SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

FOR THE

IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST
DRAFT REGIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2023-2027

for: Fáilte Ireland

88-95 Amiens Street

Dublin 1

by: CAAS Ltd.

1st Floor

24-26 Ormond Quay Upper

Dublin 7

SEPTEMBER 2022

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
ACA	Architectural Conservation Area
CFRAM	Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DECC	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
DEDP	Destination Experience Development Plan
DEHLG	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
FI	Fáilte Ireland
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
HSE	Health Service Executive
IFI	Inland Fisheries Ireland
pNHA	Proposed Natural Heritage Area
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NI	Northern Ireland
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
OPW	Office of Public Works
RMP	Record of Monuments and Places
RPA	Register of Protected Areas
RPS	Record of Protected Structures
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEO	Strategic Environmental Objective
S.I. No.	Statutory Instrument Number
SPA	Special Protection Area
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Glossary

Appropriate Assessment

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

Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

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

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

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

Environmental Problems

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

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

Environmental Vectors

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

Mitigate

To make or become less severe or harsh.

Mitigation Measures

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

Protected Structure

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

Recorded Monument

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

Scoping

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

Strategic Actions

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

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)

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

Section 1   SEA Introduction and Background

1.1   Introduction and Terms of Reference

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the **Ireland's** Ancient East Draft Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027 (hereafter referred to as 'the Strategy'). It has been undertaken by CAAS Ltd. on behalf of Fáilte Ireland.

1.2   SEA Definition

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

1.3   SEA Directive and its transposition into Irish Law

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27th June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including tourism.

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

1.4   Implications for the Strategy

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

a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive[1], or

b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive[2] i.e., the Directive requires that SEA is undertaken where Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)[3] is being undertaken on plans, programmes etc.

---

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

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

[3] AA is provided for by the Habitats Directive and is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action or project, alone and in combination

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

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

This SEA Environmental Report provides the findings of the SEA and should be read in conjunction with the Strategy. This report has been placed on public display and will be altered in order to take account of non-material changes that were made to the original Draft Strategy on foot of submissions following public display. Fáilte Ireland has taken into account the findings of this report and other related SEA output during their consideration of the Strategy and before it is finalised. On finalisation of the Strategy, an SEA Statement is prepared that summarises, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Strategy.

---

with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a European site in view of its conservation objectives.

Section 2 The Strategy

2.1 Overview

The Ireland's Ancient East Draft Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027 is a roadmap for the industry and all tourism stakeholders in the region to navigate the current challenges and steer a course towards recovery and continued success positioning the region as a destination of choice. The Strategy sets out a strategic approach to unlock the **commercial potential of Ireland's Ancient East** while ensuring development is sustainable and the benefits accrue to local communities and protect our natural environment.

The intention of the brand is to provide visitors with a very different flavour of Ireland relative **to Ireland's other regional experience brands. In building on the early success of Ireland's** Ancient East, the continued focus is to increase the economic contribution of tourism to the region by convincing visitors to stay longer and explore more of what the region has to offer and at an industry level to increase the level of brand adoption and collectively grow market **awareness of Ireland's Ancient East** domestically and internationally. The ambition for this strategy is to drive recovery and growth **of the visitor economy in Ireland's Ancient East** to create sustainable, high-quality jobs in the sector to support and strengthen local communities while protecting the natural environment.

The strategic challenge is to increase awareness and consumer appeal of the region through a strengthened brand proposition; **improve the 'navigability' of the region for the** visitor and ensure the continued development of attractive destinations and motivating visitor experiences, in a coordinated and visitor facing manner to attract and disperse targeted domestic and overseas visitors.

The Strategy presents a 10-year vision for the sustainable development of tourism in **Ireland's** Ancient East **together with a 5-year strategy to guide the achievement of that vision**:

> "**It's 2030 and Ireland's Ancient East is not only** internationally renowned for its rich heritage base but also the variety of tracks and trails by which the region can be discovered. Its diverse landscape provides the visitor with a rich tapestry from which to unlock the living culture unique to place and underpinned by 5,000 years of heritage

and tradition evidenced in its many historical sites. As the food producing region of Ireland, the provenance and offering is steeped in the same tradition as its music, crafts and culture is alive for all the senses. The region boasts extensive coastline, river and canal network, mountain ranges and low-lying rich pastures accessible by an extensive off-road network of greenways, tracks and trails by which the visitor is invited to discover the heritage that shaped Ireland. Interspersed with cities and towns that provide evening and night-time entertainment, it is the diversity that has developed over time which attracts the visitor for a varied holiday."

It is intended that the Strategy will be the blueprint for sustainable tourism development in the region ensuring our stakeholders and partners can work together towards a shared vision. It provides a guiding strategic framework for other more detailed tourism development plans that will be prepared within the region over the next five years. These include: Destination and Experience Development Plans (DEDPs); County Tourism Strategies; and the tourism sections of County Development Plans. The Strategy will also to help identify priorities for available funding in the region.

The strategic framework has been **developed to achieve the vision for Ireland's** Hidden Heartlands. It consists of:

- Sustainability Strategy;
- Visitor and Brand Strategy;
- Destination Development Strategy & Product Development Strategy;
- Industry Development Strategy;
- Distribution and Business Development Strategy;
- Marketing Strategy;
- Community Strategy; and
- Environmental Strategy.

The strategic initiatives are outlined over the five-year timeframe of the plan. They provide the basis for a collective approach to deliver the strategy a number of stakeholders will work together on and ensure we deliver on the strategic objectives. The Strategic Objectives are:

- Strategic Objective 1: Motivate the domestic **and international consumer to visit Ireland's** Ancient East.
- Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism.
- Strategic Objective 3: Ensure the region is easy to access, navigate and consume.
- Strategic Objective 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability to

ensure that it can thrive over the period of this strategy and create sustainable jobs in local communities.

- Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region.

The Strategy is supported by Appendices relating to:

- Site Maintenance Guidelines (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Visitor Management Guidelines (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Environmental Damage Resolution (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Greenway Visitor Experience & Interpretation Toolkit (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion & Campaign Statement (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Blueway Management & Development Guide (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy) and
- Sustainable Recreational Trail Development & Operation (in preparation).

2.2 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes

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

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets **out Ireland's planning policy direction** up to 2040. The NPF is being implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSESs set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSESs have informed, and continue to inform, the preparation of lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which also set out various

objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment.

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

Section 3   SEA Methodology

3.1   Introduction to the Iterative Approach

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

The process is currently at a stage where this SEA Environmental Report has been prepared. Taking into account the content of SEA scoping submissions from environmental authorities and continuous scoping of the SEA, environmental impacts have been predicted, evaluated and mitigated. The findings of the assessment are presented in this SEA Environmental Report, which accompanies the Draft Strategy on public display as part of the required statutory public consultation.

A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) Natura Impact Natura Impact Statement also accompanies the Draft Strategy. The Draft Strategy and associated SEA and AA documents

have been prepared in an iterative manner whereby multiple revisions of each document were prepared, each informing subsequent iterations of the others.

Submissions made on the Strategy and associated SEA and AA documents will be taken into account and updates may be made to these documents as relevant and appropriate. On finalisation of the Strategy, an SEA Statement will be prepared which will summarise, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Strategy. The Strategy will be implemented and environmental monitoring – as well as lower tiers of environmental assessment – will be undertaken.
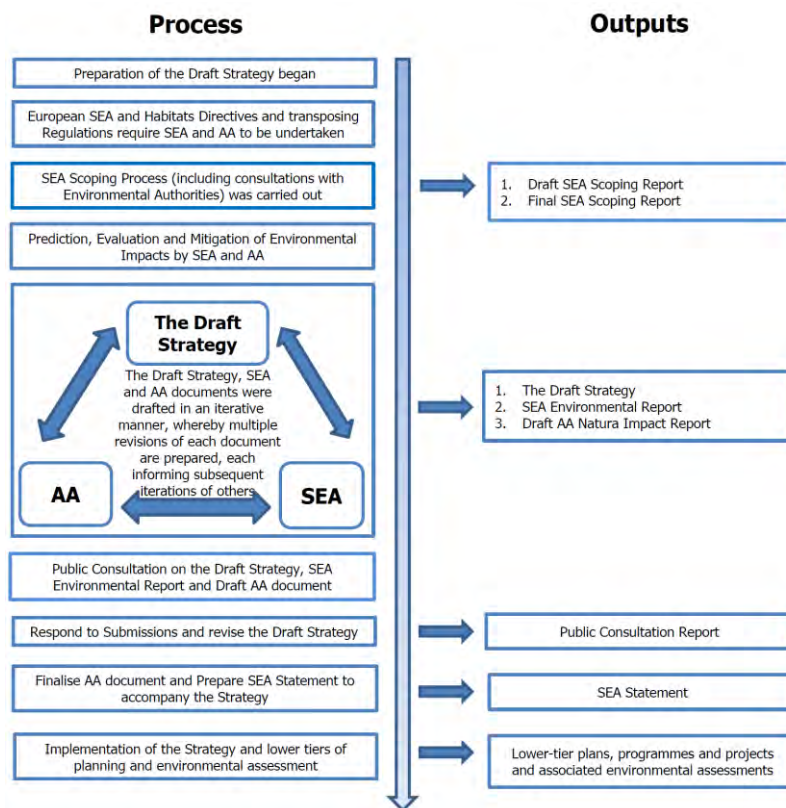
Figure 3.1 Overview of the Strategy, SEA and AA Process

3.2 Hierarchy of Planning and Environmental Assessment

As detailed within Section 2.2 of this SEA Environmental Report and further expanded upon in the Strategy, the Strategy is situated in a hierarchy of documents setting out public policy for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, climate mitigation, town and country planning or land use. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and already provide for various measures that have been compiled into the Strategy. The Strategy aligns with and includes many of the provisions already in force under these documents. Furthermore, the Strategy will be incorporated into the review and preparation of these documents.

Individual tourism projects must be consistent and comply with these higher level documents setting out policy relating to land use and tourism and are subject to their own project level EIA and AA requirements as relevant.

3.3 Appropriate Assessment and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

3.3.1 Appropriate Assessment

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

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

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

3.3.2 Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.4 Scoping

The scope of environmental issues to be dealt with by the SEA together with the level of detail to which they are addressed was broadly

decided upon taking into account the collection of environmental baseline data and input from environmental authorities. Scoping allowed the SEA to become focused upon key issues relevant to the environmental components that are specified under the SEA Directive[4].

Relevant environmental authorities[5] identified under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations, as amended, were sent SEA scoping notices by Fáilte Ireland indicating that submissions or observations in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report could be made to Fáilte Ireland. Furthermore, Northern Ireland Department for Communities and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs also made submissions during the scoping process. Submissions were made by all environmental authorities consulted with and these have been taken into account in undertaking the assessments and preparing the Draft Strategy.

As the Strategy is not likely to have significant effects on the environment in another Member State, transboundary consultations as provided for by Article 7 of the SEA Directive are not required. Notwithstanding this, Northern Ireland Department for Communities and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs have been consulted with during scoping and will be given an opportunity to enter consultations on the Draft Strategy.

3.5   Alternatives

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

3.6   Environmental Report

In this SEA Environmental Report, which accompanies the Draft Strategy on public display and may be amended in the future in order to take account of any submissions received on the Draft Strategy or associated documents, the likely environmental effects of the Strategy and the alternatives are predicted and their significance evaluated. The Environmental Report provides the Authority, stakeholders and the public with a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of implementing the Strategy.

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

This Environmental Report will be updated in order to take account of non-material changes that will be made to the original Draft Strategy on foot of submissions following public display.

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

No significant difficulties have been encountered to date during the undertaking of the assessment.

3.7   The SEA Statement

On finalisation of the Strategy by Fáilte Ireland, an SEA Statement is prepared that includes information on:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Strategy, highlighting the main changes to the Strategy that resulted from the SEA process;
- How the SEA Environmental Report and consultations have been taken into account, summarising the key issues raised in consultations and in the Environmental Report indicating what action was taken in response;
- The reasons for choosing the Strategy in the light of the other alternatives, identifying the other

---

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

[5] The following authorities were notified: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Environment, Climate and Communications; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

alternatives considered, commenting on their potential effects and explaining why the Strategy as adopted was selected; and

- The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing of the Strategy.

Table 3.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report

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

Section 4   Environmental Baseline

4.1   Introduction

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

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

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

The area to which the Strategy relates (shown on Figure 4.1) is situated within/partially within the following counties: Cork; Tipperary; Offaly; Monaghan; Louth; Meath; Kildare; Wicklow; Wexford; Carlow; Kilkenny; Laois; and Waterford.

4.2   Existing Fáilte Ireland Environmental Monitoring and Guidance

Fáilte Ireland regularly engages with environmental research that is used to make informed management decisions and produce robust guidelines to facilitate the protection of the environment. From its inception in 2014, the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) Operational Programme Monitoring Programme (undertaken to date by CAAS on behalf of Fáilte Ireland guided by relevant stakeholders) has

been conducting research into the impacts of tourism on the receiving environment guided by an independent working group including the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

On site observational surveys and ecological assessments have covered 57 locations and monitored the activities and effects of over 26,000 visitors. The findings, published in the form of Visitor Observation Reports and Ecological Impact Reports, show that visitors cause low levels of effects and that relatively higher levels of effects are predominantly caused by the mismanagement of sites – or the lack of management. Effectively managed sites have been identified where visitor movements are facilitated alongside protection of environmental receptors such as Derrynane House. The research has shown that the protection of sites does not have to rely on infrastructure or visitor restrictions to avoid environmental effects. The monitoring has shown that that activity dynamics are key drivers of both impact occurrence and impact severity. Therefore, it is fundamental that management practices identify and appropriately manage the activities available at nature-based destinations. From the monitoring work it was seen that 75% of all visitor observations resulted in no identifiable effects; **which highlights the feasibility of 'no impact tourism' being an achievable target.**

As well as the site-specific data being collected, the Monitoring Programme collates and interprets existing national environmental indicator data, compiling the results into annual Macro-Monitoring Reports.

The monitoring program has yielded a strong dataset and is set to continue into the future, expanding beyond the WAW to look at a set of 19 sites across Ireland from 2021-2025. As the data expands and is consolidated over time, annual trends and comparisons can be explored which will provide further insights into site-specific interactions. One of the key expansions of the database being gathered, aims to explore impact distance thresholds around nature-based tourism destinations. These data will be harnessed by Fáilte to inform management decisions and further refine existing guidelines

and produce additional resources that facilitate environmental protection.

The findings of the Monitoring Programme are circulated to the local authorities with host sites and to site management teams at sites not under the management of local authorities. This ensures that the research can be harnessed on site by those responsible while contributing towards informed management plans and guidelines created by Fáilte Ireland.

In 2014, Fáilte Ireland published the WAW Site Maintenance Guidelines that provide details of the works that may be required to meet a minimum standard of presentation at WAW Discovery Points. The 2014 Guidelines include an Ecological Method Statement which sets out the ecological standards and procedures that must be complied with by local authorities in implementing any works.

Fáilte Ireland is currently preparing guidance for the WAW in order to facilitate the identification of available and effective management options and the championing of **concepts like 'keeping it wild'.**

Furthermore, Fáilte Ireland is preparing a guidelines to facilitate broad scale identification and understanding of the habitats present at Nature-based tourism destinations **–** including details relating to known sensitivities of the habitats. As well as these, Fáilte Ireland have produced a suite of guidelines giving detailed design guidelines and considerations for planning tourism projects at sensitive sites.

4.3 National Reporting on the Environment

The EPA's **"***Ireland's Environment** - An Integrated Assessment 2020***"** report provides an integrated assessment of the overall quality of Ireland's environment, the pressures being placed on it and the societal responses to current and emerging environmental issues. This report has informed various parts of the environmental baseline provided below. The key environmental challenges or messages identified by the report are:

Environmental Policy Position
A national policy position for Ir**eland's** Environment.

Full implementation
Full implementation of existing

environmental legislation and a review of the governance around the coordination on environmental protection across public bodies.

Health and Wellbeing
Protecting the Environment is an Investment in Our Health and Wellbeing.

Climate
Systemic change is required for Ireland to become the climate-neutral and climate-resilient society and economy that it aspires to be.

Air Quality
Adoption of measures to meet the World Health Organization air quality guideline values should be the target to aim for in the Clean Air Strategy.

Nature
Safeguard nature and wild places as a national priority and to leave a legacy for future generations.

Water Quality
Improve the water environment and tackle water pollution locally at a water catchment level.

Marine
Reduce the human-induced pressures on the marine environment.

Clean Energy
Ireland needs to move rapidly away from the extensive use of fossil fuels to the use of clean energy systems.

Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture
An agriculture and food sector that demonstrates validated performance around producing food with a low environmental footprint.

Water Services
Drinking water and wastewater infrastructure must meet the needs of our society.

Circular Economy
Move to a less wasteful and circular economy where the priority is waste prevention, reuse, repair and recycling.

Land Use
Promote integrated land-mapping approaches to support decision-making on sustainable land use.

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

4.4 Sustainable Development Goals

Implementation of the Strategy will contribute towards efforts to achieve a number of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development, which were adopted by world leaders in 2015 at a United Nations Summit and came into force in 2016. These Goals include:

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

4.5 Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

Natural capital comprises its renewable and non-renewable resources (e.g. plants, animals, air, water, soils, minerals) that combine to yield a flow of ecosystem services that provide benefits to people. These benefits can include clean air and water, a stable climate, protection from floods, food, resources for fuel, building materials, clothes and medicines, recreation. Managing natural capital so that it can continue to deliver the ecosystem services that give us these benefits is important in order to ensure sustainable development. Unmanaged natural capital risks the continued degradation and depletion of these assets, and in turn, of their capacity to provide the economy and society with the ecosystem benefits that they depend on. These services also regulate climate, regulate water flows (e.g. through wetlands and forests), sequester and store carbon in peatlands and improve soil quality for crops.

Ecosystems are multifunctional communities of living organisms interacting with each other and their environment. Ecosystems provide a series of services for human well-being (ecosystem services) either directly or indirectly contributing towards human wellbeing. There

are four main types; provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural services. Provisioning services are the products obtained from ecosystems such as food, fresh water, wood, fibre, genetic resources and medicines. Regulating services are defined as the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes such as climate regulation, natural hazard regulation, water purification and waste management, pollination or pest control. Support services highlight the importance of ecosystems to provide habitat for migratory species and to maintain the viability of gene-pools. Cultural services include non-material benefits that people obtain from ecosystems such as spiritual enrichment, intellectual development, recreation and aesthetic values[6].

The following natural capital and ecosystem services issues are relevant to this SEA and have been taken into account in the provisions of the Draft Strategy:

- Air quality;
- Noise pollution;
- Light pollution;
- Water quality and river basin management including interactions with soil;
- Soil and vegetation carbon, which helps to regulate greenhouse gas emissions;
- Soil/geological storage of water, contributing towards flood control;
- Land supporting food production; and
- Natural resources supporting energy production and recreation.

The area to which the Strategy relates shares a border with Northern Ireland and the potential for likely significant transboundary environmental effects is considered by the SEA. For this purpose, environmental baseline information at and across the border in Northern Ireland relating to relevant environmental components detailed below have been considered.

4.6 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of the Strategy

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

---

[6] https://biodiversity.europa.eu/topics/ecosystem-services

Figure 4.1 The area to which the Strategy relates
Source: FI (August 2022)

4.7 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

4.7.1 Overview of ecological sensitivities and designations

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

The area to which the Strategy relates shares a border with Northern Ireland and the potential for likely significant transboundary environmental effects is considered by the SEA. For this purpose, environmental baseline information at and across the border in Northern Ireland relating to relevant environmental components detailed below have been considered.

Key ecological sensitivities across the area to which the Strategy relates include those relating to:

- Rare species and habitats protected in the designated Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);

- Peatlands associated mainly with upland and coastal locations;
- Aquatic and riverine ecology associated with the various lakes, streams, rivers, and estuaries; and
- Coastal areas and marine waters and associated aquatic ecology downstream of the area to which the Strategy relates.

Ecological designations include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)[7];
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)[8];
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)[9];
- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)[10];
- National Parks[11];
- Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas[12];
- Salmonid Waters identified by Regulations (S.I. 293 only)[13]
- Shellfish Waters[14];
- Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchments[15];
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)[16];
- Flora Protection Order sites[17];
- Wildfowl Sanctuaries[18];
- RAMSAR Sites[19];
- Nature Reserves[20];
- OSPAR Sites[21];
- UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) World Heritage Site[22];
- Tentative UNESCO World Heritage Sites[23]; and
- UNESCO Biosphere Reserve[24].

Relevant designations in Northern Ireland include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)[25];
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)[26];

---

[7] Refer to Section 4.7.2.1 for more detail.
[8] Refer to Section 4.7.2.1 for more detail.
[9] Refer to Section 4.7.2 for more detail.
[10] Refer to Section 4.7.2 for more detail.
[11] Refer to Section 4.7.2 for more detail.
[12] Refer to Sections 4.7.2.3 and 4.10.7 for more detail.
[13] Refer to Section 4.7.2 for more detail.
[14] In order to protect existing shellfish waters and to ensure the future protection of these areas, the European Union introduced the Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC). The purpose of this Directive is to put in place concrete measures to protect waters, including shellfish waters, against pollution and to safeguard certain shellfish populations from various harmful consequences, resulting from the discharge of pollutant substances into the sea. The Directive applies to the aquatic habitat of bivalve and gastropod molluscs only (includes oysters, mussels, cockles, scallops and clams). It does not include crustaceans such as lobsters, crabs and crayfish. There are areas of Shellfish Waters designated partially within or adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates.
[15] Refer to Section Figure 4.6 for more detail.
[16] TPOs are a planning mechanism whereby individual trees or groups of trees can be identified as important and protected by a TPO. Refer to the local authority for more detail.
[17] The Flora (Protection) Order, 2015 (S.I. No. 356 of 2015) gives legal protection to 65 species of bryophytes in the Republic of Ireland (25 liverworts and 40 mosses). There are

a number of locations within the area to which the Strategy relates with species protected by the Order. For more detail refer to https://dahg.maps.arcgis.com/.
[18] Wildfowl Sanctuaries are areas that have been excluded **from the 'Open Season Order'** so that game birds can rest and feed undisturbed. There are 68 sanctuaries in the State. Shooting of game birds is not allowed in these sanctuaries. There are a number of Wildfowl Sanctuaries within the area to which the Strategy relates. For more detail refer to https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/wildfowl-sanctuaries.
[19] Refer to Section 4.7.2 for more detail.
[20] Refer to Section 4.7.2 for more detail.
[21] Under the OSPAR Convention to Protect the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic, Ireland committed to establishing marine protected areas to protect biodiversity (OSPAR MPAs). There are currently 19 OSPAR MPAs in Ireland, which established a number of its cSACs as OSPAR MPAs for marine habitats. There are a number of OSPAR MPAs adjacent to the coastline of the area to which the Strategy relates. For more detail refer to: https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/ospar-sites.
[22] Refer to Section 4.7.3 for more detail.
[23] Refer to Section 4.7.3 for more detail.
[24] Refer to Section 4.7.3 for more detail.
[25] Refer to Section 4.7.2.1 for more detail.
[26] Refer to Section 4.7.2.1 for more detail.

- Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs)[27];
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)[28];
- Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)[29];
- National Nature Reserves[30];
- Nature Reserves[31];
- RAMSAR Sites[32]; and
- Tentative UNESCO World Heritage Sites[33].

The following information is relevant to ecological networks and connectivity and non-designated habitats:

- CORINE land cover mapping (including areas likely to contain a habitat listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive)[34];
- Watercourses, wetlands and peatlands;
- Other relevant County Development Plans designations;
- **The EPA's Framework National Ecological Network** for Ireland[35]; and
- Other sites of high biodiversity value or ecological importance as identified by, for example, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (badger sets), relevant datasets from the National **Biodiversity Data Centre and BirdWatch Ireland's 'Important Bird Areas' (Crowe et al., 2009)**.

Ecological networks are important in connecting areas of local biodiversity with each other and with nearby designated sites so as to prevent islands of habitat from being isolated entities. They are composed of linear features, such as treelines, hedgerows and rivers/streams, which provide corridors or stepping stones for wildlife species moving within their normal range. They are important for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna particularly for mammals, especially for bats and small birds and facilitate linkages both between and within designated ecological sites, the non-designated surrounding countryside and urban areas.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive recognises the importance of ecological networks as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife, including for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna. The Directive requires that ecological connectivity and areas of ecological value outside the Natura 2000 network of designated ecological sites are maintained.

Man-made habitats within the Strategy area can also include important biodiversity features. Gardens provide habitats for a range of wildlife including various bird species, invertebrates such as bees and butterflies and mammals such as hedgehogs, mice, rats and foxes. These species move around between gardens using hedgerows and vegetated areas. These urban green spaces are of importance as they form part of a network of green spaces across the Strategy area including gardens, parks, graveyards, amenity walks, old railway lines and patches of woodland and scrub within which animals and plants continue to thrive.

Ecological islands or areas of habitat that are not connected to surrounding ecologically valuable habitats can also be important.

The zone of influence of the Strategy beyond the area to which the Strategy relates with respect to impacts upon ecology via surface waters – including designated ecology – can be estimated to be areas within 15 km of the area to which the Strategy relates and all downstream areas of catchments which drain the area.

---

[27] Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) are protected **areas that represent the best of Northern Ireland's wildlife and** geological sites that make a considerable contribution to the **conservation of Northern Ireland's most valuable natural** places. There are a number of ASSIs designated partially within or adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates (mapped on Figure 4.4).
[28] The purpose of an AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the designated landscape. There are eight AONB areas designated in Northern Ireland.
[29] MCZ is a type of MPA, designated in the Northern Ireland inshore region to protect nationally important habitats, species and geological/geomorphological features, while fully taking into account any economic, cultural or social consequences of doing so. There are currently five MCZs in Northern Ireland, including Carlingford Lough MCZ, partially adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates.
[30] National Nature Reserves in the UK are exceptional places managed for wildlife and to encourage people to enjoy and appreciate wildlife. National Nature Reserves may be established and declared by the statutory nature conservation agencies and managed by them or an approved body. Local authorities may also establish nature reserves and declare

them Local Nature Reserves, provided the relevant statutory nature conservation agency approves.
[31] Refer to Section 4.7.2 for more detail.
[32] Refer to Section 4.7.24.7.3 for more detail.
[33] Refer to Section 4.7.3 for more detail.
[34] The CORINE land cover mapping classifies land cover under various headings. This dataset allows for the identification of lands that are likely to be most valuable to biodiversity including those which are likely to contain a habitat listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive e.g., natural grasslands, peat bogs, salt marshes. CORINE Land Cover (CLC) is a map of the European environmental landscape based on interpretation of satellite images. Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface.
[35] **The EPA's Framework National Ecological Network** provides a classification of the relative importance of areas by virtue of the biodiversity and flora that they contain and the connectivity they provide. Many of the areas identified are corridors.

4.7.2   Further Detail

4.7.2.1   European Sites

European sites within the area to which the Strategy relates occur in the greatest concentrations in upland and coastal areas and along the waterways within and downstream of the area to which the Strategy relates. These European sites comprise:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)[36]; and
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)[37].

The SEA uses the same zone of influence cited in the AA, a 15 km buffer around the area to which the Strategy relates. There are 167 European sites (112 SACs and 55 SPAs) designated within this zone (mapped on Figure 4.2 and listed in Appendix II) out of which 108 European sites (75 SACs and 55 SPAs) are designated within or partially within the area to which the Strategy relates.

Other European sites shown on Figure 4.3 and listed in Appendix II include sites connected to the area to which the Strategy relates via hydrological links but beyond the 15 km buffer.

All relevant European sites are listed in the Appendix II of this report, including the European sites in Northern Ireland. Additional information on European sites is provided in the AA Natura Impact Report which accompanies the Strategy and this Environmental Report on public display.

4.7.2.2   Natural Heritage Areas, Proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Areas Likely to Contain Annex I Habitats

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated due to their national conservation value for ecological and/or geological/geomorphological heritage. They cover nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms or geomorphological features, wildlife plant and animal species or a diversity of these natural attributes. NHAs are designated under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Proposed NHAs (pNHAs) were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated.

There are 12 NHAs and 348 pNHAs designated within, partially within or adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates. NHAs and pNHAs designated within a wider 15 km buffer of the area to which the Strategy relates including those immediately within the area to which the Strategy relates are mapped on Figure 4.4 and listed in Appendix II.

Areas likely to contain Annex I Habitats (mapped on Figure 4.4) comprise selected CORINE landcover mapping entries which are indicative of these areas: broad-leaved forest, peat bog, natural grassland, water bodies, coastal lagoons, mixed forests, moors and heaths, intertidal flats, beaches dunes sand, inland marshes, stream courses, estuaries, sparsely vegetated areas, burnt areas, salt marshes, bare rocks, transitional woodland scrub and land principally occupied by agriculture with areas of natural vegetation.

Relevant ASSIs designated in Northern Ireland are also mapped on Figure 4.4.

4.7.2.3   Register of Protected Areas

In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive a number of water bodies or parts of water bodies that must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs). Entries to the RPAs within and adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates, designated by virtue of their value to biodiversity include a number of water-dependent habitats within the area that have been listed on RPAs relating to biodiversity – these relate to designated SACs and SPAs (see Section 4.7.2.1).

---

[36] SACs have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European

Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats)(Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010. The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.

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

- WFD Shellfish Areas (as shown on Figure 4.5) and associated WFD Surface and Groundwater in Shellfish Areas; and
- WFD Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only) and associated WFD Surface Water and Groundwater in Salmonid Regs (as shown on Figure 4.5).

Other relevant designations also mapped on Figure 4.5 include Protected Areas of Shellfish Waters in Northern Ireland and Marine Conservation Zone. RPAs designated by virtue of their value to humans are addressed under Section 4.10.7., including other relevant designations in Northern Ireland.

4.7.2.4 Salmonid Waters

The Salmonid Regulations (S.I. 293/1988) designate the waters capable of supporting salmon (*Salmo salar*), trout (*Salmo trutta*), char (*Salvelinus*) and whitefish (*Coregonus*) as protected. 34 (No.) rivers, tributaries and lakes are listed and protected under these Regulations that prescribe quality standards for salmonid waters, the sampling programmes and the methods of analysis and inspection to be used by local authorities to determine compliance with the standards. Some sections of rivers intersecting the area to which the Strategy relates, including rivers Lee, Bride, Coom, Blackwater (Munster), Aherlow, Nore, Slaney, Vartry, Dargle and Boyne (mapped on Figure 4.7), are listed under these Regulations.

4.7.2.5 Margaritifera Sensitive Areas

Freshwater pearl mussel is a globally threatened, long-lived and extremely sensitive species that can be impacted by many forms of pollution, particularly sediment and nutrient pollution and by hydrological and morphological changes, which may arise from developments, activities or changes in any part of the catchment. There are two species of freshwater pearl mussel in Ireland (*Margaritifera margaritifera* and *Margaritifera durrovensis*) and both are protected under Annex II and Annex V of the EU Habitats Directive. Within the Strategy area the Margaritifera Sensitive Areas[38] are found within the following river catchments (mapped on Figure 4.6):

- Erne-Analee;
- Munster Blackwater;
- Munster Blackwater-Licky;
- Suir-Aherlow;
- Suir-Tar;
- Suir-Thonoge;
- Tay;
- Mahon;

- Suir-Clodiagh Waterford;
- Suir;
- Suir-Clodiagh Tipperary;
- Suir-Multeen;
- Nore Lower;
- Nore Middle;
- Nore Upper;
- Barrow;
- Barrow-Aughavaud;
- Barrow-Ballymurphy;
- Barrow-Mountain;
- Slaney Lower;
- Slaney Bann;
- Slaney-Derry;
- Slaney Upper;
- Avoca-Aughrim;
- Avoca-Lower Avonmore;
- Avoca-Upper Avonmore;
- Liffey-Kings; and
- Vartry.

Twenty-seven Management Plans for the Freshwater Pearl Mussel have been published, the objective of which is to restore the freshwater pearl mussel populations in 27 rivers, or stretches of rivers that are within the boundaries of Special Areas of Conservation. The most significant pressures across these catchments were identified as: point sources in relation to quarries, sand/gravel pits and wastewater treatments plants; and diffuse sources associated with agriculture (including overgrazing), forestry and on-site wastewater treatment systems.

4.7.3 Other Designations

Other designations within the area to which the Strategy relates (mapped on Figure 4.7) include National Parks, Nature Reserves, Ramsar sites, UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Tentative World Heritage Sites and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve[39].

Relevant designations in Northern Ireland also mapped on Figure 4.7 include Nature Reserves, National Nature Reserves, Marine Conservation Zone, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Ramsar Sites.

4.7.3.1 National Parks

National Parks have the following characteristics:

- Where one or several ecosystems are not materially altered by human exploitation and occupation; where plant and animal species,

---

[38] Catchments with previous records of Margaritifera, but current status unknown; Catchments of other extant populations; and Catchments of SAC populations listed in S.I. 296 of 2009.

[39] North Bull Island UNESCO Biosphere Reserve is located within Dublin region, adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates.

geomorphological sites and habitats are of special scientific, educational and recreational interest or which contain a natural landscape of great beauty;

- Where steps have been taken by the Government to prevent or eliminate as soon as possible exploitation or occupation in the whole area and to enforce effectively the respect of ecological, geomorphological or aesthetic features which have led to its establishment; and
- Where visitors are allowed to enter, under special conditions, for inspirational, educational, cultural and recreational purposes.

There are six National Parks in Ireland, including the Wicklow Mountains National Park located within the area to which the Strategy relates, within northern and central parts of County Wicklow. Wicklow Mountains National Park covers over 20,000 hectares and is the largest of all National Parks in Ireland, including variety of upland habitats, plant and animal species. Notable areas include the Liffey Head Bog, an active growing mountain blanket bog. Native deciduous oak woodland is found in the valley of **Glendalough, and native Scot's pine woodland at** Coronation Plantation and also at Glendalough. Deep mountain lakes and upland rocky streams occur throughout the Park.[40]

4.7.3.2 Nature Reserves

Nature Reserves are areas of importance to wildlife, protected under Ministerial order. There are currently 78 Statutory Nature Reserves in Ireland. Most are owned by the State but some are owned by organisations or private landowners. There are 18 State owned Nature Reserves located within or partially within the area to which the Strategy relates, as mapped Figure 4.7 and listed in Appendix II.

4.7.3.3 Ramsar Sites

Ramsar sites are designated and protected under the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Water Fowl Habitat, which was established at Ramsar in 1971 and ratified by Ireland in 1984. Ireland presently has 45 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance in Ireland, with surface areas of 66,994 hectares. The objective of a Ramsar site is the conservation of wetlands for wildfowl. While Ireland ratified the Ramsar Convention in 1984 there is no legal backing for Ramsar sites unless they are also Nature Reserves or SPAs and as such are protected by the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000 or the Birds or Habitats Directives. There are 11 Ramsar sites[41] designated within or partially

within the area to which the Strategy relates, as mapped on Figure 4.7 and listed in Appendix II.

4.7.3.4 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Tentative World Heritage Sites

A World Heritage Site is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). World Heritage Sites are designated by UNESCO for having cultural, historical, scientific or other form of significance. The area to which the Strategy relates includes Brú na Bóinne - Archaeological Ensemble of the Bend of the Boyne. The three main prehistoric sites of the Brú na Bóinne Complex, Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth, are situated on the north bank of the River Boyne 50 km north of Dublin. This is Europe's largest and most important concentration of prehistoric megalithic art. The monuments there had social, economic, religious and funerary functions.[42]

A Tentative List is an inventory of natural and cultural heritage sites, which may have potential to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value and therefore considered suitable for nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. World Heritage Sites are designated for having cultural, historical, natural, scientific or other form of significance. Irish heritage sites within the area to which the Strategy relates currently on Tentative List[43] include (as mapped on Figure 4.7):

- The Hill of Tara, Royal Sites of Ireland (County Meath);
- Dún Ailinne, Royal Sites of Ireland (County Kildare); and
- Cashel, Royal Sites of Ireland (County Tipperary).

The Tentative UNESCO World Heritage Site Emain Macha/Navan Fort, Royal Sites of Ireland (County Armagh) is also mapped on Figure 4.7.

4.7.4 Existing Problems

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

---

[40] Source: www.npws.ie
[41] Including sites on the border with Northern Ireland
[42] Source: https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/659

[43] Source: https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/72ef0-ministers-announce-new-world-heritage-tentative-list-for-ireland/

pressures and threats on Irelan**d's habitats and** species identified by the report comprise:

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

Ireland's Article 12 Birds Directive Reports and the 6th National Report under the Convention of Biological Diversity identify similar issues.

Previous changes in land uses arising from human development have resulted in a loss of biodiversity and flora and fauna however, legislative objectives governing biodiversity and fauna were not identified as being conflicted with. The Strategy includes robust measures to contribute towards the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna and associated ecosystem services.

Legend
- Ireland's Ancient East
- 15km Buffer
- Other Strategy Boundary
- Administrative Area
- Border Ireland/Northern Ireland
- WFD River Basin District

European Sites
- Special Area of Conservation
- Special Protection Area
- NI Proposed Special Protection Area

Figure 4.2 European sites within and within 15 km of the area to which the Strategy relates
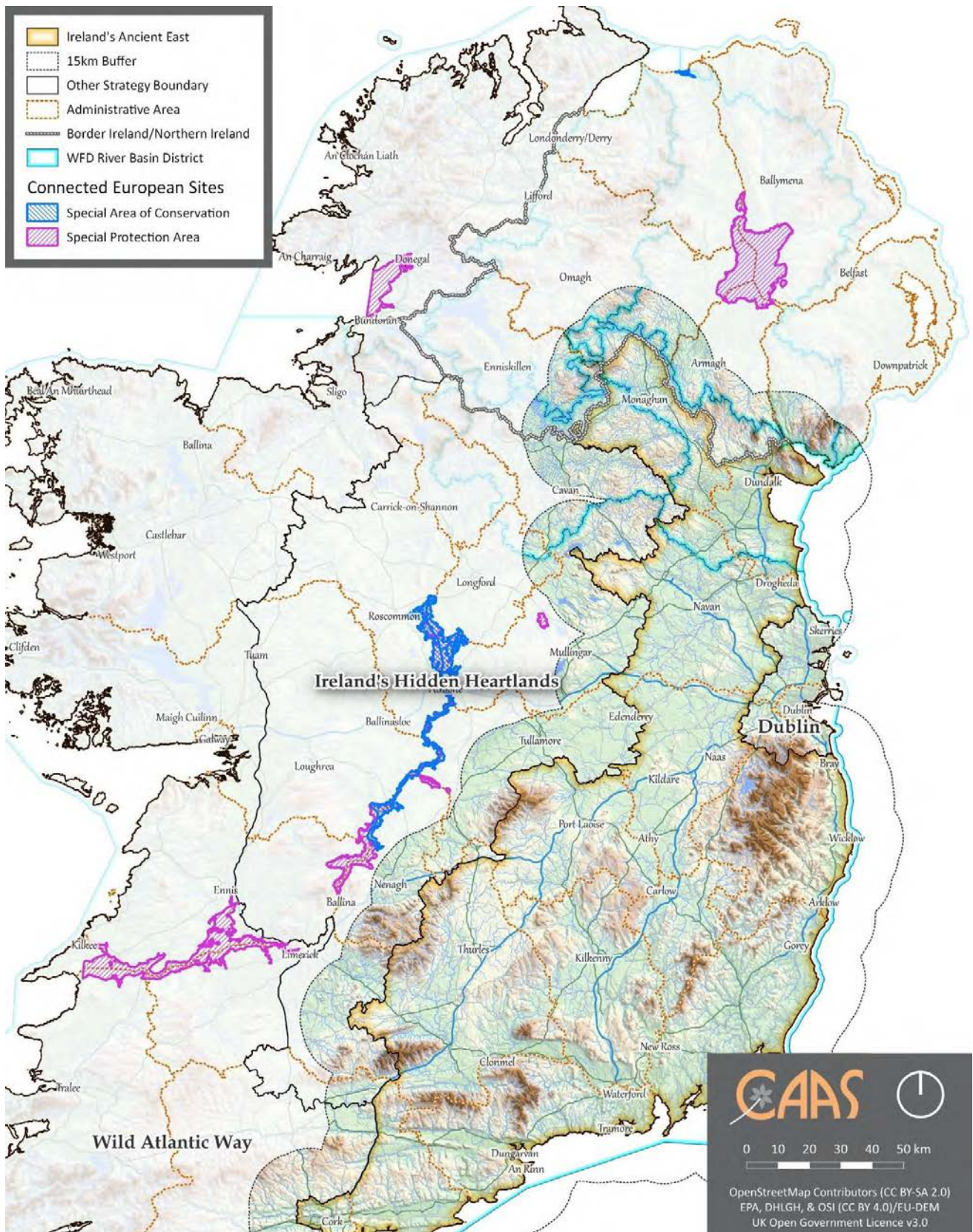
Figure 4.3 Other connected European sites beyond 15 km of the area to which the Strategy relates

