visitor experience.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, both the construction and operation of new visitor experiences could have the potential to result in negative or uncertain environmental effect on cultural heritage, land, soils, geology, hydrology, biodiversity, landscape and visual. Increased tourism in these sensitive locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)	CH (CH1, CH2), B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), MA (MA1)	ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA2, MA3)		Yes
1.5 Collectively achieve a reduction in carbon emissions in line with the targets set out in the National Climate Action Plan.	<p>This objective will result in overall positive effects on the environment.</p> <p>However, any new development or infrastructure upgrade in line with the targets set out in the National Climate Action Plan presents potential uncertain environmental effects that have the potential to</p>	PHH (PHH1), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA2, MA3)		PHH (PHH2), B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), MA (MA1), CH (CH1, CH2),		Yes

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	arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.					
1.6 Seek opportunities to support the development of a national EV charging infrastructure, especially at visitor attractions and activity provider sites across the Destination.	This objective will support energy efficiency and reduction of GHG emissions reduction. This action will have positive effect on climate. However, in the absence of mitigation, works involved in provision of new infrastructure can have the potential to result in uncertain environmental effects on biodiversity, lands & soils, water quality, cultural heritage, material assets and landscape.	PHH (PHH1), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA2, MA3)		PHH (PHH2), B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), MA (MA1), CH (CH1, CH2),		Yes
1.7 Align with the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 in ensuring that the tourism activity in Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon 'acts for nature' in the development of awareness of biodiversity and its importance, and in the implementation of measures to enhance biosecurity measures throughout the Destination.	This objective will have overall positive effects on the environment. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.	B (B1, B2, B3), PHH (PHH1, PHH2), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)				No

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1.8 Grow national and international recognition for how the Destination facilitates the protection and enhancement of the environment as the fundamental asset of the visitor experience in counties Leitrim, Cavan and Roscommon.	This objective will enhance tourism opportunities for the counties and have positive effect on population and human health. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
Strategic Objective 2 : Growth in Destination Awareness <i>Grow the profile of the Destination through collectively growing awareness, locally and in the domestic and international markets of Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon as great places to visit, where the visitor is assured of an authentic, place-based experience and which also delivers net positive benefits for the community, the environment, and the tourism industry.</i>						
2.1 Grow the demand generation capabilities of the tourism industry based on understanding visitor needs and motivations, and how to attract domestic and international visitors on a year-round basis aligned with the Fáilte Ireland Visitor Motivations Framework and the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Brand Toolkit.	This objective will enhance tourism opportunities for the counties and have positive effect on population and human health. However, in the absence of mitigation, both the construction and operation of any new infrastructure could have the potential to result in uncertain environmental effect on cultural heritage, land, soils, geology, hydrology, biodiversity, landscape and visual. Increased tourism in these sensitive locations would also require provision of welfare	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2), MA (MA1), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA2, MA3)		Yes

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	facilities, wastewater and waste management.					
2.2 Employ a visitor-centric approach to the development of interpretation and orientation throughout the Destination that is aligned with the Fáilte Ireland Visitor Motivations Framework and the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Brand Toolkit.	This objective will support in raising awareness regarding tourism opportunities throughout the Destination. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
2.3 Develop and strengthen the capacity and capability of tourism industry networks and tourism clusters to establish new ways of working together and collectively grow local awareness of existing and newly developed products and experiences.	This objective will enhance tourism opportunities for the study area and have positive effect on population and human health. However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
2.4 Increase the tourism industry's engagement with the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands brand	This objective will support in raising awareness regarding tourism	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1,	No

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to collectively grow awareness and recognition of the regional experience brand to increase the share of the domestic and international market.	opportunities and promote collaboration for effective working. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.				ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)	
2.5 Elevate the profile of the Destination as a regenerative tourism destination characterised by a) visitors' ability to access quality and diverse eco-tourism and slow adventure tourism experiences and b) community pride in, and stewardship of, their cultural and natural environment and c) industry /stakeholders' respect for the environment as fundamental to the destination offering.	This objective will enhance tourism opportunities for the counties and have positive effect on population and human health. The development of new and existing experiences might give rise to uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
2.6 Grow the digital capabilities of the tourism industry to collectively grow destination visibility and sustained marketing of new experiences and motivational	This objective would result in positive effects for tourism industry and will not result in adverse environmental consequences.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV	No