Figure 4.4 Natural Heritage Areas, Proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Areas likely to contain Annex I Habitats within and within 15 km of the area to which the Strategy relates
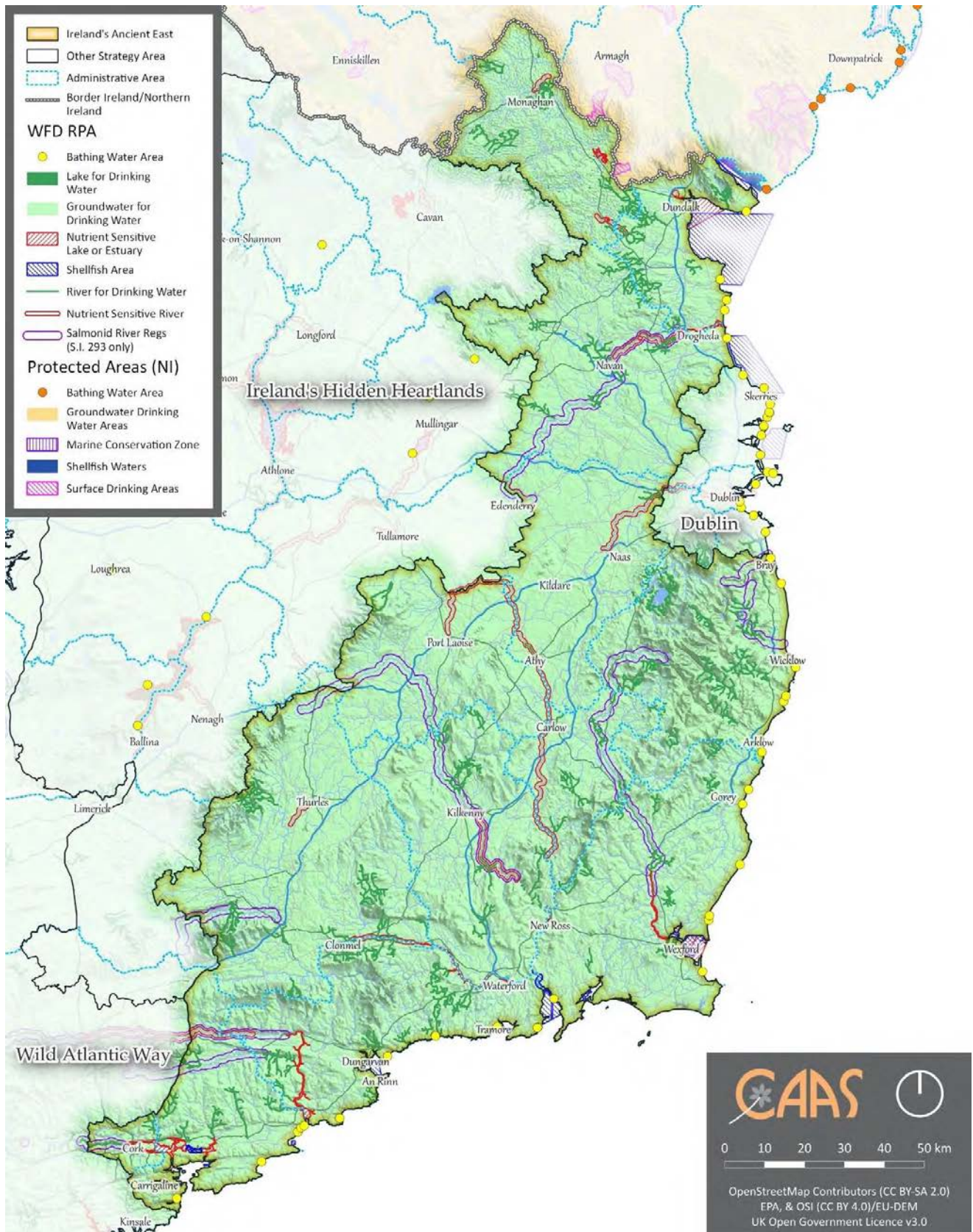
Figure 4.5 WFD Register of Protected Areas
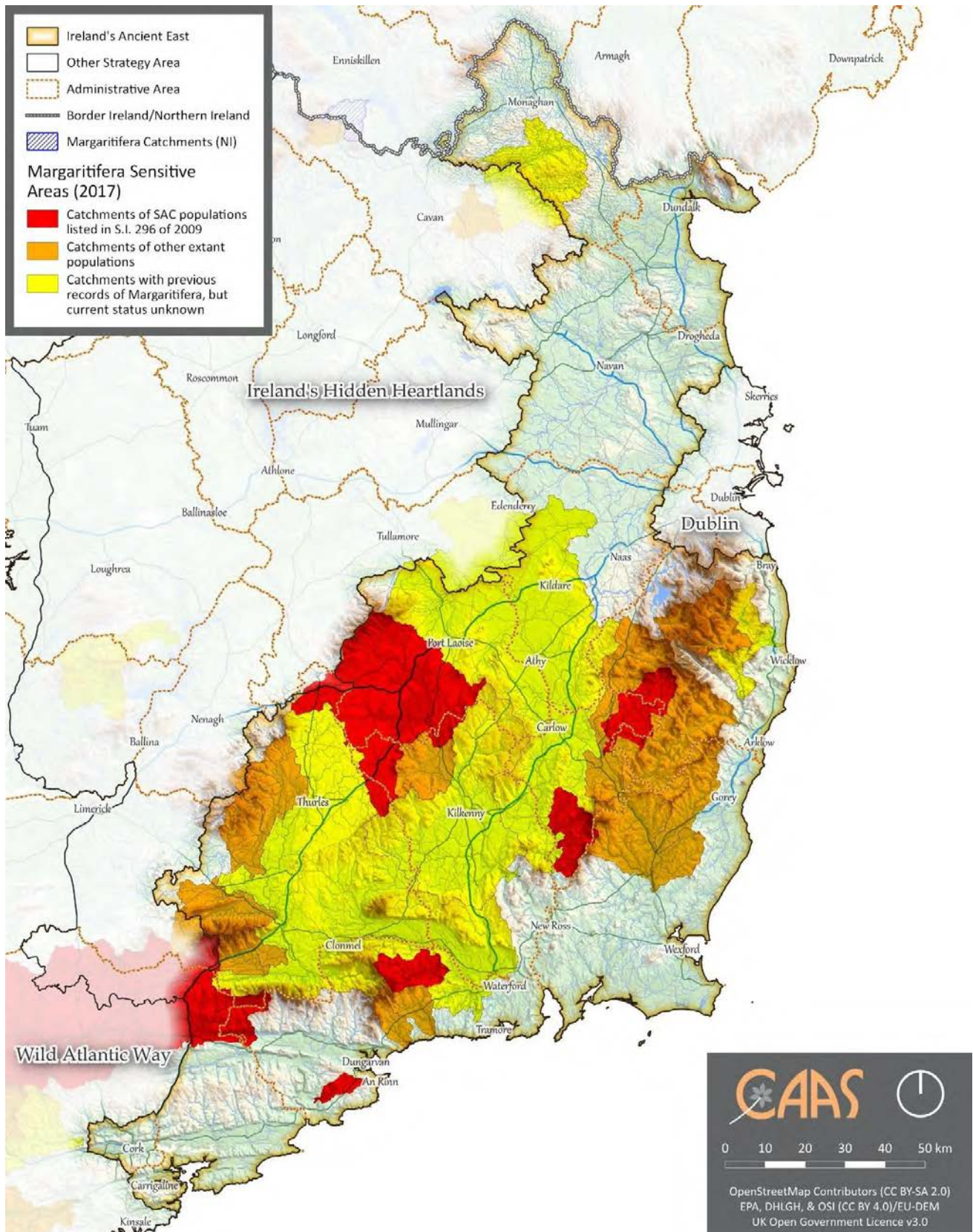
Figure 4.6 Margaritifera Sensitive Areas
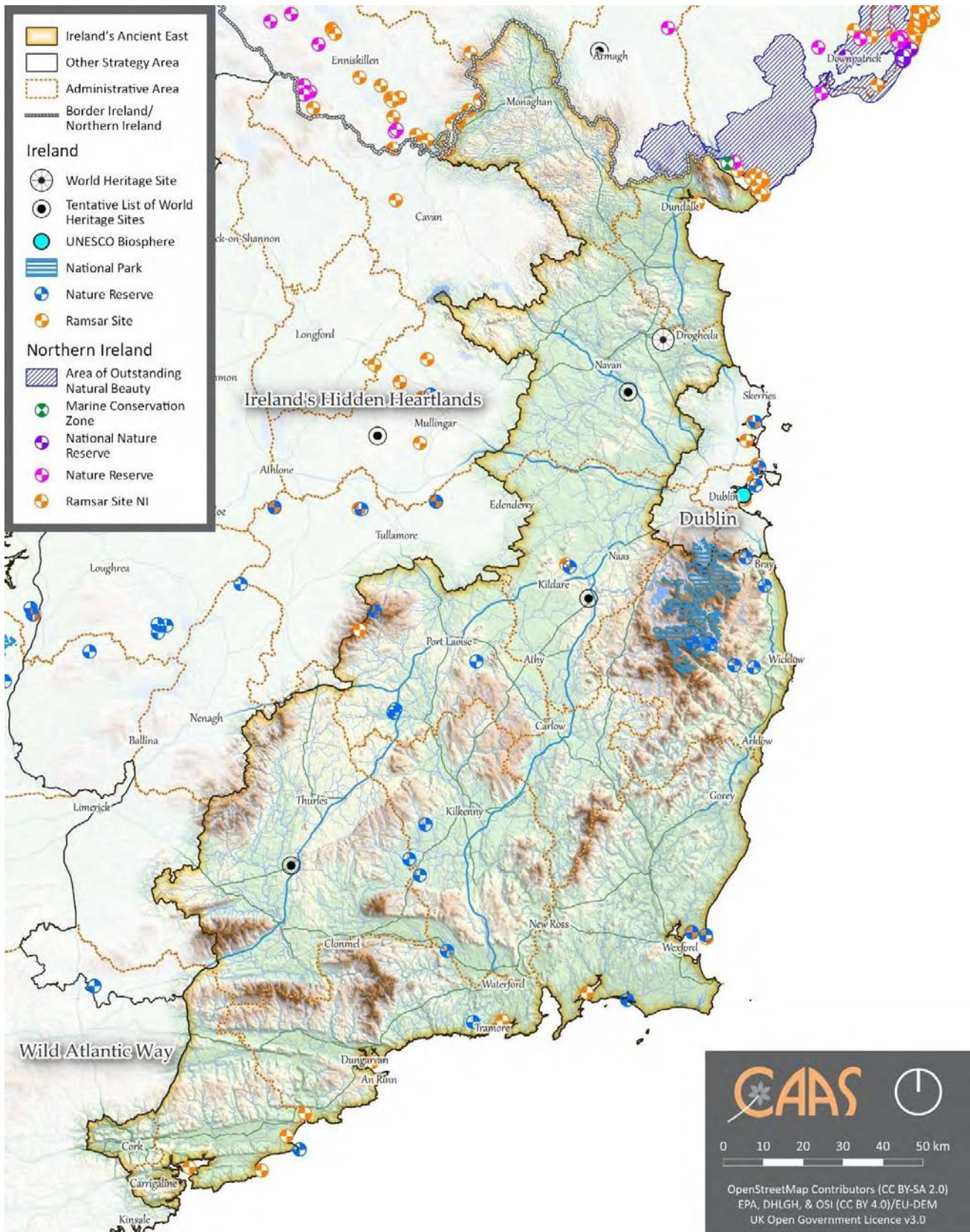
Figure 4.7 Other ecological designations

4.8   Population and Human Health

4.8.1 Population

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

- Recreational and development pressure on habitats and landscapes (see Section 4.7);
- Contribution towards an increase in demand for wastewater treatment at the municipal level (see Section 4.12);
- Contribution towards increase in demand for water supply and associated potential impact of water abstraction (see Section 4.12);
- Potential interactions in flood-sensitive areas (see Section 4.10); and
- Potential effects on water quality (see Section 4.10).

Figure 4.8 shows population density per Electoral Division. The most populous divisions are generally concentrated within and surrounding the settlements and urban areas, while the adjacent hinterland and upland areas are among the least populous divisions.

4.8.2 Human Health

With regard to human health, impacts relevant to the SEA are those which arise as a result of interactions with environmental vectors (i.e. environmental components such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings). Hazards or nuisances to human health can arise as a result of exposure to these vectors e.g. interactions with human health that could occur in urban locations that experience high levels of traffic congestion and associated particulate matter and noise emissions to air.

Emission limits for discharges to air, soil and water are set with regards to internationally recognised exposure limit values. These are generally set to be many times the safe exposure limit - in order to provide protection. In the event that a plan or programme began to have adverse health effects on surrounding populations it is likely that it would have been identified as being in breach of such emission standards at a very

early stage - and long before the manifestation of any adverse health effects in the population.

4.8.1   Soil

In the absence of mitigation, contaminated materials have the potential to adversely impact upon human health, water quality and habitats and species.

As is the case with other historically developed areas across the country, there is potential for contamination at local sites within the Strategy area, especially where land uses occurred in the past in the absence of the high standards of **today's environmental protection legislation.**

4.8.2 Existing Problems

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

The number of homes within the area to which the Strategy relates with radon levels above the reference level is within the normal range experienced in other locations across the country[44].

Parts of the Strategy area are very vulnerable to adverse effects from small changes in sea level combined with changes in the occurrence of severe rainfall events and associated flooding of rivers and a number of smaller urban streams. Flooding in certain circumstances could pose a risk to human health. There is historic and predictive evidence of flooding within the area (see Section 4.10.9).

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

---

[44] Mapping available at
http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap
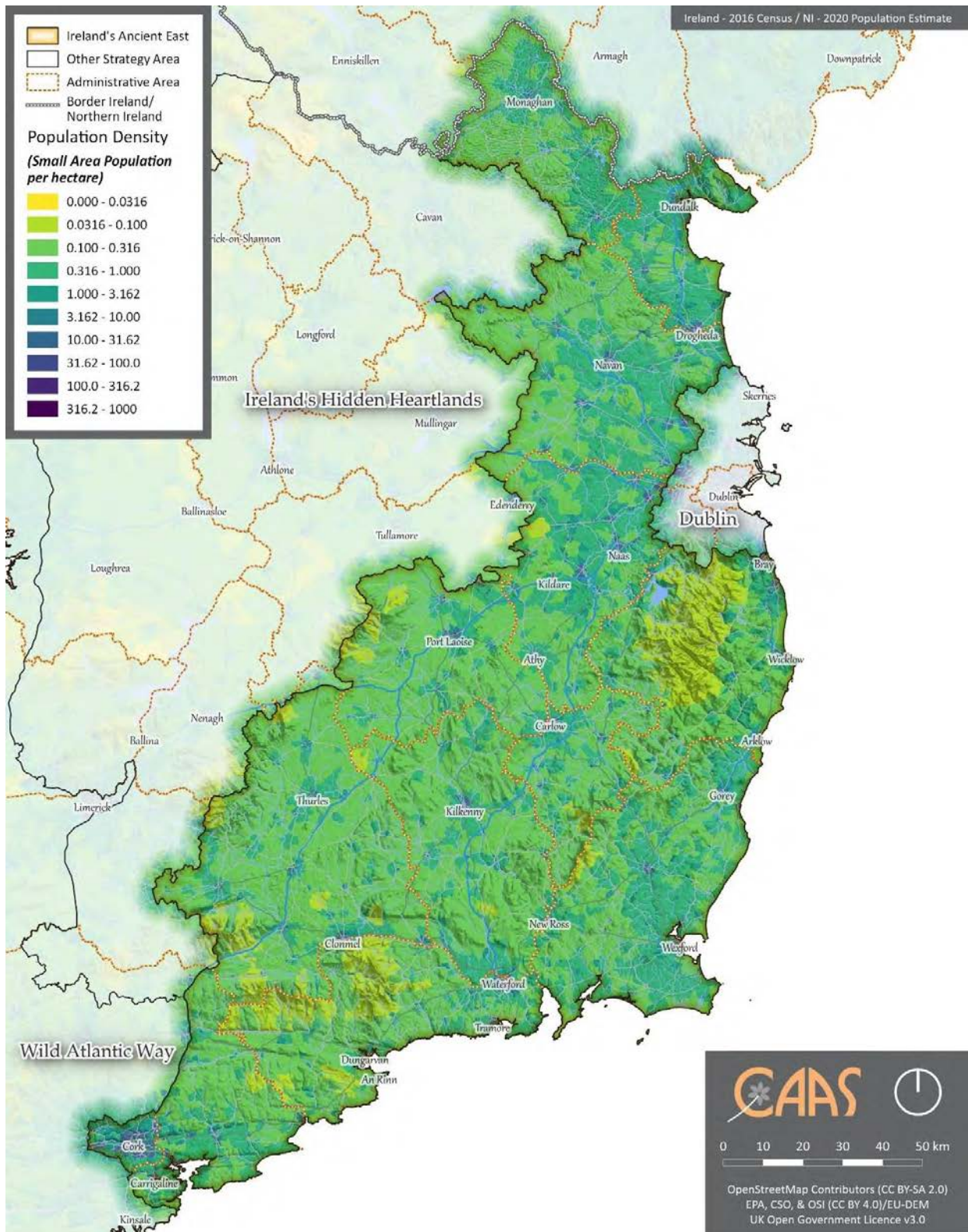
Figure 4.8 Population Density

4.9   Soil

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

To date, there is no legislation which is specific to the protection of soil resources. However, the EU Soil Strategy for 2030 sets out a framework and concrete measures to protect and restore soils, and ensure that they are used sustainably. It sets a vision and objectives to achieve healthy soils by 2050, with concrete actions by 2030. It also announces a new Soil Health Law by 2023 to ensure a high level of environmental and health protection.

Active blanket bogs and active raised bogs are considered to be priority habitats, listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. Ombrotrophic (rain-fed) and minerotrophic (groundwater-fed) peat soils are often indicative of areas that are the most sensitive to development due to ecological sensitivities and impeded drainage issues. Many of these peat areas are also subject to ecological designations (see Section 4.7).

Very large environmental challenges in the region arise from past exploitation of peatlands. These are the subject of very large-scale investment and activation – particularly using initiatives employing transition communities. Some of these may eventually offer regenerative tourism destinations.

The GSI (Geological Survey of Ireland) have a suite of data sources available that would be useful in planning and assessing individual projects with regard to the environmental topic(s) of soil and/or material assets. These include:

- Aggregate Potential Mapping;
- Bedrock mapping;
- Quaternary and Physiographic mapping; and
- National Aquifer and Recharge mapping.

4.9.1 Geological Heritage

Geological Survey of Ireland coordinates the Irish Geological Heritage Programme, which seeks to identify and select sites of geological interest within each county across the country. Sites that are appraised, but which are not selected for NHA designation, are classified as 'County Geological Sites' (CGSs), as recognised in the National Heritage Plan (2002). This enables their integration into County Development Plans. All sites of geological heritage importance are currently classified as County Geological Sites (CGSs) until such time that the most significant sites can be designated as geological NHAs.

Nationally, audits of geological sites of 29 local authority areas have been completed to date[45], including counties within or partially the area to which the Strategy relates: Tipperary; Offaly; Monaghan; Louth; Meath; Kildare; Wicklow; Wexford; Carlow; Kilkenny; Laois; and Waterford. There are many CGSs within or partially within the area to which the Strategy relates, with the highest concentration of these sites occurring within upland and coastal locations as mapped on Figure 4.9.

Relevant designations in Northern Ireland, including Areas of Special Scientific Interest with Earth Science Interest are also mapped on Figure 4.9.

4.9.2   UNESCO Global Geopark

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance, managed with a holistic

---

[45] The audits of County Cork and County Kerry have not yet been completed. More detail on audits of CGSs is available from the GSI https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/programmes-and-

projects/geoheritage/activities/county-geological-site-audits/Pages/Completed-audits.aspx.

concept of protection, education and sustainable development. They strive to raise awareness of geodiversity and promote protection, education and tourism best practices. **Whilst the 'Global Geopark' is not a legislative designation, the key** heritage sites within a Geopark must be protected under local, regional and national legislation as appropriate.

The Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark[46] (mapped on Figure 4.9) is located within the area to which the Strategy relates, in County Waterford. The Geopark covers geological and cultural heritage of the historic 19th century metal mines, extending approx. 17 km along the coast in County Waterford.

4.9.3 Source Protection Areas

Source Protection Area delineation provides an assessment of the land area that contributes groundwater to a borehole or spring. Source reports have been undertaken by the GSI on behalf of Local Authorities since the mid-1990s.

Public Supply Source Protection Areas are managed by Irish Water to supply Public Water Supply Schemes across Ireland. Source Protection Areas provide protection by placing tighter controls on activities within all or part of the zone of contribution of the source.

Groundwater bodies are important water supply sources for private wells, group schemes and local authority supplies and for use in a range of commercial activities. This is particularly the case in rural areas that are not served by public or group water schemes, with private bored wells being the only source of supply. There are a number of Source Protection Areas within the area to which the Strategy relates[47].

4.9.4 Landslides

The term "landslide" describes a wide variety of processes that result in the downward and outward movement of materials such as rock, debris, earth, mud and peat under the force of

gravity. Issues such as existing ground conditions, slope stability and storage of excavated material have the potential to influence susceptibility to landslides/bog bursts. The potential impacts of landslides include loss of human life/injury, flooding, pollution of watercourses and impacts upon aquatic biodiversity.

The area to which the Strategy relates has numerous locations with a history of landslide events[48] and many of these events are associated with peatlands and some of the coastal and upland areas.

The GSI have identified[49] the area to which the Strategy relates as having mainly low levels of landslide susceptibility with some areas of moderately high and high levels of landslide susceptibility associated with peatlands, coastal and upland locations (mapped on Figure 4.10).

4.9.5 Existing Problems

There have been a small number of landslide events across the area to which the Strategy relates and there are various areas identified by the GSI as being of elevated levels of landslide susceptibility (see Section 4.9.4).

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

---

[46] There are currently two other UNESCO Global Geoparks on the island of Ireland: The Marble Arch Caves in counties Cavan (in Ireland) and Fermanagh (in Northern Ireland), which is adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates and the Burren and Cliffs of Moher in Counties Clare and Galway.

[47] For more information refer to https://data.gov.ie/dataset/gsi-public-supply-source-protection-areas.
[48] Landslide events are recorded in the National Landslides Database available from GSI (www.gsi.ie).
[49] https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/programmes-and-projects/geohazards/projects/Pages/Landslide-Susceptibility-Mapping.aspx
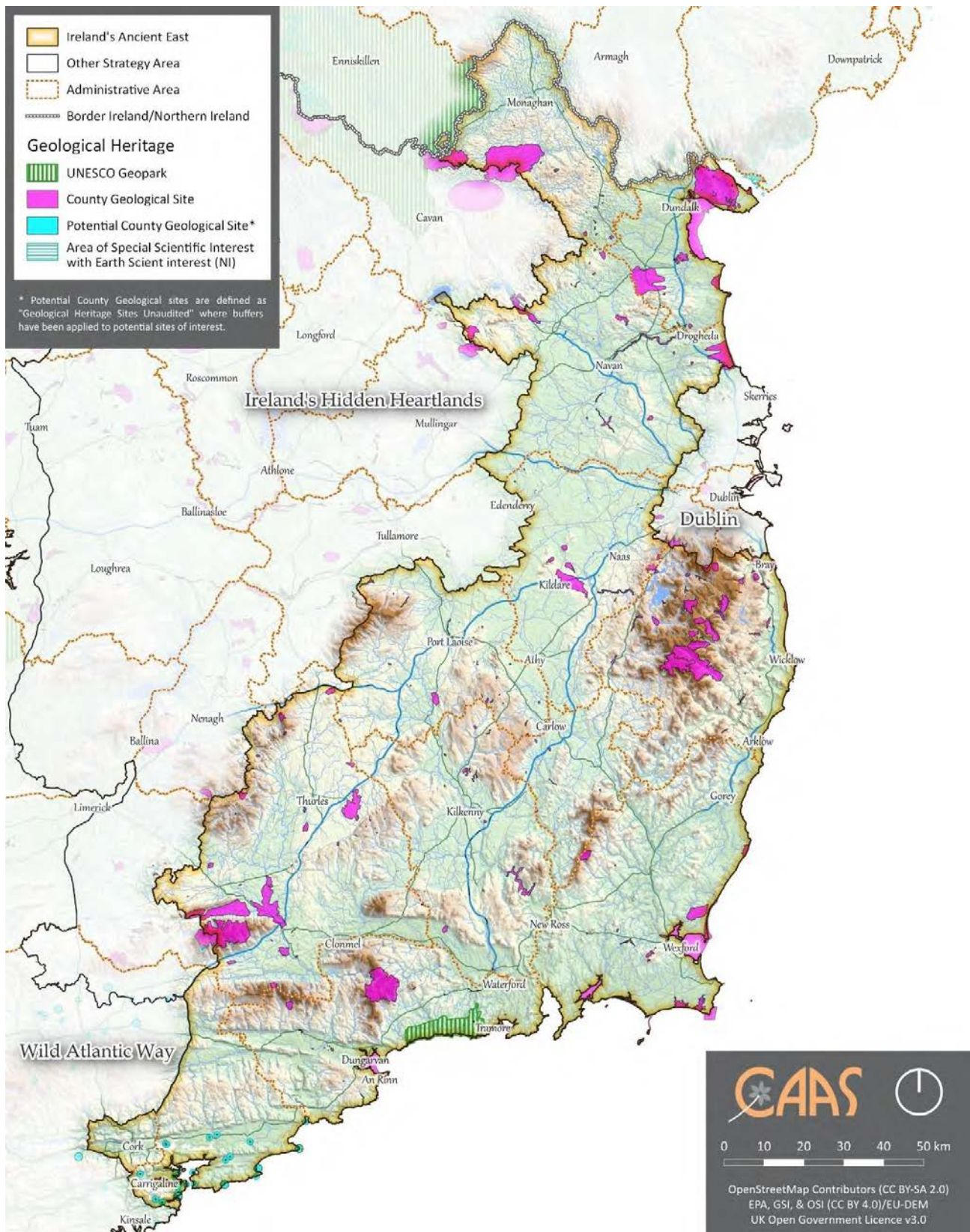
Figure 4.9 Geological Heritage
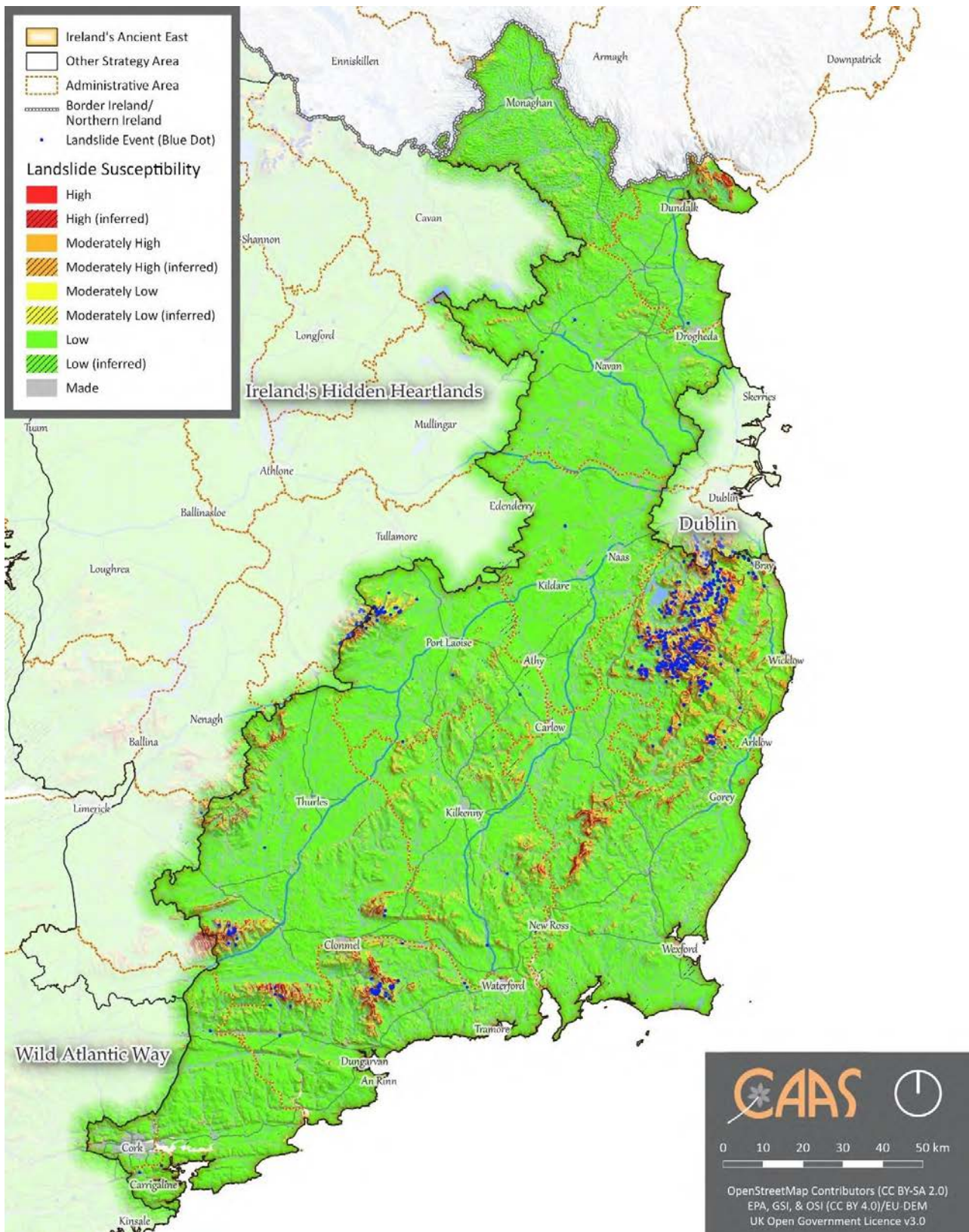
Figure 4.10 Landslide Susceptibility and Previous Landslide Events

4.10   Water

4.10.1   The Water Framework Directive

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

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

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

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland) publish an annual *"Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report"*, which includes information on the status of waterbodies[50]. The 2021[51] report identified that:

- In 2015, 147 (33%) of the 450 river water bodies were classified as *good* or *high* overall status. In 2018, 141 (31%) of river water bodies were classified as *good* or *high* overall status. In 2021, no river water bodies achieved *good* or *high* overall status.
- In 2015 and 2018, 5 (24%) of the 21 lake water bodies were classified as *good* overall status. In 2021, no lakes achieved *good* overall status.
- In 2015, 8 (32%) of the 25 transitional and coastal water bodies achieved *good* overall status and 1 (4%) achieved *high* overall status. In 2018, 10 (40%) water bodies achieved *good* overall status. In 2021, no water bodies achieved *good* overall status.
- In 2015, 49 (65%) of the 75 groundwater bodies achieved *good* overall status. In 2021, 51 (68%) achieved *good* overall status.

4.10.2   The Zone of Influence

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

4.10.3   Surface Water Drainage

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

The area to which the Strategy relates falls within or partially within the following river catchments:

- Erne;
- Lough Neagh and Lower Bann;
- Newry, Fane, Glyde and Dee;
- Upper Shannon;
- Lower Shannon;
- Boyne;
- Nanny-Delvin;
- Barrow;
- Liffey and Dublin Bay;
- Avoca-Vartry;
- Slaney and Wexford Harbour;
- Owenavorragh;
- Ballyteigue-Bannow;

---

[50] The most recent *"Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report"* was issued in May 2022, however, WFD data included is not updated each year due to the timescales of the monitoring. https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/water-framework-directive-statistics

[51] The latest Water Framework Directive statistics on the status of all water body types: rivers, lakes, transitional, coastal and groundwater were published in 2021.

- Colligan-Mahon;
- Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay;
- Nore;
- Suir;
- Owenavorragh;
- Blackwater (Munster); and
- Bandon-Ilen.

4.10.4 Surface Water Status

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

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

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

The WFD surface water status (2013-2018) for rivers and lakes within and surrounding the area to which the Strategy relates, including a number of *unassigned[52]* waterbodies is shown on Figure 4.11.

The WFD status of the rivers and lakes within the area to which the Strategy relates is classified as *high, good* and *moderate* however, sections[53] of rivers and streams are identified as being of *bad* or *poor* due to unsatisfactory ecological/biological and/or physio-chemical status.

The status of transitional and coastal waterbodies within and adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates is classified as *high good* and *moderate* however some of the transitional and coastal waters are identified as being of *bad* or *poor* due to unsatisfactory ecological/biological and/or physio-chemical status.

The WFD status of river and coastal waterbodies in Northern Ireland (2018)[54] adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates is also shown on Figure 4.11.

In addition to this, many water bodies are identified as being at risk of not achieving their water quality objectives due to the damage being caused by significant pressures[55]. Significant pressures, those pressures which need to be addressed in order to improve water quality, have been identified for waterbodies that are 'At Risk' of not meeting their water quality objectives under the WFD. There are various types of pressures identified within the area to which the Strategy relates, such as[56]:

- Agricultural pressures - can include issues related to farming including loss of excess nutrients and sediment loss to surface waters from diffuse sources such as spreading of fertilisers and manures. Excess phosphorous and sediment are typically issues for rivers and lakes, and too much nitrogen is the main issue for estuaries and coastal waters.

- Urban run-off pressures - can include leaking sewers and run-off from paved and unpaved areas and misconnections where private foul connections are connected to storm sewers instead of the foul sewer network.

- Urban wastewater pressures - can include direct discharge of nutrients from urban wastewater treatment plants and discharge from combined storm overflows or storm water overflows. Discharges of elevated concentrations of phosphorus, ammonium and nitrogen impact on the ecology of surface waters.

- Hydromorphological and anthropogenic pressures are identified together in many instances. Hydromorphological pressures can include: modifications to the physical habitat conditions or the natural functioning of a waterbody which can impact on ecology, caused by dredging and straightening of rivers (chanellisation), land drainage or hard

---

[52] There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. Overall status is currently not assigned and the term *"unassigned status"* applies in respect of these waterbodies.
[53] As per EPA classification system (gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps).
[54] The 2018 WFD datasets are the most recent GIS and mapping datasets available for Northern Ireland: https://gis.daera-ni.gov.uk.

[55] EPA (2019): Report on Water Quality in Ireland 2013-2018
[56] For more detail on significant pressures refer to: https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water.

infrastructure such as dams, weirs, culverts or other obstructions. Anthropogenic pressures can include: water abstractions; invasive species; agriculture; use of fertilizers, manures and pesticides; animal husbandry activities; inefficient irrigation practices; deforestation of woods; aquaculture; pollution due to industrial effluents and domestic sewage; mining; and recreational activities.

- Extractive industry-related pressures – can include different activities that lead to the extraction of raw materials from the earth, such as oil, metals, mineral and aggregates. Impacts from extractive sites include sediment/siltation pollution and alteration to the physical environment.

- Forestry pressures - can include poorly managed and inappropriately sited forest operations, negatively impact on water quality and aquatic habitats and species. The most common water quality problems arising from forestry relate to the release of sediment and nutrients and the impacts from acidification. Forestry may also give rise to changes in stream flow regimes caused by associated land drainage.

- Domestic wastewater pressures – can include septic-tank systems associated with one-off housing and small unlicensed private urban waste-water treatment plants. If not correctly installed and well maintained, these systems can result in leakage of untreated effluent to waters.

- Other pressures can include impacts from activities such as historically polluted sites and aquaculture. These activities each impact a relatively small number of water bodies so they have been grouped together.

4.10.5 Groundwater

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

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

The WFD groundwater status (2013-2018) of groundwater underlying the area to which the Strategy relates[57] is mostly identified as being of *good* status, meeting the objectives of the WFD with some areas of *poor*[58] status.

4.10.6 Aquifer Vulnerability and Productivity

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates groundwaters according to both their productivity and vulnerability to pollution.

Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter into groundwater. The vulnerability of aquifers underlying the area to which the Strategy relates[59] is generally classified as being of:

- *Low vulnerability;*
- *Moderate; and*
- *High, extreme vulnerability and extreme (rock at or near surface or karst).*

The GSI also rates aquifers based on the hydrogeological characteristics and on the value of the groundwater resource; this is referred to as aquifer productivity. Productivity classifications relevant within the area to which the Strategy relates[60] include:

- *Poor aquifer - bedrock which is generally unproductive except for local zones;*
- *Regionally important aquifer - fissured bedrock;*
- *Regionally important aquifer – karstified;*
- *Poor aquifer - bedrock which is generally unproductive except for local zones;*
- *Poor Aquifer - bedrock which is generally unproductive;*

---

[57] Mapping available at: https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/
[58] Underlying: Newry, adjacent to the Strategy area (County Louth/Northern Ireland); Bettystown and Duleek (County Meath); Industrial Facility No. P0784-01 (County Louth); Industrial Facility No. P0325-01 and Waste Facility No. W0014-01 (County Kildare); Historic Mines in Glendalough, Avoca and Glenmalure (County Wicklow); Industrial Facility No. P0394-01); Waste Facility No. W0016-02 and Industrial Facility No.P0062-02 (County Wexford); Waste Facilities No. W0018-01 and No. W0032-02 and Industrial Facility No. P0157-02 (County Waterford); Waste Facility No. W0012-

03 and Mitchelstown (County Cork); Durrow (County Tipperary/County Kilkenny/County Laois); Industrial Facility No. P0274-01 (County Laois); and Waste Facility No. W0020-01 (County Monaghan).
[59] Mapping available at:
https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aaac3c228
[60] Mapping available at:
https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aaac3c228

- *Locally important aquifer - bedrock which is generally moderately productive;*
- *Locally important aquifer - bedrock which is moderately productive only in local zones;*
- *Locally important gravel aquifer;*
- *Regionally important gravel aquifer; and*
- *Regionally important aquifer - karstified (diffuse).*

The Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI) provides regional groundwater aquifer and vulnerability classification for Northern Ireland. More detail on groundwater vulnerability and groundwater resources for Northern Ireland are available from the **Geological Survey of Northern Ireland's (**GSNI) GeoIndex.[61]

4.10.7 WFD Registers of Protected Areas

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

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

- WFD RPA Drinking Water Surface Water Bodies[62] (as shown on Figure 4.5); groundwater beneath the entire area to which the Strategy relates is also included;
- WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive Areas (Lakes, Rivers and Estuaries) and associated Surface Water and Groundwater in Nutrient Sensitive Areas (as shown on Figure 4.5); and
- WFD RPA Bathing Waters and associated WFD Surface Waters in Bathing Locations (as shown on Figure 4.5).

Relevant Protected Areas in Northern Ireland intersecting and adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates (mapped on Figure 4.5),

include Surface Drinking Water Areas, Bathing Locations and Groundwater Drinking Water Areas.

There are also a number of RPAs in the area to which the Strategy relates designated by virtue of their value to biodiversity - these are addressed under Section 4.7.

4.10.8 Bathing Waters

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

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

The most recent available data from the EPA for 2021[63] shows that locations of designated bathing waters within the area to which the Strategy relates[64] are classified as *excellent* with the reminder classified as *good* or *sufficient.*

The Blue Flag award is given to beaches and marinas that have excellent water quality and maintain other standards including effective and appropriate management to ensure the protection of the natural environment and safety standards. Many of the bathing locations within the area to which the Strategy relates were awarded with the Blue Flag in 2022[65].

4.10.9 Flooding

Flooding is an environmental phenomenon which, as well as causing economic and social impacts, could in certain circumstances pose a risk to human health. The existence of flood risk across the country is illustrated by various sources of information on historical flooding events – including those available from the

---

[61] https://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/GSNI_Geoindex/home.html
[62] Various water bodies are used for drinking water abstraction in accordance with European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 278/2007).

[63] EPA (2022) Report: *Bathing Water Quality in Ireland 2021*
[64] Mapping available at: https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/
[65] For more detail refer to: https://beachawards.ie/blue-flag/sites-2-2/.

Office of Public Works, the lead Authority on flooding in the country, National Flood Hazard Mapping website. In addition to this historic mapping there is predictive, modelled Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Risk and Hazard mapping available from the OPW including through the National Catchment Flood Risk Management Programme. These mapping sources identify flood risk from various sources, including fluvial, pluvial, coastal and groundwater. The Flood Risk and Hazard mapping has informed the preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans, which have been in force since 2018 across different parts of the Strategy area.

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

4.10.10 Potential Water Sensitivity

A potential water sensitivity map (shown on Figure 4.12) has been prepared as part of the SEA process. The purpose of the map is to indicate at a regional level where the main concentrations of water sensitivities might occur within and surrounding the Strategy area.

The map is prepared at the regional scale and different layers or weightings would produce different map outputs. Where the sensitivity mapping shows a concentration of water sensitivities there is an increased likelihood that development will conflict with these sensitivities and cause environmental deterioration, if mitigation is not applied. It is emphasised that the occurrence of water sensitivities does not preclude development; rather it flags at a strategic level that the mitigation measures - which have already been integrated into the Strategy - will need to be adhered to at lower tiers of decision making in order to ensure that the implementation of the Strategy contributes towards the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. It is emphasised that the map is a high scale, regional map and additional, local water sensitivities may become apparent during the consideration of projects at local level.

The potential water sensitivity map (Figure 4.12) has been prepared by weighting layers

relating to water sensitivity and overlaying them using GIS software. The layers and associated weightings are detailed on Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Water Sensitivity Layers and Weighting

Layer	Weight
WFD Status of Surface water *bad* ecological status	15
WFD Status of Surface water *poor* ecological status	10
WFD Status of Surface water *moderate* and *unassigned* ecological status	5
WFD Status of Groundwater *poor*	10
Aquifers which are *extremely vulnerable* – X and E areas	10
Aquifers which are *highly vulnerable* – H areas	5
GSI Source Protection Areas - Inner Protection Area	10
GSI Source Protection Areas - Outer Protection Area	5
Group Scheme Preliminary Source Protection Areas	10
WFD RPA Rivers for Drinking Water	10
WFD RPA Lakes for Drinking Water	10
WFD RPA Groundwater for Drinking Water	10
WFD RPA Bathing Water Areas	10
WFD RPA Bathing Locations	10
WFD RPA Shellfish Areas	10
WFD RPA Surface Water in Shellfish Area	10
WFD RPA Groundwater in Shellfish Areas	10
Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only)	10
WFD RPA Surface Waters in Salmonid Regs	10
WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive - Rivers	10
WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive - Lakes and Estuaries	10

On the Figure 4.12, areas with higher water sensitivities are indicated by darker orange colours, areas with moderate water sensitivities are indicated by yellow colours and areas with lower water sensitivities are indicated with green colours. Rivers, lakes and estuaries throughout the region show up as being sensitive. Sensitivity is also attached to some of the coastal and upland areas.

4.10.11 Existing Problems

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

There is historic and predictive evidence of elevated levels of flood risk from fluvial and coastal sources at various locations across the area to which the Strategy relates.
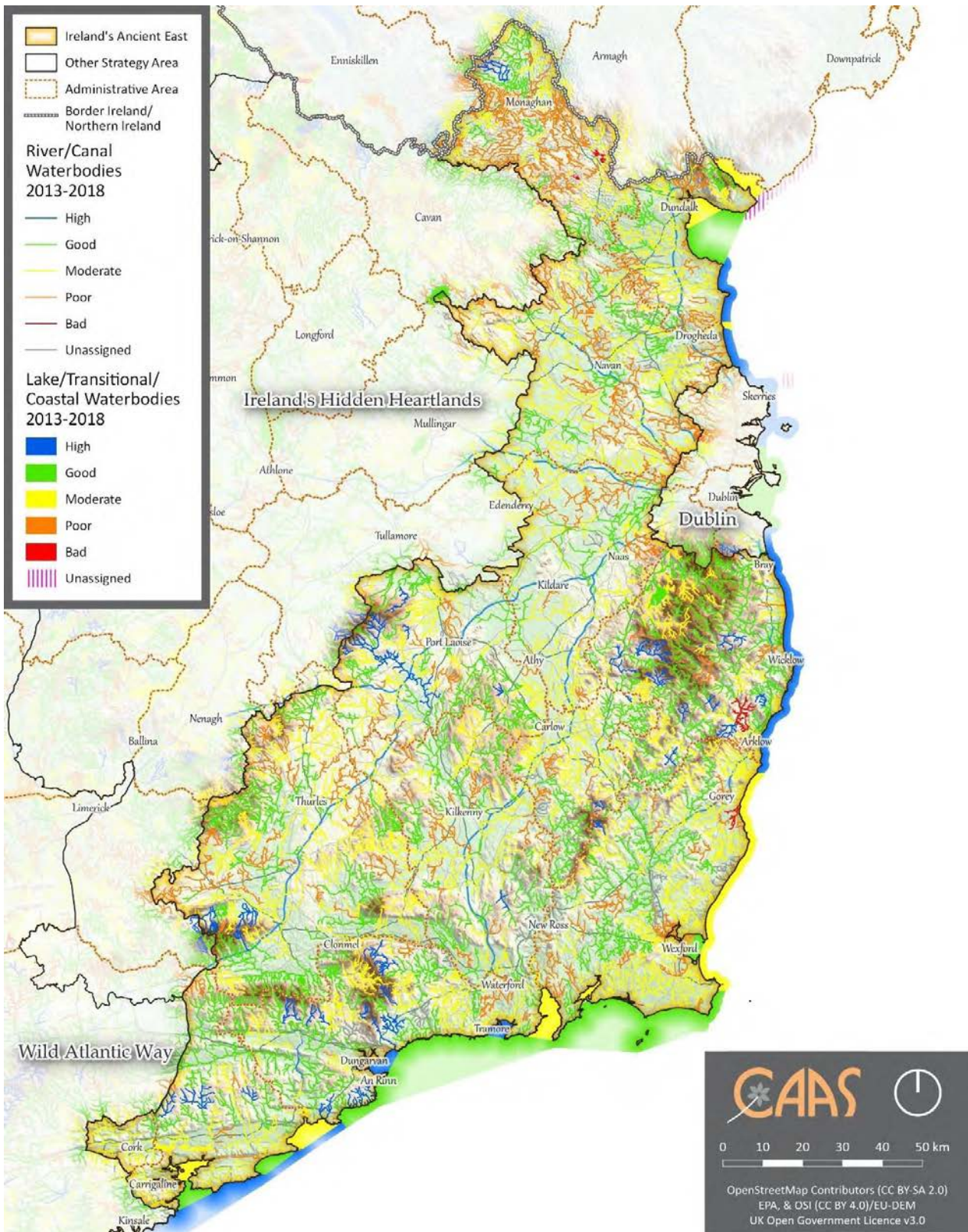
Figure 4.11 WFD Surface Waterbodies Status (2013-2018)

Figure 4.12 Potential Water Sensitivity

4.11 Air and Climatic Factors

4.11.1 Climatic Factors

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

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

Interactions with climatic factors are also present with other environmental components including water/flooding (see Section 4.10).

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

Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2020 (EPA, 2021) report details provisional estimates of greenhouse gas emissions for the period 1990-2020. In 2020 total national greenhouse gas emissions are estimated to have declined by 3.6% on 2019 levels to 57.70 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO_2eq). This reduction in total emissions was driven by the COVID impact on transport and less peat used for electricity generation. It highlights that further, transformative measures will be needed to meet national climate ambitions.

Greenhouse gas emissions from the Transport sector decreased by 15.7% or 1.92 Mt CO_2eq in 2020. This decrease was largely driven by the impact of COVID restrictions on passenger car and public transport usage. International aviation, not included in the national total

emissions, declined by 65% in 2020 or by 2.17 Mt CO_2 eq.