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itineraries to encourage visitor dispersion into and across the area.					(LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	
2.7 Increase the destination profile as a family and multi-generational holiday destination.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities for families and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This could also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management which has potential to effect the receiving environment.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
2.8 Grow awareness within the domestic market of signature destination experiences such as cruising.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health by growing awareness.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, this objective could have the potential to result in uncertain environmental effect on cultural</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1,		Yes

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	heritage, land, soils, geology and biodiversity due to increased visitor numbers. Increased tourism in these sensitive locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management.			LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)		
Strategic Objective 3: Connection and integration of land and water-based trails <i>Deliver new levels of connectivity between new and existing trails, both land-based and water-based, across the Destination to create an enhanced and integrated scale of outdoor activity provision and development of best-in-class slow tourism hubs.</i>						
3.1 Deliver the Beara Breifne Way to become an internationally recognised way-marked walking trail and focal point for communities in the Destination to engage with the emerging tourism opportunities.	<p>This objective will provide enhanced visitor experience and have positive effect to population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
3.2 Develop the network of nationally accredited greenways,	This objective will result in positive effects on population and human	PHH (PHH1, PHH2), MA (MA3)	B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1,	ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA		Yes

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blueways and trails within the Destination and, where feasible and viable, connect with trails that facilitate and encourage visitor flow within the wider Hidden Heartlands region, and to and from adjoining destinations; e.g. Ulster Way, Boyne Valley Landlands Greenway.	<p>health and on material assets by promoting sustainable transportation.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially negative or uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.</p>		WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2)	(MA1, MA2), CH (CH1, CH2)		
3.3 Integrate signature trails with other outdoor activities featured within the Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon; e.g. development, extension and accreditation of the Shannon and Shannon-Erne Blueways.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health and on material assets by promoting sustainable transportation.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially negative or uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2), MA (MA3)	B (B1, B2, B3), WQ (WQ1, WQ2)	LSG (LSG1), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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	and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast. This would result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.					
3.4 Develop links between trails, attractions and activities to facilitate new ways for visitors to access and interact with local experiences; e.g. the National Famine Way and National Famine Museum Strokestown Park, Arigna Mining Experience and the Miners' Way, Lough Key Forest and Activity Park and the Boyle – Carrick-on-Shannon Greenway, The Shed Distillery and Electric Bike Trails, Dún an Rí Forest Park and the Boyne Valley to Lakelands Greenway, and to and through the Cuilcagh Lakelands Geopark, e.g. Killykeen Forest Park and the Killykeen Way.	<p>This objective will provide enhanced visitor experience and have positive effect to population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p> <p>These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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	areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.					
3.5 Identify means and on-water routes that facilitate slow exploration of the Destination by water; e.g. through day-boat hire, small e-powered vessels, and/or water taxis.	<p>This objective will enhance connectivity and have positive effect to population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing transport route, presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p> <p>These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
3.6 Link existing and new land- and water-based trails to build a new scale of integrated trails and opportunities to enable visitors to engage with mix of eco-tourism and 'off the beaten track' opportunities	<p>This objective will enhance connectivity and have positive effect to population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing trails, presents a variety of potentially uncertain</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2,		Yes

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that tap into the heritage and living culture of the local area.	<p>environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p> <p>These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.</p>			MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		
3.7 Revitalise existing trails to become more place-based and experiential, based on their capacity to orientate the visitor to established or emerging destination experiences e.g. Táin Trail, Lough Allen Drive, Miners Way, Ulster Way.	<p>This objective will provide enhanced visitor experience and have positive effect to population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p> <p>These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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	ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.					
3.8 Create a best-in-class approach to developing walking trail heads to grow the Destination profile as a centre of excellence for outdoor activity. This will be supported by a commitment to maintaining the quality of trails and maintenance plan to ensure the sustainable management of the trails experience.	<p>This objective will provide enhanced visitor experience and have positive effect to population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p> <p>These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
Strategic Objective 4: Development of Place-based, Ecotourism Experiences <i>Develop the range and quality of visitor experiences across the Destination drawing on the natural, community and cultural heritage, with a focus on ecotourism.</i>						
4.1 Develop new visitor experiences linked to eco-tourism and slow	This objective will result in positive effects on population and human	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ		Yes