The EPA 2022 publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2021-2040* provides **an assessment of Ireland's total projected** greenhouse gas emissions from 2021 to 2040, updated using the latest Inventory data for 2020. The report provides an assessment of **Ireland's progress towards achieving its** national ambitions under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 and EU emission reduction targets for 2030 as set out under the Effort Sharing Regulation[66] Key findings identified as part of the report are that:

- Urgent implementation of all climate plans and policies, plus further new measures, are needed for Ireland to meet the 51 per cent emissions reduction target and put Ireland on track for climate neutrality by 2050.
- Ireland can meet its non-ETS EU targets of a 30 per cent emission reduction by 2030 (compared to 2005) assuming implementation of planned policies and measures and the use of the flexibilities available. These include a land use flexibility using the Climate Action Plan 2021 afforestation rate of 8,000 hectares per annum.
- **The gap between the 'Existing Measures' and** 'Additional Measures' scenarios in these projections highlights that the current pace of implementation will not achieve the change required to meet the Climate Act targets. Faster **implementation of 'Additional Measures' is** needed to close this gap.
- Carbon budgets proposed by the Climate Change Advisory Council have recently been approved by the Oireachtas for the periods 2021-25, 2026-30 and 2031-35. The Projections highlight that there is currently a significant gap between the budgets and the projected emissions over the budget periods. This gap will need to be addressed very quickly if Ireland is to stay within the Carbon Budgets.
- Under the Additional Measures scenario, renewable energy is projected to increase to 78 per cent of electricity generation by 2030 with emissions from the Energy Industry decreasing by 10 per cent per annum from 2021-30. Increased coal use from 2021 and growing energy demand, including from data centres, threaten to negatively impact achievement of National targets, particularly for the first carbon budget period.
- Under the Existing Measures scenario emissions are projected to increase by 1.9 per cent over the 2020-2030 period. A methane emissions reduction of almost 30 per cent is required to achieve a 22 per cent reduction in agriculture emissions compared to 2018, as committed to in the 2021 Climate Action Plan. The sector must clearly set out how this will be achieved to

---

[66] Regulation (EU) 2018/842 of on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States

from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement.

address uncertainty regarding its ability to deliver even the lower end of the range of its sectoral targets within the ever-shortening timeframe to 2030.

- The end of COVID travel restrictions is projected to result in transport emissions increasing by 18-19 per cent from 2020 to 2022. Emissions from the sector are projected to reduce to 39 per cent below 2018 levels by 2030 and achieve a 31.7 per cent renewable transport share if the additional measures in plans and policies are implemented, this includes over 940,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2030, increased biofuel blend rates and measures to support more sustainable transport.
- Spending more time at home due to hybrid working and the increasing cost of fossil fuels highlights the need for our houses to become far more efficient. Implementing currently planned measures for the installation of 680,000 heat-pumps by 2030 as well as retrofitting 500,000 homes is projected to achieve a 41.5 per cent reduction in residential emissions in 2030 (compared to 2018).

The revised National Climate Action Plan 2021 provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting us on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021. The Plan lists the actions needed to deliver on our climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy. It will be updated annually, including in 2022, to ensure alignment with our legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings.

The National Adaptation Framework Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, 2018), sets out the national strategy to reduce the vulnerability of the country to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of positive impacts. The National Adaptation Framework outlines a whole of government and society approach to climate adaptation. Under the Framework, a number of Government Departments will be required to prepare sectoral adaptation plans in relation to a priority area that they are responsible for. The statutory Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Transport Sector was prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act (2015) and the National Adaptation Framework (2018) and published by the Department of Transport in 2019. The plan sets out the national strategy to **reduce Ireland's vulnerability to the negative**

effects of climate change and to avail of any positive impacts, with an objective to help develop resilience within the sector in order to safeguard transport infrastructure from future climate impacts.

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 commits Northern Ireland to a target of 48% reduction in emissions and 80% renewable electricity by 2030 and carbon net zero by 2050. The latest *Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory* estimated 2019 emissions to be 21 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MtCO_2e$). This was an 18% decrease on the 26 $MtCO_2e$ emitted in 1990. Projections are produced annually and provide an estimate of emissions of greenhouse gases in Northern Ireland from 2020 to 2030. The latest projection is that greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland will reduce by 32% between 1990 and 2030 to 18 $MtCO_2e$.

4.11.2 Alternative Fuels and Renewable Electricity Generation Targets

The use of alternative fuels, including electricity, forms a significant part of government policy to reduce transport emissions. The Strategy facilitates a mode shift away from the private car to public transport, walking and cycling and provisions relating to electric vehicles. This will contribute towards reductions in the consumption of non-renewable energy sources and achievement of legally binding renewable energy targets.

The Renewable Energy Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC) requires each Member State to adopt a national renewable energy action plan **(NREAP) to set out Member States' national** targets for the share of energy from renewable sources consumed in transport, electricity and heating in 2020 that will ensure delivery of the overall renewable energy target. These sectoral targets are referred to as RES-E (electricity), RES-T (transport) and RES-H (heat).

The overall target for Ireland in Directive 2009/28/EC was 16% share of renewable energy in Gross Final Consumption (GFC) by 2020. Under the Directive (2009/28/EC), Ireland was obliged to deliver 10% of transport energy by renewable sources by 2020[67]. SEAI's

---

[67] Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (2017) National Renewable Energy Action Plan

Fourth Progress Report submitted under Article 22 of Directive 2009/28/EC.

2021 publication "*Energy in Ireland 2021*" report includes the most recent assessment of **Ireland's progress towards renewable energy** targets up to 2020 and identifies that Ireland:

- Did not meet its EU 2020 overall renewable energy target. The overall share of renewable energy was 13.5%, compared to the target of 16%;
- Succeeded against its EU 2020 renewable energy target for transport (10.2% vs. 10%), and just missed its renewable energy target for electricity (39.1% vs. 40%);
- Achieved just half its 2020 renewable energy target for heating and cooling (6.3% vs. 12%); and
- Energy from renewable sources grew by 8.9% in 2020.

4.11.3   Energy Security

Greater use of alternative fuels, including renewable energy, has the potential to further contribute towards energy security.

Indigenous production accounted for 32% of **Ireland's energy requirements in 1990.** However, since the mid-1990s import dependency had grown significantly, due to the increase in energy use together with the decline in indigenous natural gas production at Kinsale since 1995 and decreasing peat production. **Ireland's overall import dependency reached** 90% in 2006. It varied between 85% and 90% until 2016 when it fell to 69%. This trend reflects the fact that Ireland is not endowed with significant indigenous fossil fuel resources and has only in recent years begun to harness significant quantities of renewable resources and more recently natural gas from the Corrib field.

4.11.4   Ambient Air Quality

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

The principles to this European approach are set out in the Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) (which replaces the earlier Air Quality

Framework Directive 1996 and the first, second and third *Daughter Directives*; the fourth *Daughter Directive* will be included in CAFE at a later stage).

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

The EPA's (2021) *Air Quality in Ireland 2020* identifies that:

- Air quality in Ireland is generally good however there are localised issues.
- Ireland was above the European Environment Agency reference level for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), a toxic chemical, at 4 monitoring sites due to the burning of solid fuel.
- Ireland was above World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guidelines for particulate matter (PM), sulphur dioxide (SO_2) and ozone at 52 monitoring sites across the country.
- The travel restrictions imposed as a result of Covid-19 had a positive impact on air pollution in our urban areas with up to 50% reductions in traffic pollution.
- Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) from transport emissions fell in 2020, however, if long-term changes are not made to modes or patterns of transport it will lead to future exceedances in the urban areas.

Air pollution from transport is dominated by NO_x emissions. Of these, NO_2 is particularly impactful from a health perspective. The report describes that concentrations of NO_2 at urban areas in Ireland are close to the EU annual limit value. The potential implications for air quality with increases in traffic numbers or from certain weather conditions unfavourable to dispersion of pollutants could result in exceedances of the EU limit value.

The report states that:

- "**Short**-term exposure to NO_2 is linked to adverse respiratory effects including airway inflammation in healthy people and increased respiratory symptoms in asthmatics.
- Long-term exposure is associated with an increased risk of respiratory infection in children. NO_x is a major precursor in the formation of ground level ozone. It is also a major precursor **in the formation of photochemical 'smog'."**

With regards to solutions, the report identifies that:

- To tackle the problem of particulate matter:

o Move away from domestic burning of solid fuel (coal, wood, peat) towards cleaner ways of heating homes such as heat-pump technology.
o **Implement the Government's proposed** nationwide smoky fuel ban in 2022 which will facilitate people to make clean air choices.

- To reduce the impact of NO₂:
o Implement the transport options (clean public transport and increasing the use of electric **vehicles) as identified in the Government's** Climate Action Plan.
o Avoid reverting to pre-COVID traffic levels, **maintain pedestrianisation of Ireland's urban** areas and continue to improve cycling infrastructure.

In order to apply with European Directives relating to air quality, the EPA manages the National Ambient Air Quality Network and measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants at locations across the country.[68]

4.11.5   Noise

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

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

In compliance with the Directive and transposing Environmental Noise Regulations (S.I. No. 140 of 2006), Noise Action Plans have been prepared for each local authority area within the country, including those currently in force within the area to which the Strategy relates, in counties: Cork; Tipperary; Offaly; Monaghan; Louth; Meath; Kildare; Wicklow; Wexford; Carlow; Kilkenny; Laois; and Waterford.   The Action Plans include noise mapping and are required to include measures

to manage noise issues and effects, including noise reduction if necessary.

4.11.6   Existing Problems

The Climate Change Advisory Council's *Annual Review 2021* identified that when considering national policy goals to 2050, Ireland is presently significantly off-track from paths that deliver long-term transition towards climate neutrality on that timescale. The Council also noted that:

- Transport trends are not consistent with a sustainable low-carbon path, making emissions reductions more difficult, while also driving congestion and a host of sustainability problems and costs; and
- It is necessary to accelerate electrification while putting an urgent priority on long-term integrated spatial and mobility planning in Ireland, if a transformational sustainable path is to be delivered.

Air quality and noise present challenges, especially in urban areas, as detailed under the relevant sub-sections above. With regard to air quality, air pollution from transport is dominated by NOₓ emissions. Of these, NO₂ is particularly impactful from a health perspective. The Strategy will help to facilitate reductions in emissions and a transition from dependence on fossil fuel combustion powered transport.

4.12   Material Assets

4.12.1   Water Services

The region has been in receipt of significant structural investment for water services over the past 15 years. Many ongoing environment pressures are linked to agricultural practices that are rapidly changing with a view to anticipating and avoiding diffuse pollution of ground and surface waters caused by increased nutrient loading.

4.12.1.1 Wastewater

The EPA's 2021 report '***Urban*** *Waste Water Treatment in 2020*'identified that:

- Wastewater treatment at 12 large urban areas did not meet European standards;
- Raw sewage is released into the environment from 34 urban areas;

---

[68] For more detail on air quality data for the area to which the Strategy relates refer to: https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/.

- Wastewater from 42 priority areas is the sole threat to waters at risk of pollution;
- Wastewater contributed to poor quality bathing waters at three beaches in 2020;
- Discharges from 12 areas must improve to protect freshwater pearl mussels;
- Seven wastewater collection systems have been found non-compliant with European Union requirements.

Based on the EPA's assessment of monitoring information provided by Irish Water and the enforcement activities carried out by the EPA, this report identifies urban areas with the most important environmental issues that must be addressed. There are currently[69] a number of Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTP) within and/or serving the area to which the Strategy relates, listed by the EPA as **"priority areas"**, where improvements are required to resolve urgent environmental issues, including in:

- County Carlow:
  - Tullow
- County Cork:
  - Ballycotton
  - Cork City
  - Fermoy
  - Midleton
  - Mitchelstown
  - Rathcormac
  - Ringnaskiddy-Crosshaven-Carrigaline and Cobh
  - Whitegate-Agada
- County Laois:
  - Ballyroan
  - Castletown
  - Portarlington
- County Louth:
  - Dundalk
  - Dunleer
  - Omeath
- County Tipperary:
  - Mullinahone
- County Waterford:
  - Dungarvan
  - Kill
- County Wexford:
  - Arthurstown
  - Ballycanew
  - Ballyhack
  - Duncannon
  - Ferns
  - Kilmore Quay
- County Wicklow:
  - Arklow
  - Avoca
  - Kilcoole

  - Kilpedder

The area to which the Strategy relates is served by combined sewer networks, including septic tanks and sewerage treatment schemes serving agglomerations under 500 P.E. and urban WWTPs.

The most recent and available Irish Water compliance report for the wastewater treatment plants serving the area to which the Strategy relates, provide information on the environmental performance and wastewater discharge licence compliance of the following WWTPs[70].

Irish Water in collaboration with County Councils has developed and prioritised a major programme of work which will address deficiencies that exist across the wastewater infrastructure across the country.[71]

4.12.1.2 Water Supply

Drinking water supply in the area to which the Strategy relates is provided by private and public water supply schemes[72].

Irish Water in collaboration with County Councils has developed and prioritised a major programme of work, which will address deficiencies that exist across the water supply network and infrastructure.[73] Irish Water is currently preparing a National Water Resources Plan (NWRP)[74] to address urgent issues with the supply and demand for drinking water in Ireland over the short, medium and long term.

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

---

[69] Updated list of priority urban areas (EPA, May 2022)
[70] For more information refer to Irish Water (2020 & 2021): *Annual Environmental Reports (AERs)*
[71] For more information refer to local authorities and Irish Water.
[72] In rural areas, individual wells are used to serve farms and single houses.
[73] For more information refer to local authorities and Irish Water.

[74] The preparation of the NWRP has been divided into two phases, the combination of which will become the final NWRP. The NWRP Framework Plan (Phase 1) has now been adopted. Phase 2 of the NWRP (four Regional Water Resources Plans), currently in preparation, will address the needs across the 535 individual water supplies and identify the solutions to address these needs. https://www.water.ie/projects/strategic-plans/national-water-resources/

schemes within and/or serving the area to which the Strategy relates listed on the most recent EPA Remedial Action List (Q4 of 2021) in:

- County Carlow:
  o Carlow North Regional
- County Cork:
  o Whitegate Regional
  o Cork City Water Supply
- County Kilkenny:
  o Callan
  o Kilkenny City (Radestown) WS
  o Pilltown-Fiddown
- County Louth:
  o Greenmount
  o Tallanstown
- County Meath:
  o Batterstown
  o Drumcondrath
  o Navan – Mid Meath Kilcarn PWS
  o Trim PWS
- County Tipperary:
  o Borrisokane
  o Burncourt Ballylooby
  o Clonmel Pulavanogue
  o Galtee Regional
  o Nenagh Regional
- County Waterford:
  o Dungarvan
  o Kereen
- County Wexford:
  o Clonroche
  o Wexford Town
- County Wicklow
  o Aughrim/Annacurra
  o Ballymorris

4.12.2 Public Assets and Infrastructure

Some bigger settlements across the area to which the Strategy relates include: Monaghan; Carrickmacross; Carlingford; Dundalk; Ardee; Dunleer; Drogheda; Oldcastle; Kells; Navan; Athboy; Trim; Dunshaughlin; Ratoath; Ashbourne; Dunboyne; Enfield; Kilcock; Leixlip; Celbridge; Prosperous; Sallins; Naas; Blessington; Newbridge; Kildare; Kilcullen; Ballymore Eustace; Athy; Castledermot; Portarlington; Mountmellick; Stradbally; Portlaoise; Mountrath; Abbeyleix; Durrow; Thurles; Cashel; Fethard; Tipperary; Cahir; Clonmel; Blarney; Ballincollig; Glanmire; Cork; Passage West; Midleton; Cloyne; Youghal; Dungarvan; Tramore; Waterford; Portlaw; Mooncoin; Mullinavat; New Ross; Thomastown; Callan; Kilkenny; Castlecomer; Wexford; Enniscorthy; Ferns; Gorey; Muine Bheag; Tullow; Carlow; Arklow; Aughrim; Rathdrum; Wicklow; Greystones; and Bray.

The area to which the Strategy relates is served by rail, bus, cycle network, regional and strategic roads. **Public transport to Ireland's** Ancient East from east coast hubs such as Dublin City and Airport and Cork City is strong with regular bus services operated by the public and private sector. Public transport within counties however is weaker with little to no linkages between towns and visitor attractions or key cities and tourism towns.

The waterways, marinas, ports and harbours located across the area to which the Strategy relates have many functions including transport, fishing, marine leisure and tourism.

The area to which the Strategy relates provides with access to the natural environment and other significant cultural, tourism, recreation and sports assets including access to lakes, forests and mountains.

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

Various provisions relating to material assets have been integrated into the Strategy, compliance with which will need to be demonstrated by those seeking or maintaining funding from Fáilte Ireland.

4.12.3 Green Infrastructure

Parks and open space promote health and well-being, provide recreational facilities and range of habitats for various species. Green infrastructure is also a crucial component in building resilient communities capable of adapting to the consequences of climate change with trees, woodlands and wetlands providing carbon capture and slowing water flows while improving air quality.

4.12.4 Forestry

Some parts of the area to which the Strategy relates are covered by forestry. Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to

their heritage and economic benefits. They are a valuable resource in terms of biodiversity, recreation and tourism, and also important as links in the green infrastructure network.

4.12.5 Peatlands

Many parts of the area to which the Strategy relates are covered by peatlands. Peatlands provide a valuable natural and archaeological resource. Peatlands are also important controllers of water levels in river catchments, providing a source of water in dry conditions and soaking up excess water during wetter periods; they actively capture and hold carbon and are an important natural resource in combatting climate change. Cutaway bogs have the potential to facilitate land uses such as employment, renewable energy generation, waste management, industrial, and tourism and recreation. Peat soils, such as those found in some parts of the area to which the Strategy relates, are often indicative of areas that are the most sensitive to development due to ecological sensitivities and impeded drainage issues. Many of the peatland areas are subject to ecological designations.

4.12.6 Coastline

The coastline and coastal erosion are topics with relevance to various environmental components. Coastlines can be amongst the most sensitive and valuable resources, in terms of natural and cultural heritage, scenic beauty and recreation. The coast is also an important economic resource - particularly for the fishing, aquaculture, leisure and tourism industries. Some of the settlements within the area to which the Strategy relates have developed along or near the coast.

4.12.7 Minerals and Aggregates

Minerals such as iron and copper and aggregates such as sand and gravel can occur throughout the country. Minerals and aggregates are essential to manufacturing and construction.

The GSI have a suite of data sources available that would be useful in planning and assessing individual projects with regard to the environmental topic(s) of soil and/or material assets. These include:

- Aggregate Potential Mapping;
- Bedrock mapping;
- Quaternary and Physiographic mapping; and
- National Aquifer and Recharge mapping.

4.12.8 Waste Management

For the purposes of waste management planning, Ireland is now divided into three regions: Southern, Eastern-Midlands and Connacht-Ulster. Waste management plans for each waste management region were published in 2015 and provided a framework for the prevention and management of waste in a sustainable manner.

4.12.9 Existing Problems

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

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

The Capital Investment Plan 2020-2024 is Irish **Water's** 5-year investment plan for water and wastewater assets and infrastructure to 2024. As the national water utility, Irish Water is delivering improvements to water and wastewater services throughout Ireland where they are needed most urgently based on a clearly defined set of priorities.

2018 saw long dry spells, which Met Éireann compared to 1976 when similar drought conditions were experienced across the country. The prolonged hot weather during the summer caused a huge increase in water usage across the country. As demand for water rose to critical levels, **Irish Water's** supplies were put under severe stress as more water was being used than could be produced.

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

4.13   Cultural Heritage

4.13.1   Archaeological Heritage

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

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

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

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

The term 'monument' includes all man-made structures of whatever form or date except buildings habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes. All monuments in existence before 1700 A.D. are automatically considered to be historic monuments within the meaning of the Acts. Monuments of architectural and historical interest also come within the scope of the Acts. Monuments include: any artificial or partly artificial building, structure or erection or group of such buildings, structures or erections; any cave, stone or other natural product, whether or not forming part of the ground, that has been

artificially carved, sculptured or worked upon or which (where it does not form part of the place where it is) appears to have been purposely put or arranged in position; any, or any part of any, prehistoric or ancient tomb, grave or burial deposit, or, ritual, industrial or habitation site; and any place comprising the remains or traces of any such building, structure or erection, any such cave, stone or natural product or any such tomb, grave, burial deposit or ritual, industrial or habitation site, situated on land or in the **territorial waters of the State', but excludes 'any** building or part of any building, that is habitually used for ecclesi**astical purposes'** (National Monuments Acts 1930-2004).

A recorded monument is a monument included in the list and marked on the map, which comprises the RMP set out county by county under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Notification within which requirements for notifications of proposed works apply.

A Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)[75] is a manual containing a numbered list of all certain and possible monuments accompanied. An Urban Archaeology Survey was completed in 1995 and contained reports on historic towns dating to before 1700 A.D. with a view to delineating zones of archaeological potential (SMR Zones of Notification). The SMR formed the basis for issuing the RMP.

Figure 4.13 shows the spatial distribution of recorded monuments and associated SMR Zones of Notification within the Strategy area and beyond. There are thousands of Recorded Monuments within the area to which the Strategy relates, concentrated within urban/suburban areas. These are less common in areas which are not settled, most noticeably in the upland locations.

These archaeological monuments include a number of National Monuments in State Care Ownership and Guardianship within the area to which the Strategy relates (mapped on Figure 4.13 and listed in Appendix II).

The Underwater Archaeology Unit was established within the National Monuments

---

[75] The RMP was issued for each county between 1995 and 1998 in a similar format to the existing SMR. However, the RMP differs from the earlier lists in that, as defined in the Act, only monuments with known locations or places where there are believed to be monuments are included. The large

archive and supporting database are managed by the National Monuments Service and the records are continually updated and supplemented as additional monuments are discovered.   (https://data.gov.ie/dataset/national-monuments-service-archaeological-survey-of-ireland).

Service to manage and protect Ireland's underwater cultural heritage, including the quantification of the underwater resource and assessing development impacts in order to manage and protect this aspect of Ireland's heritage. The Shipwreck Inventory is principally a desktop survey with information gathered from a broad range of cartographic, archaeological and historical sources, both documentary and pictorial.

Wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects found underwater are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts 1987 and 1994. Significant wrecks less than 100 years old can be designated by the Underwater Heritage Order on account of their historical, archaeological or artistic importance. Such Orders can also be used to designate areas of seabed or land covered by water to more clearly define and protect wreck sites and archaeological objects. Under the legislation all diving on known protected wreck sites or with the intention of searching for underwater cultural heritage is subject to licensing requirements.

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

Relevant archaeological heritage designations in Northern Ireland (also mapped on Figure 4.13), include Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest, Scheduled Historic Monuments and entries to the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record[76].

4.13.2 Architectural Heritage

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

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

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

- The interior of the structure;
- The land lying within the curtilage[77] of the structure;
- Any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors; and,
- All fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii).

Similar to the general spatial spread of archaeological heritage, clusters of architectural heritage are indicated within developed urban and suburban locations across the area to which the Strategy relates, as shown on Figure 4.14.

In addition to Protected Structures, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides the legislative basis for the protection of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). An ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures, whose character it is an objective to preserve in a development plan. The ACA designation requires that planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in the ACA that might alter the character of the structure or the ACA. The ACA designations are

---

[76] More detail available at: https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com
[77] Curtilage is normally taken to be the parcel of ground immediately associated with the Protected Structure, or in use for the purposes of the structure. Protection extends to the buildings and land lying within the curtilage. While the curtilage sometimes coincides with the present property boundary, it can originally have included lands, features or

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

identified in the relevant planning authority Development Plan.[78]

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a State initiative under the administration of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and was established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to the local authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures. Figure 4.14 shows entries to NIAH within the area to which the Strategy relates.

Relevant architectural heritage designations in Northern Ireland (also mapped on Figure 4.14) include Listed Buildings, Defence Heritage and entries to the Industrial Heritage Record.

4.13.3 Existing Problems

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

---

[78] Refer to local authorities for more information.
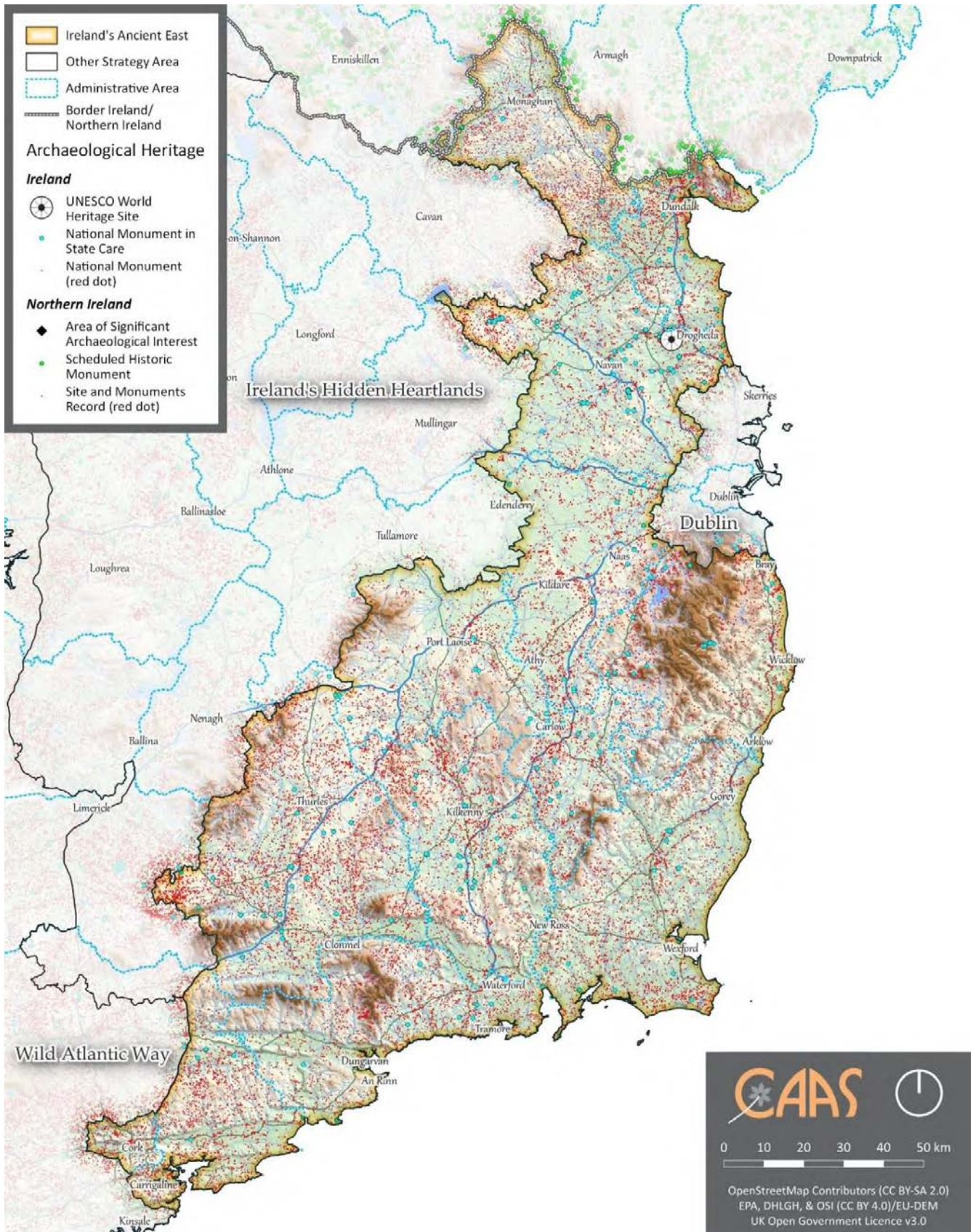
Figure 4.13 Archaeological Heritage
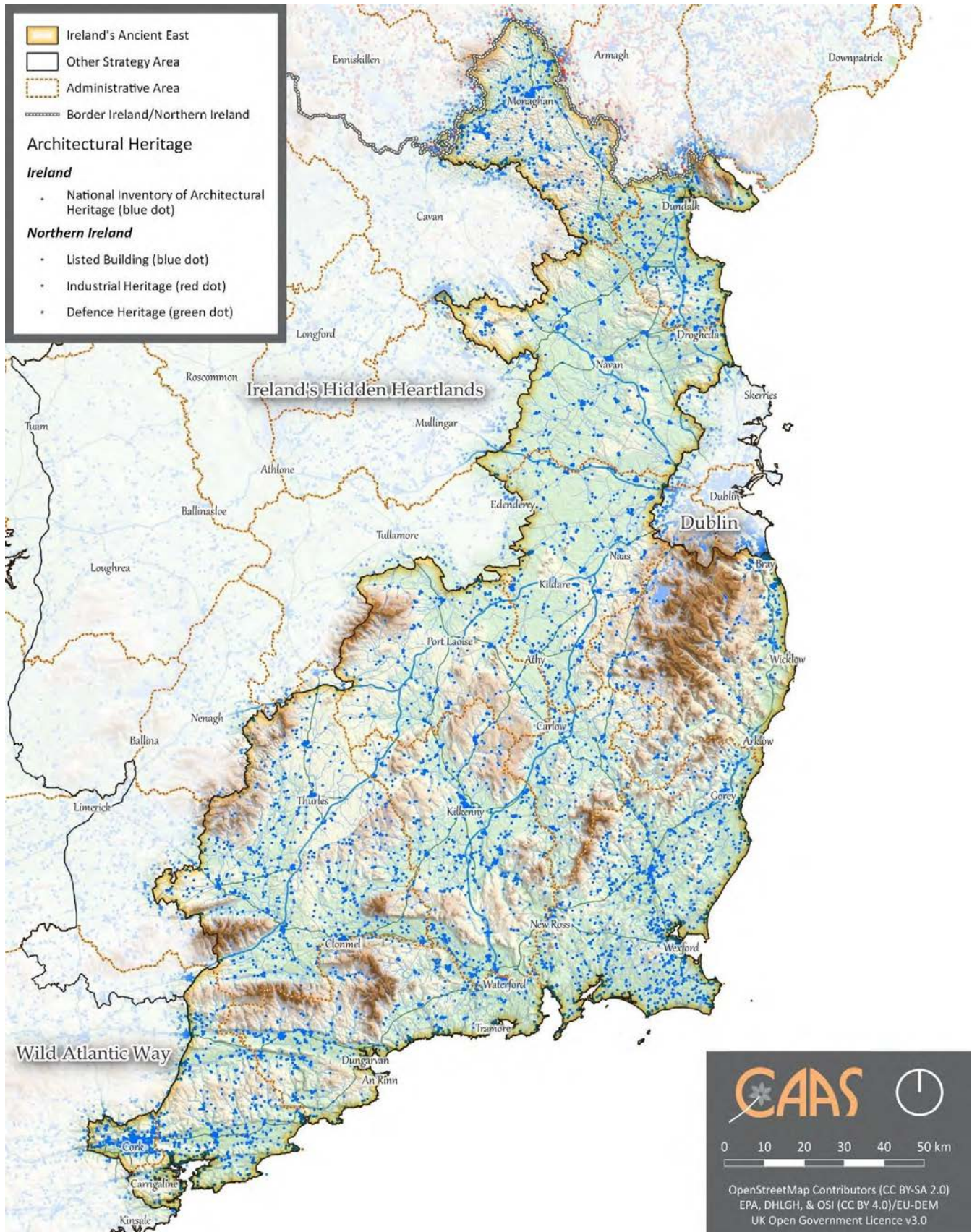
Figure 4.14 Architectural Heritage

4.14 Landscape

4.14.1 Introduction

Article 1 (a) of the European Landscape Convention provides a definition of landscape as follows; **"Landscape means an area, as** perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural/or **human factors". The importance of landscape** and visual amenity and the role of its protection are recognised in the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, which requires that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty.

The unique visual character of the area to which the Strategy relates is due to its variety of landscapes, seascapes and rich and diverse built, natural and cultural heritage. The Strategy area encompasses landscape designations and sensitivities that have been identified by Development Plans prepared for administrative areas of counties: Cork; Tipperary; Offaly; Monaghan; Louth; Meath; Kildare; Wicklow; Wexford; Carlow; Kilkenny; Laois; and Waterford; and also landscape designations and sensitivities in adjacent counties and along the border with Northern Ireland.

The different landscapes found across the area to which the Strategy relates have varying visual and amenity values, topography, exposure levels and contain a variety of habitats. Each landscape type has varying capacity to absorb development related to its overall sensitivity.

4.14.2 Designations

The importance of landscape and visual amenity and the role of its protection are recognised in the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, which requires that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty. These objectives and associated plan content often designate different aspects of the landscape such as the following:

- Landscape character areas;
- Landscape sensitivity and value areas;

- High amenity zones;
- Scenic views and prospects; and
- Land use objectives relating to landscape protection.

Such designations, which vary from local authority to local authority and change over time, should be taken into account by lower tier planning and environmental assessments.

4.14.3 Landcover

CORINE land cover mapping classifies land cover under various headings. This dataset allows for the identification of areas that are likely to be most visually sensitive and robust.

Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface. The CORINE Land Cover map is based on interpretation of satellite images.

Three Categories of potential landcover sensitivity have been identified as follows by combining the following landcover layers:

Category 1 Robust Landcover

- Sport and leisure facilities
- Continuous urban fabric
- Discontinuous urban fabric
- Industrial or commercial units
- Road and rail networks
- Sea ports
- Airports
- Mineral extraction sites
- Dump
- Construction sites

Category 2 Normal Landcover

- Non-irrigated land
- Coniferous forest
- Complex cultivation patterns
- Pasture
- Transitional woodland scrub
- Land principally occupied by agriculture with areas of natural vegetation

Category 3 Sensitive Landcover

- Fruit trees and berry
- Green urban sites
- Broad-leaved forest
- Peat bog
- Natural grassland
- Water bodies
- Coastal lagoons
- Mixed Forests
- Moors and Heaths

- Intertidal Flats
- Beaches Dunes Sand
- Inland marshes
- Stream Courses
- Estuaries
- Sparsely Vegetated Areas
- Burnt Areas
- Salt Marshes
- Bare Rocks

Potential landcover sensitivity mapping is shown on Figure 4.15. Normal landcover is the predominant landcover type and is generally found throughout of the Strategy area. Robust landcover is found within and surrounding the in pockets throughout the Strategy area, but predominantly surrounding settlements and villages. Sensitive landcover is most common within and surrounding the rivers, upland and ecologically sensitive areas especially across the central and northern parts of the Strategy area.

4.14.4 Existing Environmental Problems

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

Figure 4.15 Potential Landcover Sensitivity Mapping

4.15 Overall Environmental Sensitivities and Opportunities/ Robustness

4.15.1 Overview

Some of the environmental information detailed under previous subsections has been weighted and mapped to show overall (potential) environmental sensitivity (see Figure 4.16) and overall potential environmental opportunities (see Figure 4.17) with regard to the development of various projects. The purpose of the map is to indicate at a regional level where the main concentrations of sensitivities might occur.

The maps are prepared at the regional scale and different layers or weightings would produce different map outputs. Where the sensitivity mapping shows a concentration of environmental sensitivities there is an increased likelihood that development will conflict with these sensitivities and cause environmental deterioration, if mitigation is not applied. It is emphasised that the occurrence of environmental sensitivities does not preclude development; rather it flags at a strategic level that the mitigation measures - which have already been integrated into the Strategy - will need to be adhered to at lower tiers of decision making in order to ensure that the implementation of the Strategy contributes towards environmental protection.

Where the robustness mapping shows a concentration of environmental robustness there is a decreased likelihood that development will conflict with the environment. It is emphasised that the maps are high scale, regional maps and additional, local sensitivities and opportunities may become apparent during the consideration of projects at local level. A weighting system applied through Geographical Information System (GIS) software was used in order to calculate sensitivity and robustness.

The maps have been prepared by weighting layers relating to environmental sensitivity and robustness and overlaying them using GIS software. The layers and associated weightings are detailed on Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 below.

4.15.2 Environmental Sensitivities

For the environmental sensitivity mapping shown on Figure 4.16, weightings were applied as per Table 4.2. On Figure 4.16, areas with higher environmental sensitivities are indicated by darker orange/red colours, areas with moderate environmental sensitivities are indicated by yellow colours and areas with lower environmental sensitivities are indicated with green colours.

Lower levels of sensitivity occur across most of the Strategy area. Heightened areas of sensitivity within the Strategy area include rivers, valleys, estuaries, coastal and marine areas, the rivers and their tributaries, on account of ecological designations, landscape sensitivities, areas of extreme groundwater vulnerability and flood risk. Heightened levels of sensitivity are also indicated within and surrounding urban and suburban areas, on account of cultural heritage designations.

Table 4.2 Environmental Sensitivity Layers and Weighting

Layer	Weight
SACs or SPAs	10
NHAs	10
pNHAs & Areas likely to contain Annex I habitats	5
Corine 2018 Sensitive Landcovers	10
Margaritifera sensitive areas (Catchments of SAC populations listed in S.I. 296 of 2009 and Catchments of other extant populations)	5
GSI Landslide Susceptibility High or High Inferred	10
GSI Landslide Susceptibility Moderately High or Moderately High Inferred	5
County Geological Sites or Geological sites of importance	10
Archaeological Heritage (National Monuments in State Care, National Monuments, SMR Zones of Notification)	10
Architectural Heritage (NIAH)	10
Water Sensitivity High	15
Water Sensitivity Moderate	10
Water Sensitivity Low	5
Flood data (OPW CFRAM/NIFM Present Day Fluvial 0.1% AEP and CFRAM Present Day Coastal 0.1% AEP)	10
UNESCO World Heritage Sites	15
Tentative UNESCO World Heritage Sites	10
UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (Core Zone)	15
UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (Buffer Zone)	10
UNESCO Biosphere (Transitional Zone)	5
National Park	15
UNESCO Global Geopark	15

4.15.3 Environmental Opportunities/ Robustness

For the environmental opportunities mapping shown on Figure 4.17, weightings were applied as per Table 4.3. On Figure 4.17, areas with higher environmental robustness are indicated by darker green colours, areas with moderate environmental robustness are indicated by yellow colours and areas with lower environmental robustness are indicated with red/pink colours.

Heightened areas of opportunities within the Strategy area include those associated with the existing built-up footprint of urban and suburban areas. Lower levels of robustness occur elsewhere.

Table 4.3 Environmental Opportunities/ Robustness Layers and Weighting

Layer	Weight
Areas not covered by SACs or SPAs	10
Any areas not covered by NHAS, pNHAs or potential Annex I Habitats	10
Corine 2018 Landcover Sensitivity - Robust Landcovers	10
Corine 2018 Landcover Sensitivity- Normal Landcovers	5
Areas not covered by *Margaritifera* sensitive areas (Catchments of SAC populations listed in S.I. 296 of 2009 and Catchments of other extant populations)	5
Areas not susceptible to landslides	10
Areas not covered by County Geological Sites or Geological Sites of Importance	10
Areas not covered by Archaeological Heritage (National Monuments in State Care, National Monuments, SMR Zones of Notification)	10
Areas not covered by Architectural Heritage (NIAH)	10
Water Sensitivity High	5
Water Sensitivity Moderate	10
Water Sensitivity Low	15
Population Density Low	5
Population Density Moderate	10
Population Density High	15
Areas not at risk from flooding (OPW CFRAM/NIFM Present Day Fluvial 0.1% AEP and CFRAM Present Day Coastal 0.1% AEP)	10
Areas not covered by UNESCO World Heritage Sites	15
Areas not covered by UNESCO Biosphere Reserve	15
Areas not covered by the National Park	15
Areas not covered by UNESCO Global Geopark	15
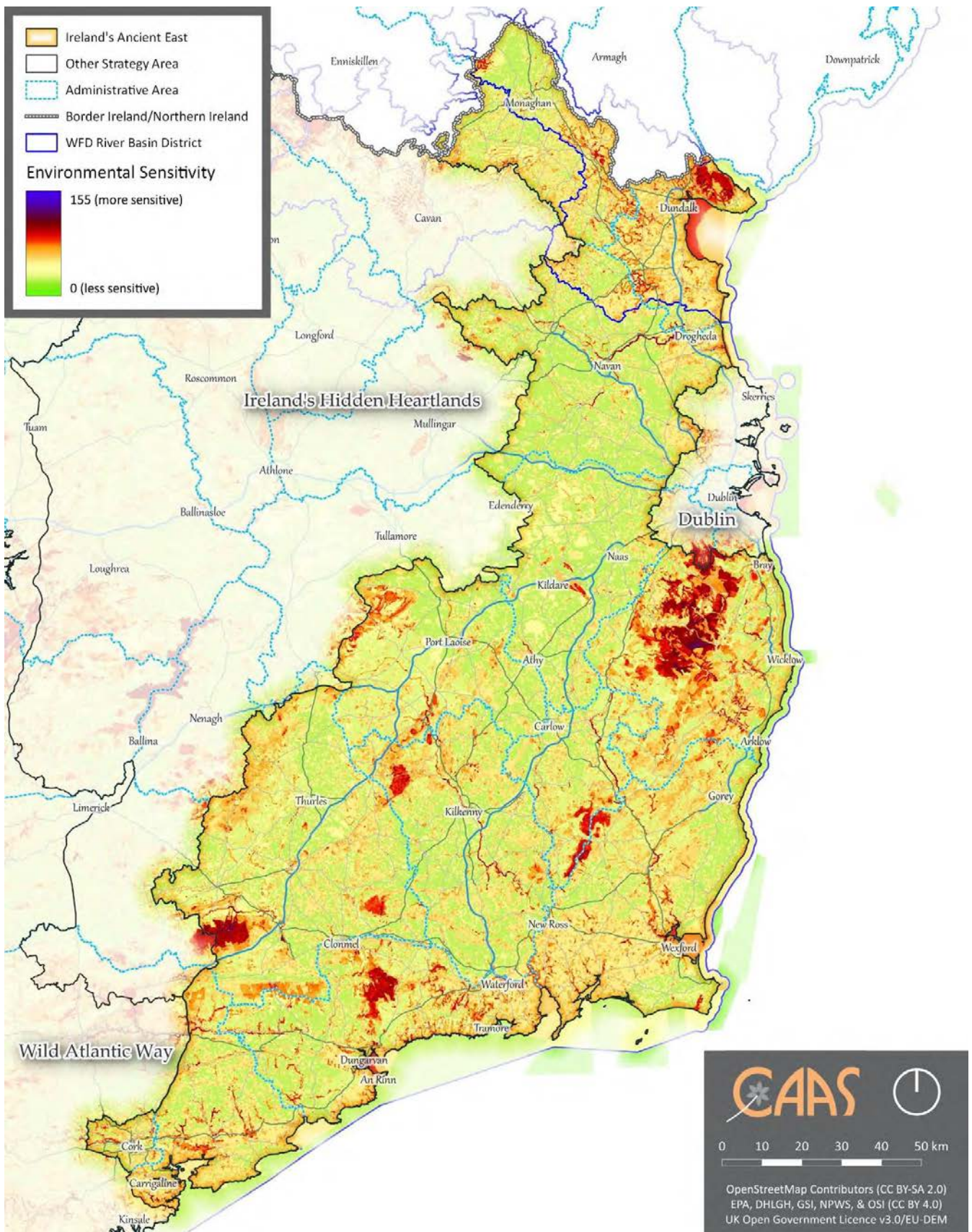
Figure 4.16 Overall Potential Environmental Sensitivity
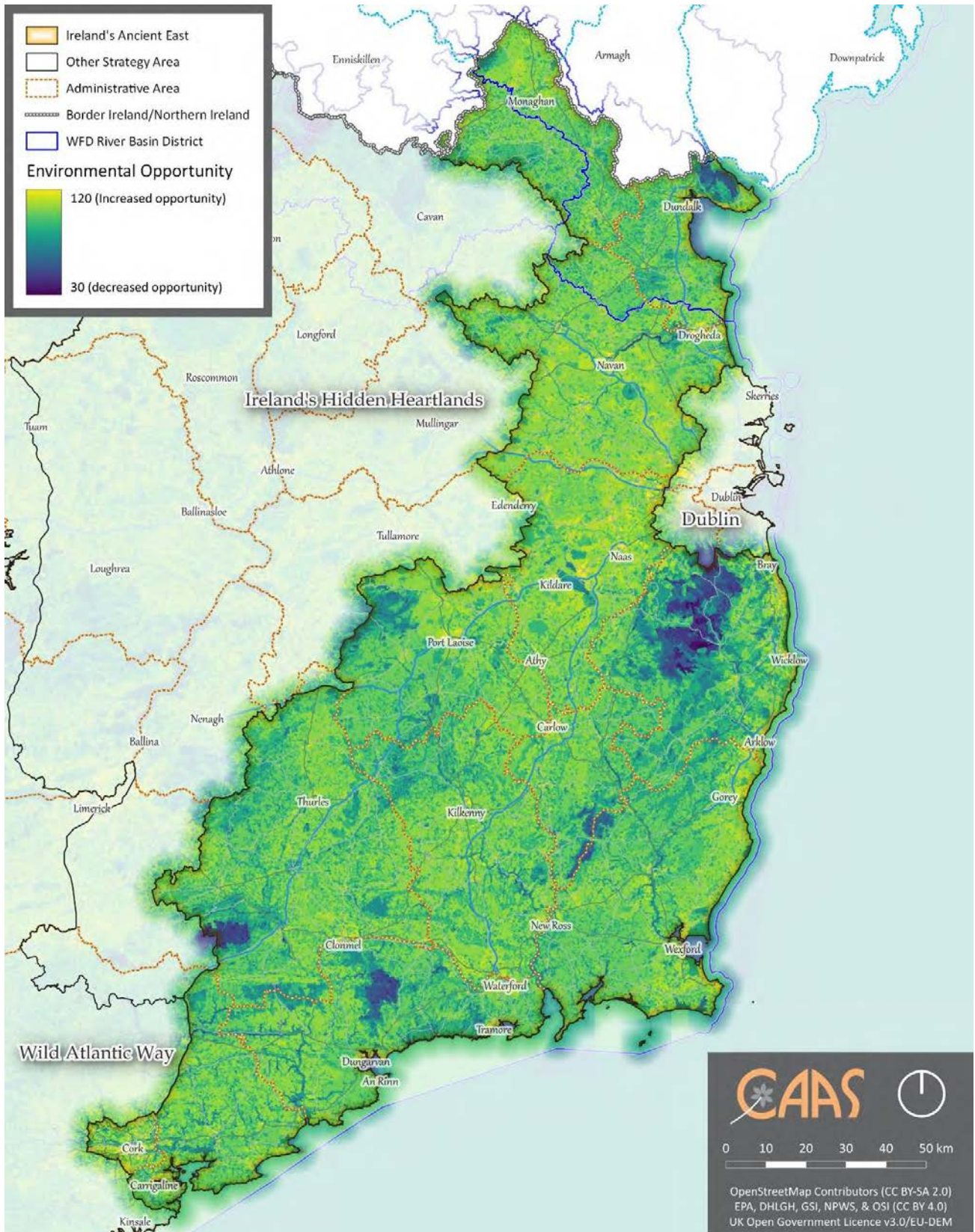
Figure 4.17 Overall Potential Environmental Opportunities

Section 5　　Strategic Environmental Objectives

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

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

The SEOs are linked to indicators that can facilitate monitoring the environmental effects of the Strategy as well identifying targets that the Strategy can help work towards (see Section 10).