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adventure leveraging the core destination assets such as the River Shannon, Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Geopark, Shannon Erne Waterway, established and emerging national trails, forest parks and water amenities, whose core objective is the protection of the natural and/or cultural heritage.	<p>health and by promoting eco-tourism and slow tourism.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast. This would result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p> <p>Increased tourism in these sensitive locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management.</p>			(WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		
4.2 Create compelling in nature visitor experience moments blended with local heritage, culture and activities that utilise the on land and water trail network of greenways and blueways.	<p>This objective will provide enhanced visitor experience and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2,		Yes

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	and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast. This would result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.			MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		
4.3 Expand the opportunities for community tourism groups to enable visitors to immerse themselves in local culture through the development of new experiences linking agri-tourism, local heritage, food, and culture.	This objective will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive or neutral effects on the environmental themes and SEOs. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2), CH (CH1, CH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)	No
4.4 Develop eco-tourism experiences linked to water across, e.g. paddling, cruising, cycling, angling, identified through the Lough Tapestry plan (see section 4.2.7 of the DEDP).	This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health by promoting eco-tourism. However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)	B (B1, B2, B3), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2),	LSG (LSG1), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
	a variety of potentially negative or uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.					
4.5 Create new cross-border and cross regional experiences to introduce new visitor flows into the Destination, e.g. from/to the Wild Atlantic Way, Fermanagh Lakelands and Omagh and the Sperrins VEDP, and Ireland's Ancient East.	<p>This objective will provide enhanced visitor experience and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
4.6 Maximise the opportunity provided by the National Famine	This objective would result in positive effects for tourism industry	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1,	No

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
Museum and the National Famine Way to connect businesses and communities with the diaspora market.	and will not result in adverse environmental consequences.				ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	
4.7 Build the capability of existing visitor attractions, cultural hubs (e.g. The Dock Art Gallery, Carrick on Shannon; King House, Boyle; Ramor Theatre, Virginia among others) and activity providers to develop innovative visitor experiences to grow the range of things to do in the day and evening time.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the development of new or existing infrastructure presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		CH (CH1, CH2), LV (LV_1, LV2), B (B1, B2, B3), MA (MA1, MA2), WQ (WQ1, WQ2),	LSG (LSG1), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA3)	Yes
4.8 Develop a number of signature climate neutral and sustainable destination experiences linked to the natural and cultural heritage and showcase the role of water in shaping the landscape and communities.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health and climate.</p> <p>However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2),		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
	developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.					
4.9 Develop the capability of the tourism industry to deliver new forms of nature-based wellbeing experiences and work with strategic partners to develop nature-based wellness opportunities in forest parks, on trails and on and beside water access points.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast. This could also result in increased visitor numbers and pressure in the vicinity of European sites.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
4.10 Develop angling across the Destination given its potential to support both geographic and seasonal dispersal.	This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2,		Yes

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
	However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.			MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		
4.11 Capitalise on the growing momentum signified by the development of the Hidden Heartlands' Golf Association and the existing high-quality (e.g. Slieve Russell PGA status) and extensive offering to develop the Destination's profile for international golfers.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
Strategic Objective 5: Growth in Sustainable Economic Impact <i>Grow the economic impact of tourism and create high quality jobs in the Destination by supporting the industry to enhance its capacity and capability and by developing and enhancing the visitor services' provision.</i>						
5.1 Support tourism businesses to improve their capacity and capability through a range of	This objective will support in raising awareness regarding tourism and also provide economic benefits to the study area population. No	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1,	No