All SEOs are provided on Table 5.1 overleaf.

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

Given the relationship of the Tourism Strategy and lower-tier tourism related projects with the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (see Section 9.2), the measures identified in RSES and lower tier Development Plan SEAs have been used **–** as they are or having been slightly modified **–** in many instances.

Table 5.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives, Indicators and Targets

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	• Preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species • Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function • Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species • Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Action Plan and its targets • To protect, maintain and conserve natural capital
Population and Human Health	PHH	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	• Contribute towards economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable and regional development and environmental protection and management • Seek to ensure that tourism is serviced by the required public infrastructure and services • Safeguard citizens and visitors from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being
Soil (and Land)	S	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	• Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource • Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites
Water	W	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive • Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to service development funded under the Strategy in the context of existing and projected water supply and wastewater capacity constraints, ensuring the protection of receiving environments • Avoid funding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion • Ensure that sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) are integrated into developments funded under the Strategy where relevant and appropriate

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Material Assets	MA	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	• Optimise use of existing infrastructure and seek to ensure that new infrastructure is provided to match development funded under the Strategy - this includes transport infrastructure • Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, solar, hydro, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels • Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies • Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure capacity in place to support new development • Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes • Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, towns and grids
Air	A	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	• Avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all related sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, heating, industry and agriculture • Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency • Promote continuing improvement in air quality • Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution • Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive • Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels
Climatic Factors [79]	C	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	• Minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses • Integrate sustainable design solutions into infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure) • Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets • Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change • Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport
Cultural Heritage	CH	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage
Landscape	L	Protect and enhance the landscape character	Avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those provided by Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

[79] Please also refer to relevant legislation and requirements under Section 4.10, Section 8, Section 9 and Appendices III and IV. Targets under the national Climate Action Plan are reviewed and updated periodically and include those under the headings of Electricity, Built Environment, Transport, Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use and Enterprise.

Section 6 Description of Alternatives

6.1 Introduction

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

6.2 Current Situation (Alternative 1: Business as Usual)

Ireland's Ancient East was launched in 2015 as a mechanism to unify the region as an internationally marketable tourism destination. By 2019, tourism in Ireland's Ancient East was worth €1.7bn to the regional economy supporting approximately 55,200 jobs. Over half (55%) of this revenue was generated by international visitors with the remaining 45% from Island of Ireland visitors.

At a consumer level, the brand has proven to be a motivating reason to visit Ireland with 650,000 more **visitors visiting the region in 2019 compared to 2017. Nationally, Ireland's Ancient East has a 25%** share of overseas visitors to Ireland and 35% share of total domestic trips. In the international marketplace, the brand has proven to be very appealing to the Great Britain, German, French and North American markets.

The intention of the brand is to provide visitors with a very different flavour of Ireland relative to **Ireland's other regional experience brands.**

While 2022 is a strong year due to pent-up demand and deferred bookings from the previous two years, 2023 and beyond are expected to be more challenging. Forecasting is very difficult in the current economic environment as the global economy recovers from the impact of Brexit, Covid-19 and the Russian-Ukraine conflict. At a minimum, a return to 2019 levels of revenue by 2026 is expected, in inflation adjusted terms, and with an ambition to exceed this.

There are various policies and plans that are already in place relating to the development of tourism, including:

- **The Government's Tourism Strategy, People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025;**
- **Fáilte Ireland's Corporate Strategy** 2021-2023; and
- The wider statutory planning framework, including the National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the various Development Plans and Local Area Plans in force across the country.

This current situation presents Alternative 1 (Business as Usual) to be considered by the SEA. Overtime, the numbers of visitors would be expected to restore to pre-pandemic levels under this scenario.

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

Alternatives 2A and 2B both involve preparing a Strategy that would seek to drive recovery and **growth of the visitor economy in Ireland's Ancient East to** further unlock the commercial potential (see Section 6.2) **of Ireland's Ancient East by creating** sustainable, high-quality jobs in the sector to support and strengthen local communities. This would be achieved by raising awareness and consideration of the region as a visitor destination and by increasing the average length of stay, convincing visitors to stay longer and explore more of what the region has to offer.

A Strategy would **refine and strengthen the destination's brand proposition to embrace the broader** offering of the destination and increase its consumer appeal to a wider audience; increase knowledge **and awareness, and improve the 'navigability' of the region; alongside establishing iconic and signature** visitor experiences and strong destination towns that have the potential to become key regional attractors to drive and disperse targeted domestic and overseas visitors.

Under the heading of Alternative 2 there are two separate alternatives:

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

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

- Site Maintenance;
- Visitor Management;
- Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others;
- Environmental Damage Resolution;
- Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaigns;
- Blueway Management and Development;
- Sustainable Recreational Trail Development and Operation;
- Infrastructure capacity; and
- Ecosystem services.

Alternative 2A would also integrate focus on:

- Optimising existing assets, in addition to developing new stock, when increasing supply side capacity (accommodation, visitor attractions, activity providers, etc.) to come on stream over the period of the Strategy (e.g. longer opening hours and using mid-week and weekend capacity across the full calendar year); and
- Visitor management, including through lower-tier Destination and Experience Development Plans.

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

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

Section 7   Evaluation of Alternatives

7.1   Introduction

This section provides a comparative evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects[80] of implementing available alternatives that are described in Section 6. This determination sought to understand whether each alternative was likely to improve conflict with or have a neutral interaction with the receiving environment.

7.2   Methodology

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (see Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs, see Section 5 and Table 7.1) are used in the evaluation of alternatives. This methodology is also used in the assessment of Strategy provisions, the findings of which are provided in Section 8 of this report.

The alternatives (and, in Section 8, the Strategy provisions) are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 7.2 below) in order to determine they would be likely to affect the status of the existing environment and the SEOs. The SEOs and the alternatives (and, in Section 8, the Strategy provisions) are arrayed against each other in order to demonstrate which interactions would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies an interaction with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the relevant column.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects:

- Interactions that would be *likely to improve the status* of a particular SEO would be likely to contribute towards a significant positive effect on the environmental component to which the SEO relates, including in-combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework.

- Interactions that would *potentially conflict with the status* of *an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated* would be likely to result in potential significant negative effects; however, these effects will be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Strategy and residual effects would not be significant (see Table 8.3 of this report).

- Interactions that would probably *conflict with the status of an SEO and would be unlikely to be mitigated* would be likely to result in a significant residual negative effect on the environmental component to which the SEO relates.

These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 7.3), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

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

---

[80] These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 8.2), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives[81]

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	• Preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species • Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function • Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species • Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Action Plan and its targets • To protect, maintain and conserve natural capital
Population and Human Health	PHH	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	• Contribute towards economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable and regional development and environmental protection and management • Seek to ensure that tourism is serviced by the required public infrastructure and services • Safeguard citizens and visitors from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being
Soil (and Land)	S	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	• Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource • Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites
Water	W	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive • Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to service development funded under the Strategy in the context of existing and projected water supply and wastewater capacity constraints, ensuring the protection of receiving environments • Avoid funding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion • Ensure that sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) are integrated into developments funded under the Strategy where relevant and appropriate
Material Assets	MA	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	• Optimise use of existing infrastructure and seek to ensure that new infrastructure is provided to match development funded under the Strategy - this includes transport infrastructure • Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, solar, hydro, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels • Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies • Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure capacity in place to support new development • Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes • Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, towns and grids

---

[81] See Section 5 for a description of Strategic Environmental Objectives.

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Air	A	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	• Avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all related sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, heating, industry and agriculture • Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency • Promote continuing improvement in air quality • Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution • Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive • Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels
Climatic Factors [82]	C	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	• Minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses • Integrate sustainable design solutions into infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure) • Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets • Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change • Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport
Cultural Heritage	CH	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage
Landscape	L	Protect and enhance the landscape character	Avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those provided by Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

Table 7.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives on SEOs

Likely to Improve status of SEOs			Potential Conflict with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated			Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
+			−			−	0
to a Greater degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Greater degree		

---

[82] Please also refer to relevant legislation and requirements under Section 4.10, Section 8, Section 9 and Appendices III and IV. Targets under the national Climate Action Plan are reviewed and updated periodically and include those under the headings of Electricity, Built Environment, Transport, Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use and Enterprise.

7.3 Cumulative Effects

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

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

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

- Potential *inter-Strategy* cumulative effects - these arise when the effects of the implementation of one strategy occur in combination with those of other strategies, plans, programmes, developments, etc.

In considering the relationship with legislation and other strategies, plans, programmes etc. it is important to note that the Strategy is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (see Sections 2, 4, 5 and 9 and Appendix III). These other existing strategies, plans, programmes etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction up to 2040. The NPF is being implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSESs set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSESs have informed, and continue to inform, the preparation of lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which also set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment.

Implementation of the Strategy shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSESs and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Strategy (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, strategies, plans, programmes etc. (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Strategy is not part and does not contribute towards[83].

Effects[84] that may arise as a result of implementing the Strategy, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework, have been mitigated to the extent

---

[83] These provisions are in addition to those that have been integrated into the Strategy that will contribute towards sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management (see Section 9).
[84] Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services and infrastructure (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSESs and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Mitigation includes that which has been integrated into the Strategy – please refer to Section 9 of this report.

that the only residual adverse effects likely to occur as a result of implementation of the Strategy are those that are identified under Table 8.3.

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

- Land use policy, plans and programmes (e.g. the NPF, the RSESs, Development Plans and Local Area Plans);
- Water services, waste management, transport and energy infrastructure plans (e.g. Irish **Water's Water Services Strategic Plan and associated Capital I**nvestment Plan, Regional Waste Management Plans, Transportation Policies and Strategies, Grid25 and associated Implementation Programme) and the Local Economic and Community Plans;
- Tourism strategies, plans, programmes etc. (e.g. the Government's Tourism Strategy, People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025; Fáilte Ireland's Corporate Strategy 2021-2023; and the other Draft Regional Tourism Strategies 2022 that have also been prepared); and
- Environmental protection and management plans (e.g. River Basin Management Plan, National Climate Action Plan, National Adaptation Framework, and Flood Risk Management Plans).

The Ireland's Ancient East Tourism Strategy Region shares borders with the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and Dublin Regions (all of which are the subject of related Regional Tourism **Strategies) and with Northern Ireland. Provisions of the Ireland's Ancient East Strategy that have the** potential to link with areas beyond the Region and that have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:

- Various greenways and blueways, such as the Cork to Dublin Greenway and the Royal and Grand Canals;
- Cross-border collaboration regarding the development and promotion of the visitor offering in Louth and Monaghan, in the context of the Ulster Canal redevelopment, cooperation across Carlingford Lough and on the Dublin Belfast Corridor; and
- Tourism development in the Slieve Blooms and Cork, for example.

Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities **to be funded under the Ireland's** Ancient East Strategy would need to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management referred to within the Strategy. Likewise, any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under other Fáilte Ireland Regional Tourism Strategies would need to demonstrate compliance with the measures from those Strategies. Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be considered by Northern Ireland for permission would **be subject to that country's planning and** environmental legislation and rules.

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

- Contribution towards sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management **–** various provisions for which are provided for in the aforementioned plans (Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B).
- Need for and use of services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism), including those related to water services, transport, access or accommodation, that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework **–** and associated potential adverse environmental effects on various environmental components including biodiversity and flora and fauna, the status of waters, human health, soil, emissions, cultural heritage and landscape (Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B).
- Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation through measures such as those relating to walking and cycling, charging infrastructure, flood risk management and resilience (Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B).
- Contribution towards travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air as a result of increases in tourist numbers (Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B).

- Helps to minimise likelihood of exceeding capacity in material assets as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified (Alternative 2A). This would positively impact upon the protection and management of environmental components such as human health, water, soil, air and climatic factors.
- Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European Sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) through visitor management strategies, as relevant and appropriate (Alternative 2A).
- In combination with plans and programmes from all sectors potential adverse effects on all environmental components arising from all development in greenfield and brownfield areas (e.g. infrastructural, residential, accommodation, economic, forestry, agricultural etc.). The type of these effects are consistent with those described on Table 7.3. These plans and programmes from other sectors undergo SEA and comply with environmental legislation while projects are subject to EIA and AA, as relevant (Alternatives 1, 2A and 2B).

7.4   Detailed Consideration of Alternatives

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

Table 7.3 Effects Common to All Alternatives

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects from all Alternatives, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework[85]	
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	- Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European Sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) - Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services. - Contribution towards protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna as a result of contributing towards the protection of environmental vectors, air, water and soil.	Arising from both construction and operation of tourism related development/activities: - Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna; - Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and - Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting as a result of product development in semi-natural areas) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.
Population and human health	- Contribution towards the protection of human health. - Contribution towards the protection of amenity usage and access. - Contribution towards the sustainable growth of tourism and associated sustenance and growth of communities within the Region.	- Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water are not mitigated. - Potential interactions if additional tourists are directed towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified.
Soil	- Contribution towards minimising land-take and loss of extent of soil resource. - Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination.	- Land-take arising from mobility, accommodation and hospitality and other tourism products. - Adverse impacts upon the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource. - Adverse effects on designated geological heritage sites.

---

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

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects from all Alternatives, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework[85]	
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated
	• Contributes towards protection of designated sites of geological heritage.	• Potential for increase in coastal /river bank erosion.
Water	• Contribution towards the protection of water resources (including the status of surface and groundwaters), bathing water quality and water-based designations. • Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.	• Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies, associated fisheries, and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. • Increase in flood risk.
Air and climatic factors	• Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation.	• Potential conflict, in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors including transport and land use planning, between increases in visitors (which is likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions to air, including from aviation, with associated interactions with climatic factors) and local, national and European objectives to reduce carbon emissions. • Potential conflicts between transport movements, including car movements, and air quality.
Material Assets	• Contributes towards protection and allows for continued use of public assets and infrastructure. • Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies.	• Increased number of visitors have the potential to increase traffic levels. • The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Irish Water to provide for such needs; this Region has been in receipt of significant structural investment for water services over the past 15 years). • Increases in waste levels and residual wastes from visitors and construction of developments. • Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure. • Contributes to overall energy use, in-combination with all other sectors in the state.
Cultural Heritage	• Contribution towards the long-term protection of archaeological and architectural heritage.	• Potential effects on designated and unknown archaeological heritage. • Potential effects on architectural heritage.
Landscape	• Contribution towards the protection of landscape designations.	• Occurrence of adverse visual impacts, especially in marine, estuary, island and ridge areas where, and conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape. • Changes in the appearance of the landscape.

Alternative 1: Business as Usual

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

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

In the absence of a Strategy, overtime, a restoration of tourist numbers back to pre-pandemic levels would be expected. An increase in visitors would increase potential adverse effects on all environmental components (arising from increased levels of land use development and activities).

Potential increases in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation, would occur as a result of increases in visitors; however, emission reduction measures contained within the Climate Action Plan would be likely to increasing take effect, more so towards the end of the Strategy period (2026). The increase in visitors and associated emissions would be likely to be less under Alternative 1. Additional mitigatory provisions contained within the Alternative 2A Strategy, including those relating to low-carbon travel, such as walking and cycling, and the circular economy would not be provided for.

There would be one layer of mitigation under Alternative 1; the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue be mitigated through that process.

Alternatives 2A and 2B: Prepare a Strategy

Alternatives 2A 'A Strategy with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and **Management'** and 2B 'A Strategy without Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management**' both involve preparing a Strategy that** would seek to drive recovery and growth of the visitor economy **in Ireland's Ancient East to further unlock the commercial potential** (see Section 6.2) **of Ireland's Ancient East by creating sustainable, high**-quality jobs in the sector to support and strengthen local communities. A Strategy would refine and strengthen th**e destination's brand** proposition to embrace the broader offering of the destination and increase its consumer appeal to a **wider audience; increase knowledge and awareness, and improve the 'navigability' of the region;** alongside establishing iconic and signature visitor experiences and strong destination towns that have the potential to become key regional attractors to drive and disperse targeted domestic and overseas visitors.

Therefore, Alternatives 2A and 2B would be likely to result in a greater increase in tourism levels – and associated development and activity requirements and loadings – than would be the case under Alternative 1 **('Business as Usual').**

Under both Alternatives 2A and 2B, tourism related development would continue to be planned for and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Potential adverse effects (see Table 7.3) would continue be mitigated through that process.

Potential increases in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation, would occur as a result of increases in visitors; however, emission reduction measures contained within the Climate Action Plan would be likely to increasing take effect, more so towards the end of the Strategy period (2027). The increase in visitors and associated emissions would be likely to be more under Alternatives 2A and 2B when compared with Alternative 1. The Alternative 2A Strategy would provide additional measures relating to emissions reduction, including those relating to low-carbon travel, such as walking and cycling, and the circular economy.

A Strategy would help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects. Notwithstanding this, there would be one layer of mitigation under Alternative 2B, through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. Alternative 2A would provide additional requirements for environmental protection and management, including those relating to:

- Site Maintenance;
- Visitor Management;
- Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others;
- Environmental Damage Resolution;
- Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaigns;
- Blueway Management and Development;
- Sustainable Recreational Trail Development and Operation;
- Infrastructure capacity; and

- Ecosystem services.

Alternative 2A would also integrate focus on:

- Optimising existing assets, in addition to developing new stock, when increasing supply side capacity (accommodation, visitor attractions, activity providers, etc.) to come on stream over the period of the Strategy (e.g. longer opening hours and using mid-week and weekend capacity across the full calendar year); and
- Visitor management, including through lower-tier Destination and Experience Development Plans.

7.5   Selected Alternative for the Strategy

Taking into account the environmental effects detailed above and the strengths and potential present for tourism across the **Ireland's Ancient East Region**, Fáilte Ireland have proceeded with Alternative 2A **"A Strategy with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management".** A comparative assessment of all three alternatives against SEOs is provided on Table 7.4 overleaf.

Table 7.4 Comparative Evaluation of Alternatives against SEOs

Alternative	Likely to <u>Improve</u> status of SEOs ＋			Potential <u>Conflict</u> with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated －			Probable <u>Conflict</u> with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated －	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs O
	to a **Greater** degree	to a **Moderate** degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a **Moderate** degree	to a **Greater** degree		
Alternative 1 Do Not Replace the 2015-2019 Operational Programme			BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[86] PHH[87]	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[88]	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[89]			
Alternative 2A A Strategy with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[90] PHH MA[91]			BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[92]	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[93]			
Alternative 2B A Strategy without Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management	PHH MA[94]		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[95]			BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[96] BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L[97]		

---

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

[87] Under Alternative 1 'Business as Usual', tourism levels would be expected to restore to pre-pandemic levels, with associated benefits for the sustenance and growth of communities and their infrastructure and services. However, this increase would be less than under Alternatives 2A and 2B, which provide for the preparation of a Strategy.

[88] Under Alternative 1 'Business as Usual', tourism levels – and associated development and activity requirements, loadings and potential environmental conflicts– would be expected to restore to pre-pandemic levels. However, this increase would be less than under Alternatives 2A and 2B, which provide for the preparation of a Strategy.

[89] Only one layer of environmental protection and management therefore elevated likelihood for residual effects on a case-by-case basis. However, the number of new projects would be likely to be less than would be the case under Alternatives 2A and 2B.

[90] In addition to sustainable development, environmental management and environmental protection being provided through the existing statutory planning and consent framework, **Alternative 2A would require Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders to** demonstrate compliance with additional measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. Alternative 2A would also integrate focus on regionality, seasonality and visitor management into the Strategy. All of these measures would further contribute towards positive effects on the protection and management of all environmental components (see Table 7.3).

[91] Alternatives 2A and 2B would be likely to result in a greater increase in tourism levels, with associated benefits for the sustenance and growth of communities and their infrastructure and services, than would be the case under Alternative 1.

[92] Two layers of environmental protection and management, with Alternative 2A Strategy providing additional measures.

[93] Alternatives 2A and 2B would be likely to result in a greater increase in tourism levels – and associated development and activity requirements, loadings and potential environmental conflicts – than would be the case under Alternative 1. However, there would be an additional layer of environmental protection and manageme**nt provided for by Alternative 2A 'A Strategy with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management'.**

[94] Alternatives 2A and 2B would be likely to result in a greater increase in tourism levels, with associated benefits for the sustenance and growth of communities and their infrastructure and services, than would be the case under Alternative 1.