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
support programmes, such as the Digital that Delivers Programme and the Employer Excellence Programme, as well as other more tailored training supports.	negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.				MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	
5.2 Develop the opportunity identified in the Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon and Discovery Zones to grow the ability of the main visitor hubs and towns such as Carrick on Shannon, Cavan and Roscommon Towns to disperse visitors across the wider Destination.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the development of any new or existing infrastructure presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
5.3 Build the profile of the Destination as a host for niche business tourism activity linking the tourism hubs of Carrick-on-Shannon, and Cavan and Roscommon Towns, as sustainable business tourism host venues.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the development of any new or existing infrastructure presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
	arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.					
5.4 Develop smaller towns across the Destination such as Manorhamilton, Drumshanbo, Boyle, Bailieborough, and Virginia as key service hubs from a daytime and evening-time visitor economy perspective and enhance their ability to act as gateways to and from neighbouring regions.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the development of any new or existing infrastructure presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
5.5 Grow the level of available accommodation stock in our rural and urban areas to include hotel accommodation with alternative forms of accommodation linked to the outdoors. New accommodation development should strive for net-zero status.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities for the study area and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>The development of new and existing accommodations might result in uncertain environmental effects on the environmental themes and SEOs that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
	and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.					
5.6 Support the industry in developing saleable experiences for individual experience providers as well as bundled saleable experiences for clusters of experience providers where appropriate.	<p>This objective will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive or neutral effects on the environmental themes and SEOs.</p> <p>No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
5.7 Deliver a range of developmental and promotional initiatives that are aimed at lengthening the visitor season by growing revenue during the shoulder season; e.g. targeted cruise-hire promotion during the shoulder season and the development of new festivals and events across the Destination during the shoulder season.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects on population.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new festivals and events across the Destination presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from the provision of ancillary infrastructure for the events. There is also potential for uncertain environmental effect on air quality & noise, biodiversity and human health due to elevated levels of noise & congestion.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
5.8 Deliver on the recommendations arising from the recently published <i>Feasibility Study for the Sustainable Development and Greening of the Cruise Hire Sector</i> , to ensure that the sector grows its capacity and diversifies its offering in a sustainable manner.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities for the study area and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also increase visitor numbers in sensitive areas.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
5.9 Work with education and training agencies in Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon to align investment in building capabilities and capacity with existing and new tourism enterprises.	<p>This objective will promote collaboration with education and training agencies, support efficient delivery of tourism experiences across a range of sites and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>No specific projects are associated with the statement, and therefore the effect on the remaining environmental themes and SEOs will be neutral.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
5.10 Develop a community tourism training programme to build the	This objective will support in raising awareness regarding tourism and	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1,	No

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
capabilities of the community tourism enterprise sector to realise the social and economic potential of tourism for their locality.	also provide economic benefits to the study area population. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.				WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	
5.11 Establish new sustainable transport options working with existing providers such as Local Link to enhance visitor access to local attractions, communities and activities, and support the night-time economy in key locations.	<p>The development of new sustainable transport options has the potential to contribute to sustainable mobility, reduction in emissions and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefiting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations.</p> <p>The development of these projects, however, may result in uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2), MA (MA3)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

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	of rivers and streams or along the coast.					
5.12 Maximise the visibility of the Destination, and access routes to the Destination at ferry ports, airports, in particular regional airports such as Ireland West (Knock) and Shannon Airports. Chart the visitor journey from the point of access to the Destination, in terms of all forms of transport, but particularly all the sustainable forms of transport, including 'the last mile'.	<p>This objective will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive or neutral effects on the environmental themes and SEOs.</p> <p>No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)	No
5.13 Improve the signage to attract visitors off bypasses (e.g., the new N5 bypass currently under construction) and Motorways, in order to grow the visitor footfall in the smaller towns.	<p>This objective will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive or neutral effects on the environmental themes and SEOs.</p> <p>No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)	No
Strategic Objective 6: Development of New Levels of Collaboration <i>Build new levels of tourism industry and stakeholder collaboration through the strengthening of existing and the creation of new tourism networks and clusters.</i>						

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
6.1 Develop a network of geographic and themed clusters of visitor experiences rooted in regenerative tourism principles across the Destination to facilitate collaboration between the industry.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities for the study area and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, any new development or upgrade to existing infrastructure presents potential uncertain environmental effects that have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also increase visitor numbers in sensitive areas.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
6.2 Engender a pan-agency focus on tourism clusters and networks for tourism investment and collectively grow local community and business engagement to stimulate new tourism opportunities; e.g. the Geopark Sustainable Business network. Support networks which foster community level engagement in order to share learnings, mentoring opportunities and develop new community tourism	<p>This objective will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive or neutral effects on the environmental themes and SEOs.</p> <p>No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)	No

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experiences- e.g. Community Wetlands Forum.						
6.3 Grow the capabilities of the Destination's visitor attractions and cultural hubs to work together, cross promote and collaborate, and with those in the neighbouring regional experience brands of the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East.	<p>This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
6.4 Deliver on the sustainable tourism objectives of the <i>Shannon Tourism Masterplan 2020-2030</i> in partnership with all agencies and stakeholders.	<p>This objective will result in positive effects across the majority of SEOs for environmental factors.</p> <p>No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.</p>	B (B1, B2, B3), PHH (PHH1, PHH2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3),			LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2)	No
6.5 Grow cross border destination collaboration by working on collective initiatives such as Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Geopark, and	This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2,		Yes

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Fermanagh Lakelands and Omagh and the Sperrins VEDP.	However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.			MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		
6.6 Ensure tourism is integrated as a key element of future placemaking activity; e.g. public realm projects, town and village enhancements.	This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and have positive effect on population and human health. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
6.7 Develop a collective tourism impact measurement system for the DEDP adopting a current situation baseline model to align stakeholder activity, programming and investment with the target outcomes of the plan underwritten by the VICE model as the basis for how success is measured.	This objective would result in positive effects for promoting tourism and investment and will not result in adverse environmental consequences.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
6.8 Leverage partnering initiatives as collaborative platforms to drive regenerative tourism and the adoption of appropriate accreditation systems.	<p>This objective will promote collaboration, support efficient delivery of tourism experiences across a range of sites and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>No specific projects are associated with the statement, and therefore the effect on the remaining environmental themes and SEOs will be neutral.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No

8.3 Environmental Assessment of the ‘Destination Catalyst’ and ‘Destination Enabling’ Initiatives listed within the Upper Shannon, Shannon-Erne and Border (USSEB) Destination & Experience Development Plan

The USSEB DEDP includes a list of destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives which will be delivered to support the above strategic objectives and initiatives of the DEDP. The environmental assessment of the effects of the catalyst projects and destination enabling initiatives is detailed in Appendix 1 of the SEA ER.

There are 8no. destination catalysts initiatives and 8no. destination enabling initiatives in total. The projects where there is a requirement for development of existing and new infrastructure might also give rise to uncertain environmental effects on other environmental themes and SEOs that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. Refer to Table 8.1A in Appendix 1 of the SEA ER for the detailed assessment of effects of the catalyst projects and actions.

8.4 The Interrelationship between Environmental Factors

An overview of the key and minor / no interaction between environmental factors with potential for effects arising from the USSEB DEDP are set out in the matrix in **Table 8.2**.

Actions within the Plan that give rise to positive or negative environmental effects for one environmental component also have the potential to generate positive or negative environmental effects for inter-related environmental components – e.g. negative effect on soils can have a negative effect on biodiversity, water, and / or landscape. Likewise, actions supporting the delivery of SuDS will improve water quality, which in turn can have a positive effect on aquatic ecology.

An assessment of impact inter-relationships and interactions is already embedded in the evaluation of environmental effects that has been carried out in this environmental report. This ensures that there is adequate coverage of all potential environmental effects associated with the implementation of plan actions. In addition the mitigation measures set out in **Section 9.0** of this Report.

Table 8.2 Significant Interrelationships between Environmental Factors

Component Effect	Biodiversity	Population & Human Health	Land, Soils & Geology	Water Quality	Air Quality, Noise and Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual
Biodiversity		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Population & Human Health	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Land, Soils & Geology	✓	✓		✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Water Quality	✓	✓	✓		✗	✓	✗	✓
Air Quality, Noise and Climate	✓	✓	✗	✗		✓	✓	✗
Material Assets	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓		✗	✗

Component \ Effect	Biodiversity	Population & Human Health	Land, Soils & Geology	Water Quality	Air Quality, Noise and Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual
Cultural Heritage	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓		✓
Landscape & Visual	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Legend: Key Interaction ✓ Minor/No Interaction ✗								

8.5 Potential Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects can be described as the addition of many small impacts to create one larger, more significant, impact.

There are 2 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. The interrelationships between environmental factors that help determine these potential effects are identified on **Table 8.2**.
- 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, projects, etc.

The USSEB DEDP could have a relationship with other plans and programmes. However, these plans and programmes will also be subject to environmental assessment, including SEA and AA, for the purpose of preventing and mitigating potential negative environmental effects. **Table 8.3** lists the relevant plans and programmes that have potential for cumulative effects with the USSEB DEDP.

The assessment of cumulative effects above focused on national, regional and local plans, programmes, strategy and policy documents that have the potential to affect the same receiving environment that could be affected by the USSEB DEDP.

The Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out policies and objectives for land use, settlement strategy, sustainable development, transport, infrastructure, environmental protection, and management, cultural heritage, climate change, etc. for the counties. Other higher-level international, national and regional plans are integrated within the County Development Plans and have been assessed as such. The USSEB DEDP will comply with the provisions set within the aforementioned County Development Plans which themselves have been subject to standalone environmental assessment (SEA, NIR, etc.).

The assessment of cumulative effects concludes that the implementation of the USSEB DEDP will not result in direct, indirect or cumulative impacts which would have the potential to adversely affect the environment. Indeed, the implementation of the USSEB DEDP has the potential for positive cumulative interactions in delivering on policies and objectives of higher level plans in relation to increased economic activity and employment and greater appreciation and understanding of natural heritage, cultural heritage and landscape.

Table 8.3 Potential Cumulative Effects with other Plans and Programmes

Plan, Programme etc.	Potential Cumulative effect	Likely Cumulative Effect
National Planning Framework (NPF) Project 2040 National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030 (<i>As part of Project Ireland 2040 the National Development Plan sets out the Government's over-arching investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030</i>)	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the National Planning Framework have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the RSES have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the RSES have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
National CFRAMS Programme Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study	Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Studies and their product – Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) – are at the core of national policy for flood risk management and the strategy for its implementation. These studies are required by The Floods Directive [2007/60/EC], which is being implemented in Ireland through the European Communities (Assessment and Management of Flood Risks) Regulations 2010 [S.I.122/2010]. Each FRMP is accompanied by an associated SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement. The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the FRMP have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the FRMP have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
National 4 th Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030	The Biodiversity Action notes the requirements and purposes of AA and SEA and the vision of the plan to conserve and restored for the benefit of all sectors of society.	No
National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)	The policy sets a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel and public transport to support Ireland's overall requirement to achieve a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by the end of this decade. The projects which will be implemented as a result of this national policy will be subject to their individual environmental impact assessment and appropriate assessment processes (as appropriate) and hence there would be no potential adverse effects on the overall receiving environment.	No

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Plan, Programme etc.	Potential Cumulative effect	Likely Cumulative Effect
River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for Ireland 2022-2027	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the RBMP have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
County Development Plans (Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025, Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027, Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023, Draft Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030, Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028,	The County Development Plan (CDP) provides the principal planning strategy document for the development of a local authority area over the statutory time period of the plan. Each of the CDP with Zone of Influence of the study area has been subject to SEA and AA processes to ensure that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
Transboundary County Development Plan (Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Local Development Plan 2030: Plan Strategy)	The Plan Strategy is the first of two development plan documents which will comprise the Local Development Plan. A Habitat Regulations Assessment Report (HRA) and a Sustainability Appraisal which incorporates the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been prepared for the Plan Strategy to ensure that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027 – Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the Strategy have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Strategy have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No

9 Mitigation Measures

9.1 Overview

The finding of the environmental assessment in **Section 8.0** of this Environmental Report is that, if unmitigated, a number of the actions of the USSEB DEDP have potential for uncertain or negative effects on aspects of the environment. These potential negative and / or uncertain effects, which derive from potential works resulting from the relevant action, focus primarily on biodiversity, water, cultural heritage, material assets and landscape. This section of the Environmental Report identifies measures for the mitigation and avoidance of potential uncertain or negative environmental effects.

9.2 Mitigation Measures

This Plan sits at the lower level of the hierarchy and must comply with relevant higher-level strategic actions / plans. These documents include plans and programmes, which have also been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant.

The projects included in this Plan will have to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of 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 this Plan is not part and does not contribute towards. The Plan includes requirements for environmental protection and management including the ones set out in the *Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027* especially the *Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027*.

The majority of the mitigation measures are achieved through the detailed environmental protective policies and objectives as set out in the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028. The Development Plans provides for sustainable planning and management control of all development in the study area– including the delivery of Destination & Experience Development Plans through continued collaboration with Fáilte Ireland.

Proposals for development within the USSEB DEDP area must comply as appropriate with the relevant provisions included within the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028. Given that the USSEB DEDP sits within and at a lower level in the planning hierarchy, the measures contained within the Development Plans, and in their Natura Impact Report (NIR), SEA Environmental Report / SEA Statement and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) are applicable to the USSEB DEDP.

Therefore, the key environmental protection measures included in the *Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028*, provide for appropriate and detailed mitigation of potential uncertain environmental effects of the USSEB DEDP.

These measures are detailed in the accompanying SEA ER.

10 Monitoring

10.1 Introduction

Monitoring of the USSEB DEDP and its implications on the environment is important to ensure that the environment is not adversely affected through the implementation of the Plan. In accordance with Article 10 of the SEA Directive, monitoring must be carried out of the significant environmental effects directly related to the implementation of the Plan *“in order to, inter alia, identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action.”*

Monitoring is based around indicators which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives (**Section 6**) used in the assessment. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the targets. The monitoring programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues - including unforeseen effects - as they arise. Such issues may be identified by the Council or identified to the Council by other agencies.

Fáilte Ireland is responsible for monitoring and the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action. It is recommended that the monitoring for the USSEB DEDP and review is undertaken in parallel with monitoring and review of the *Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028* for efficiency and given that similar data sets will be used to measure the progress of each plan.

Environmental indicator assessment during monitoring can show positive / neutral impacts or negative impacts on the environment. Where an indicator value highlights a positive / neutral impact on the environment, it is likely that the objectives of the USSEB DEDP are well-defined with regard to the environment. Conversely where the objectives of the USSEB DEDP have a negative impact on the environment, it may be necessary to review the objectives of the USSEB DEDP or to take some other form of intervention. For example, if an objective is having a significant adverse impact, an amendment may be considered during the lifetime of the USSEB DEDP.

Refer to **Table 10.1** below for the monitoring programme set for the SEA which includes details on the indicators, targets and data sources to monitor the progress of the USSEB DEDP.

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Table 10.1 Environmental Monitoring Programme

SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)				
B1	Ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites (and transboundary National Site Network) and Annex habitats and species ²⁴ and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.	Conservation status of habitats and species protected under European and International legislation.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for habitats and species protected under European and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.	<p>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years)</p> <p>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)</p> <p>Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) data.</p> <p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p> <p>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.</p>
B2	Preserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, including internationally, EU and nationally designated sites, habitats and protected species.	Conservation status of habitats and species protected under International and National legislation.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under International and National legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.	<p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p>

²⁴ '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.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
B3	Ensure USSEB DEDP does not contradict biodiversity protection, restoration and rehabilitation objectives in the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028	To comply with the biodiversity policies and objectives of the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028	No contravention of the biodiversity policies and objectives of the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028	Cavan /Leitrim/ Roscommon County Council monitoring likely significant environmental effects of the developments and compliance with policies and objectives of the CDPs.
Population & Human Health (PHH)				
PHH1	Promote sustainable high quality tourism within the County that supports economic development and maximises potential for employment and investment.	To comply with the tourism and economic development policies and objectives of the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028	No contravention of the tourism and economic development policies and objectives of the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028	Central Statistics Office (CSO) census data. Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
PHH2	Improve health and wellbeing by provision of recreational and tourism-related activities.	Occurrence of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from the USSEB DEDP, as identified by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and / or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).	No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of the USSEB DEDP.	Publicly available data from HSE and EPA to be reviewed. EPA State of the Environment reporting. Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG)				

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
LSG1	Minimise green field development and protect land and soil resources from pollution and degradation.	Extent of conversion of land cover / green field to developed / artificial surfaces.	Contribute towards the target of the SEA for the National Planning Framework's (2018) to " <i>Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%.</i> "	CORINE mapping surveys (every 5 years). EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
Water Quality (WQ)				
WQ1	Protect, maintain and where necessary improve water quality and the management of watercourses, groundwater and the marine environment, in compliance with the requirements of the WFD objectives and measures.	<p>Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 272 of 2009).</p> <p>Groundwater compliance 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>Reference to EPA WFD Monitoring programme and status of surface waterbodies, groundwater bodies reported.</p>	No deterioration in the status of any groundwater or surface water, or adverse effect upon the ability of any groundwater or surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the USSEB DEDP.	<p>Information issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual).</p> <p>Review of WFD status of Bathing Waters, green flag / blue flag for beaches.</p> <p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p>
WQ2	Implement and comply with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management and Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidelines	Flood-related incidences related to the USSEB DEDP.	Compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and to ensure that any new	Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
	to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.		developments granted planning permissions are on appropriately zoned lands.	Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes. Review of planning applications for any new infrastructure to be accompanied by standalone flood risk assessment report in sensitive areas.
Air Quality, Noise & Climate (ANC)				
ANC1	Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality and noise emissions through the reduction of emissions.	Demonstration of compliance with air quality and noise provisions. Number of exceedances of ambient air quality standards in the County, as monitored under the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network.	To maximise the amount of measures relating to air quality and noise minimisation being implemented.	EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes. Review of Air Quality Dashboard for air quality monitoring data results and EPA data for air quality monitoring.
ANC2	Contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with National targets, including Ireland's commitment to realising a climate neutral economy by 2050.	Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation.	To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented.	EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
Material Assets (MA)				
MA1	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, ensure new developments are served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, wastewater, waste and	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned infrastructure, including water supply, wastewater	No incompatible development (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned material assets infrastructure.	Review of Annual Environmental Reports prepared by Uisce Éireann. Review of publicly available data from EPA monitoring. EPA State of the Environment reporting.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
	transport) that does not present a danger to human health.	management, energy and transport infrastructure.		Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
MA2	Promote sustainable waste management, minimisation and recovery.	<p>Tonnes of hazardous waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.</p> <p>Tonnes of W.E.E.E. waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.</p> <p>Tonnes of Bulky waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.</p> <p>Tonnes of garden waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.</p>	<p>Increase waste recycling in the Counties.</p> <p>Reduce waste generation in the Counties.</p>	<p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p>
MA3	Promote sustainable transportation including increased use of public transport and active travel measures.	<p>% change in modal split.</p> <p>Kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network.</p> <p>Kilometres of permanent integrated cycling network.</p> <p>Number of Electric Vehicle charging points in the county.</p> <p>Total Area of road reallocated for sustainable alternatives.</p>	<p>Percentage increase in the number of public transport users in the study area</p> <p>Increase kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network.</p> <p>Increase kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network.</p> <p>Increase number of Electric Vehicle charging points in the study area. Increase Total Area</p>	<p>Review delivery of sustainable transport projects via Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon County Councils / NTA.</p> <p>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p>

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
			of road reallocated for sustainable alternatives	
Cultural Heritage (CH)				
CH1	Protect and avoid impact on places, features and landscapes of cultural and archaeological importance, including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).	Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan.	No adverse effects on archaeological or cultural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan.	Review of data available from National Monuments Section of Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
CH2	Protect and avoid impact on places, features, buildings and landscapes of architectural heritage, (including entries to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAHs)).	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.	No adverse effects on architectural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan.	Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.
Landscape & Visual (LV)				
LV1	To protect landscape character, minimise the loss of historic landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows and scenic views.	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.	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.	Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
LV2	Avoid impacts on the statutory landscape & visual designations as identified in the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, Leitrim County Development Plan	Status of High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects.	All action and development proposals supported by the plan must comply with policy objectives relating to the	Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
	2023-2029 and Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028.	Number of developments permitted that result in avoidable adverse impacts on High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects.	protection of High Amenity Zone and Views and Prospects defined in the CDPs. No development supported by the plan should have an adverse impact on High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects.	Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.

11 References

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