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

[96] Only one layer of environmental protection and management therefore elevated likelihood for residual effects on a case-by-case basis.

[97] Alternatives 2A and 2B would be likely to result in a greater increase in tourism levels – and associated development and activity requirements, loadings and potential environmental conflicts – than would be the case under Alternative 1. However, **there would be an additional layer of environmental protection and management provided for by Alternative 2A 'A Strategy with** Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management**'.**

Section 8 Evaluation of Strategy Provisions

8.1 Introduction

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (see Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs, see Section 5 and Table 8.2) are used in the evaluation of Strategy provisions. This methodology is also used in the assessment of alternatives, the findings of which are provided in Section 7 of this report.

The Strategy provisions (and, in Section 7, the alternatives) are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 8.2below) in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the existing environment and the SEOs. The SEOs and the Strategy provisions (and, in Section 7, the alternatives) are arrayed against each other in order to demonstrate which interactions would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies an interaction with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the relevant column.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects:

- Interactions that would be *likely to improve the status* of a particular SEO would be likely to contribute towards a significant positive effect on the environmental component to which the SEO relates, including in-combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework.

- Interactions that would *potentially conflict with the status* of *an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated* would be likely to result in potential significant negative effects; however, these effects will be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Strategy and residual effects would not be significant (see Table 8.3 of this report).

- Interactions that would probably *conflict with the status of an SEO and would be unlikely to be mitigated* would be likely to result in a significant residual negative effect on the environmental component to which the SEO relates.

These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 7.3), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

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

Table 8.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives[98]

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	• Preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species • Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function • Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species • Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Action Plan and its targets • To protect, maintain and conserve natural capital
Population and Human Health	PHH	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	• Contribute towards economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable and regional development and environmental protection and management • Seek to ensure that tourism is serviced by the required public infrastructure and services • Safeguard citizens and visitors from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being
Soil (and Land)	S	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	• Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource • Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites
Water	W	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive • Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to service development funded under the Strategy in the context of existing and projected water supply and wastewater capacity constraints, ensuring the protection of receiving environments • Avoid funding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion • Ensure that sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) are integrated into developments funded under the Strategy where relevant and appropriate
Material Assets	MA	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	• Optimise use of existing infrastructure and seek to ensure that new infrastructure is provided to match development funded under the Strategy - this includes transport infrastructure • Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, solar, hydro, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels • Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies • Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure capacity in place to support new development • Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes • Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, towns and grids

---

[98] See Section 5 for a description of Strategic Environmental Objectives.

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Air	A	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	• Avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all related sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, heating, industry and agriculture • Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency • Promote continuing improvement in air quality • Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution • Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health ─ Air Quality Directive • Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels
Climatic Factors [99]	C	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	• Minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses • Integrate sustainable design solutions into infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure) • Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets • Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change • Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport
Cultural Heritage	CH	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage
Landscape	L	Protect and enhance the landscape character	Avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those provided by Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

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

Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
+	−	−	0

---

[99] Please also refer to relevant legislation and requirements under Section 4.10, Section 8, Section 9 and Appendices III and IV. Targets under the national Climate Action Plan are reviewed and updated periodically and include those under the headings of Electricity, Built Environment, Transport, Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use and Enterprise.

8.2 Overall Findings

The overall findings of the SEA are that:

- The Strategy contributes towards Compliance with Environmental Legislation and Guidelines

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

  Implementation of the Strategy will contribute towards efforts to achieve a number of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals[100] of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which were adopted by world leaders in 2015 at a United Nations Summit and came into force in 2016.

- The Strategy provides for Environmental Protection and Management

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

  In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development **or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to** demonstrate compliance[101] with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents, where available:

  - Site Maintenance Guidelines (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
  - Visitor Management Guidelines (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
  - Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
  - Environmental Damage Resolution (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
  - Greenway Visitor Experience & Interpretation Toolkit (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
  - Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion & Campaign Statement (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
  - Blueway Management & Development Guide (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy) and
  - Sustainable Recreational Trail Development & Operation (in preparation).

  Even where Fáilte Ireland is not the entity funding a project or controlling the funding for a project, it will seek to ensure the integration of sustainable tourism development into all of its activities and strategic partnerships. This will include taking into account the various mitigation measures integrated into the Strategy that are described in Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report.

---

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

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

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- Relevant land use plans (including the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans) and other sectoral plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management[102]; and
- The most up to date Climate Action Plan, National Climate Change Adaptation Framework and National Mitigation Plan[103].

- The Strategy is likely to interact with other governmental policies, plans etc., with respect to greenhouse gas emissions

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

Potential increases in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation, would occur as a result of increases in visitors; however, emission reduction measures contained within the **Government's National Climate Action Plan 2021** would be likely to increasing take effect, more so towards the end of the Strategy period (2026). The 2021 Plan provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting us on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050. The Plan lists the actions needed to deliver on climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy. It will be updated annually, including in 2022, to ensure alignment with legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings. The Plan supports the further development of sustainable tourism and for sustainable destination management and provides for various measures that will contribute towards climate mitigation, such as those relating to sustainable mobility, carbon pricing, electricity, agriculture and built environment. With regard to Non-Road Transport Activities, the Plan recognises that action is being taken at EU and international levels to address emissions from the aviation and maritime sectors, including through market-based measures such as the Emissions Trading Scheme and sustainable fuel mandating initiatives (through ReFuel EU Aviation, Fuel EU Maritime and the Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation which will all include binding targets once adopted). The Plan commits to supporting such measures.

The Ireland's Ancient East Strategy provides additional measures relating to emissions reduction, including those relating to low-carbon travel, such as walking and cycling, and the circular economy.

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

Implementing the Strategy will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Strategy does

---

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

<u>not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent</u>.

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

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction up to 2040. The NPF is being implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSESs set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSESs have informed, and continue to inform, the preparation of lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which also set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment.

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

- Potentially Significant Adverse Effects to be mitigated

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

With respect to ecology, by international standards, Ireland has a high level of tourism management, planning and research with effects that are well-understood. There is overwhelming evidence, including from Fáilte Ireland**'s monitoring programmes (see Section 4.6.2)**, that international tourists in rural locations give rise to very low levels of impacts. The majority of Irish tourism is now urban and structured. Covid evidence has confirmed that the majority of high-visibility/ high-impact visitor effects arise from local recreational use. Most of the impacts from tourism are indistinguishable from the recreational, occupational and betterment effects generated by local and national populations. Potential effects on ecology, if these effects are not mitigated are listed below:

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

With respect to transportation, water services and land development **–** these issues provide the greatest potential for impact. Tourism is already provided for by various statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development and

activities, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These plans provide the accommodation, movement, and hospitality facilities that are the fundamentals on which the tourism sector is based. All of these documents will have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework. The Regional Strategy seeks to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders in their activities in a way that is consistent these documents that have been subject to SEA and other assessments.

Table 8.3 details the various types of environmental effects likely to arise with respect to the Strategy as a direct result of activities under the Strategy and in combination with the existing statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework. The effects encompass all in-combination/cumulative effects arising from implementation of the Strategy. The potentially significant adverse environmental effects (if unmitigated) arising from implementation of the Strategy are detailed as are residual effects, considering mitigation through both provisions integrated into the Strategy – see Section 9. The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland.

By complying with appropriate mitigation measures - including those that have been integrated into the Strategy - potentially significant adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing the Strategy would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset. Taking into account, inter alia, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Strategy (including that which is identified at Section 9), it has been determined that: significant residual adverse environmental effects will not occur in Ireland; and significant environmental effects will not occur in Northern Ireland.

Table 8.3 Overall Findings – Environmental Effects arising from Strategy Provisions

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework[104]			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	

Biodiversity and flora and fauna	• Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European Sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) including through additional requirements for environmental protection and management, including those relating to:
	  • Site Maintenance;
	  • Visitor Management;
	  • Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others;
	  • Environmental Damage Resolution;
	  • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaigns;
	  • Blueway Management and Development;
	  • Sustainable Recreational Trail Development and Operation;
	  • Infrastructure capacity; and
	  • Ecosystem services.
	• Contributes towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services.
	• Contribution towards protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna as a result of contributing towards the protection of environmental vectors, air, water and soil.
		Arising from both construction and operation of tourism related development/activities:
		• Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;
		• Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and
		• Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting as a result of product development in semi-natural areas) - and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.
			• Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces arising from projects consented through the statutory planning/consent-granting framework.
			• Losses or damage to ecology (these would be: in compliance with relevant legislation; and mitigated as projects would demonstrate compliance with various environmental protection and management measures).
				BFF

Population and human health	• Contribution towards the protection of human health including through Strategy requirements for environmental protection and management. • Contribution towards the protection of human health as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified. • Contribution towards the protection amenity usage and access.	• Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water are not mitigated. • Potential interactions if additional tourists are directed towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified.	• Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors. This has been mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Strategy, including those relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management.	PHH

---

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

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework[104]			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
	• Contribution towards the sustainable growth of tourism and associated sustenance and growth of communities within the Region.			
Soil	• Contribution towards minimising land-take and loss of extent of soil resource – including making appropriate use of previously exploited peatlands. • Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination. • Contributes towards protection of designated sites of geological heritage.	• Land-take arising from mobility, accommodation and hospitality and other tourism products. • Adverse impacts upon the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource. • Adverse effects on designated geological heritage sites. • Potential for increase in coastal /river bank erosion.	• Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces and from sea level rise/coastal erosion.	S
Water	• Contribution towards the protection of water resources (including the status of surface and groundwaters), bathing water quality and water-based designations including through integrating requirements for environmental protection and management into the Strategy. • Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.	• Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies, associated fisheries, and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. • Increase in flood risk.	• Increased loadings as a result of development to comply with River Basin Management Plan. • Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by: measures that have been integrated into the Strategy; and the statutory planning/consent-granting framework.	W

Air and climatic factors	• Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation through measures relating to:
	  • Decarbonise the tourism sector, improving low carbon travel, such as walking and cycling, and the circular economy; and
	  • European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation, taking into account a wide range of detailed measures, including those relating to resilience.
		• Potential conflict, in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors including transport and land use planning, between increases in visitors (which is likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions to air, including from aviation, with associated interactions with climatic factors) and local, national and European objectives to reduce carbon emissions.
		• Potential conflicts between transport movements, including car movements, and air quality.
			• An increase in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. This has been mitigated by the Climate Action Plan and by provisions that have been integrated into the Strategy.
			• Risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to climate and interactions with issues including flooding and material assets.
				A
				C

Material Assets	• Contributes towards protection and allows for continued use of public assets and infrastructure. • Helps to minimise likelihood of exceeding capacity in material assets as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure	• Increased number of visitors have the potential to increase traffic levels. • The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Irish Water to provide for such needs; this Region has been in	• Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher level waste management policies. • Increased loading on critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) where no significant problems have been identified with this infrastructure[105].	MA

[105] There is a need for close collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, such as local authorities and Irish Water, to ensure that any proposals within the Tourism Strategy align with the capacity of the supporting critical service infrastructure.

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework[104]			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
	(drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified. • Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies.	receipt of significant structural investment for water services over the past 15 years). • Increases in waste levels and residual wastes from visitors and construction of developments. • Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure. • Contributes to overall energy use, in-combination with all other sectors in the State.	• Exceedance of capacity in critical infrastructure risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however such risks will be mitigated by: measures that have been integrated into the Strategy; and the statutory planning/consent-granting framework. • Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework.	
Cultural Heritage	• Contribution towards the long-term protection of archaeological and architectural heritage by encouraging greater levels of awareness and appreciation through, use, interpretation and access, in line with the requirements relating to the protection of cultural heritage including: entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context; and entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context.	• Potential effects on designated and unknown archaeological heritage. • Potential effects on architectural heritage.	• Potential alteration to the context and setting of architectural heritage however, these will occur in compliance with legislation. • Potential alteration to the context and setting of archaeological heritage however, this will occur in compliance with legislation. • Potential loss of unknown archaeology however, this loss will be mitigated by measures integrated into the Strategy.	CH
Landscape	• Contribution towards the protection of landscape designations as a result of: facilitating compliance with relevant plans; and maintaining the wildness of areas that have not yet been developed.	• Occurrence of adverse visual impacts, especially in marine, estuary, island and ridge areas where, and conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape. • Changes in the appearance of the landscape.	• Residual visual effects (these would comply with landscape designation provisions).	L

8.3   Appropriate Assessment

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

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

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

8.4   Interrelationship between Environmental Components

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

Likely significant effects on environmental components that are identified include those that are interrelated; implementation of the Strategy will not affect the interrelationships between these components. The presence of significant interrelationships between environmental components is identified on Table 8.2.

Table 8.4 Potential for Interrelationships between Environmental Components

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

8.5 More Detailed Assessment of Strategy Provisions

8.5.1 Strategy**'s** Vision, Challenge and Strategic Objectives

The Strategy should be referred to for more detail than is produced below	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
Ireland's Ancient East Vision: *It's 2030 and Ireland's Ancient East is not only internationally renowned for its rich heritage base but also the variety of tracks and trails by which the region can be discovered. Its diverse landscape provides the visitor with a rich tapestry from which to unlock the living culture unique to place and underpinned by 5,000 years of heritage and tradition evidenced in its many historical sites. As the food producing region of Ireland, the provenance and offering is steeped in the same tradition as its music, crafts and culture is alive for all the senses. The region boasts extensive coastline, river and canal network, mountain ranges and low-lying rich pastures accessible by an extensive off-road network of greenways, tracks and trails by which the visitor is invited to discover the heritage that shaped Ireland. Interspersed with cities and towns that provide evening and night-time entertainment, it is the diversity that has developed over time which attracts the visitor for a varied holiday.* **Ireland's** Ancient East– Strategic Challenge: *The strategic challenge for Ireland's Ancient East is to increase awareness and consumer appeal of the region through a strengthened brand proposition; improve the 'navigability' of the region for the visitor and ensure the continued development of attractive destinations and motivating visitor experiences, in a coordinated and visitor facing manner to attract and disperse targeted domestic and overseas visitors.* **Strategic Objectives for Achieving the Vision for Ireland's** Ancient East: Strategic Objective 1: **Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Ireland's Ancient East**. • Review the current brand proposition to simplify and dial up living culture and outdoor elements, to give expression to a more rounded regional experience without losing its point of comparative advantage. • Consolidate the geography to make it more credible in the eyes of the domestic consumer. • Work with stakeholders to develop more truly distinctive destinations to act as attractors, disrupt the traditional visitor flow and **drive the overnight stay, by developing "full destination" offering.** • Differentiate approach to day trippers versus overnights; and visiting friends and relatives versus holiday makers. • Support the development of iconic attractions as motivators to the region. Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism. • Support the development of new and existing visitor experiences to have a greater impact on the local economy than is currently being realised. • Develop and harness the outdoor as a mechanism by which the region is to be discovered by the visitor. • Develop and grow Meetings Incentives Conferences & Events through collaboration with Cork Convention Bureaux and business tourism focussed industry throughout the region. Strategic Objective 3: Ensure region is easy to access, navigate and consume. • Work with local authorities to develop a connected network of greenways throughout the region as defined visitor routes, including connecting Cork to Dublin. • Work with stakeholders to improve the network of visitor trails, and routes as easily consumable motivators to disperse visitors throughout the region. • Influence for improved public transport and the integration of timetables within and between counties. • Collaborate with Local Link and the NTA in addressing linkages between airports, seaports, cities/towns and visitor attractions. • Work with the air and sea ports to maximise the economic impact of visitors within the region.	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		

Strategic Objective 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability to ensure that it can thrive over the period of this strategy and create sustainable jobs in local communities. • Provide appropriate supports and interventions to enable businesses to thrive. • Improve the trading capabilities, digital distribution, and conversion across the industry. • Enable all tourism sectors and stakeholders to see economic value in the brand thereby increasing adoption. Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region. • Implement Destination and Experience Development Plans to which all stakeholders are aligned relative to the lifecycle of each **destination's tourism economy and maturity across the region**. • Build strong tourism networks across a wide range of authorities, agencies and businesses in each destination fostering collaboration and cross promotion to shape its future. • Involve local communities in decisions about tourism that affect their areas and address any concerns that they have about tourism to achieve a proper balancing of the local community, the environment and the visitor.				

SEA Commentary:

The assessment of the Strategy's Vision, Strategic Challenge and Strategic Objectives against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs BFF, PHH, S, W, MA, A, C, CH, L) is consistent with the:
- *Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and*
- *Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Strategy provided at Section 7 of this report.*

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

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Strategy has brought about various changes to the emerging Strategy through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Strategy, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:
- *The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Strategy, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Strategy and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and*
- *The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Strategy, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Strategy and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.*

*The **Ireland's Ancient East** Regional Tourism Development Strategy Region shares borders with the Dublin, Wild Atlantic Way **and Ireland's Hidden Heartland's** Regions (which are also the subject of related Regional Tourism Strategies) and Northern Ireland. Provisions of the Dublin Strategy that have the potential to link with areas beyond the Region and that have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:*

- *Various greenways, blueways, tracks, trails and routes;*
- *Signature projects;*
- *Water sports facility centres; and*
- *Outdoor activities and outdoor infrastructure.*

The preparation of DEDPs will be subject to lower tier SEA and AA requirements as relevant.

*Visitor management **Strategy's Vision, Strategic Challenge and Strategic Objectives, for example:***
- *Vision: "[...] disperse **targeted domestic and overseas visitors** [...]."*
- *Strategic Objective 3: "[...]improve the network of visitor trails, [...] to disperse visitors throughout the region".*

*Sustainability and environmental protection have been integrated into the **Strategy's Vision, Strategic Challenge and Strategic Objectives**, for example:*
- *Strategic Objective 5: "[...] guide sustainable destination development across the region."; "[...] to achieve a proper balancing of the local community, the environment and the visitor [...]."*

Reducing emissions have been integrated into the Strategy's Vision, Strategic Challenge and Strategic Objectives, for example:
- *Strategic objective 3: "[...] Influence for improved public transport [...]."*

8.5.2   Strategic Initiatives: **"Visitor"**

The Strategy should be referred to for more detail than is produced below	Likely to <u>Improve</u> status of SEOs	Potential <u>Conflict</u> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable <u>Conflict</u> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<u>No Likely</u> interaction with status of SEOs
3.1 Visitor Strategy Strategic Initiatives: 1. Deliver on the new domestic and overseas segmentation model which will highlight core opportunities for the region by understanding consumer motivations for travel. 2. **Attract more luxury visitors to Ireland's Ancient East from core markets with the aim of attracting higher spending** and longer staying visitors to the region. 3. Attract more international visitors to the region particularly from the key source markets of UK, North America, Germany and France. 4. Review the availability and quality of visitor experiences in the region to ensure that they can exceed the expectations of the target market segments. 5. Continue to work with the Cork Convention Bureau and business tourism focussed industry to increased share of high yielding MICE visitor. 6. Continue to attract best prospect domestic consumers to fill mid-week and weekend business across the full calendar year. 7. Provide relevant and timely local information to visitors in-destination through multiple channels. Create and **train networks of Local Experts (tourism's frontline employees) on all there is** to do and see locally and how best to share this information with visitors. **3.2 Brand Strategy** Strategic Initiatives: **Strategic Objective 1: Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Ireland's Ancient East.** 1. Conduct a review of the Ireland**'s** Ancient East brand proposition in partnership with our stakeholders, industry and Tourism Ireland. The objectives of the review are to improve domestic resonance, stakeholder adoption and ensure the proposition is inclusive for the broad range of experiences the region has to offer. 2. Ensure brand alignment between all stakeholders and industry to ensure that messaging around the brand is consistent and in accordance with the brand toolkit. 3. Continue to improve the digital shop window of the region through the Digital That Delivers Programme. Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region. 1. Develop a new brand toolkit for stakeholders upon completion of brand proposition review. 2. Deliver a series of brand adoption workshops as part of an ongoing network development programme in each of the destinations. 3. Ensure that the brand proposition informs further tourism capital development in the region aligned to RTS and **where appropriate aligned to DEDPs'.**	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		

SEA Commentary:

The assessment of the Strategy's **Section "Visitor"** *Strategic Initiatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs BFF, PHH, S, W, MA, A, C, CH, L) is consistent with the:*
- *Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and*
- *Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Strategy provided at Section 7 of this report.*

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

These actions will contribute towards positive environmental effects (see Table 8.3) including through:

The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the IAE Region. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional Strategy measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the Strategy or integration of Strategy provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the IAE area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse 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 are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The development of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

The Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy Region shares borders with the Dublin, Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Hidden Heartland's Regions (which are also the subject of related Regional Tourism Strategies) and Northern Ireland. Provisions of the Dublin Strategy that have the potential to link with areas beyond the Region and that have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:

- Various greenways, blueways, tracks, trails and routes;
- Signature projects;
- Water sports facility centres; and
- Outdoor activities and outdoor infrastructure.

The preparation of DEDPs will be subject to lower tier SEA and AA requirements as relevant.

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Strategy has brought about various changes to the emerging Strategy through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Strategy, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:
- The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Strategy, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Strategy and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and
- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Strategy, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Strategy and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.

8.5.3   Strategic Initiatives: "Industry"

The Strategy should be referred to for more detail than is produced below	Likely to <u>Improve</u> status of SEOs	Potential <u>Conflict</u> with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable <u>Conflict</u> with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	<u>No Likely</u> interaction with status of SEOs
3.3 Destination Development Strategy 3.3.1 Destination Development Framework Destination and Experience Development Plans (DEDPs) This Regional Tourism Strategy provides a strategic framework for the sustainable development of the **destinations in Ireland's Ancient East. Fáilte Ireland has been developing Destination and Experience** Development Plans (DEDP) in collaboration with local stakeholders for a number of years. These five-year plans are the detailed action plans through which the strategic objectives in this Regional Tourism Strategy will be implemented and organised around the VICE model and will be subject to environmental assessment as relevant. Strategically, the actions and interventions that are set out in each destination plan are informed by the life stage or maturity level of that destination. Destinations that are at an early stage of development require a different set of interventions and supports to those that are more mature and established. It is intended that the following DEDPs will be implemented in Ireland's Ancient East over course of this strategy in association with the relevant stakeholders and industry: 1. Meath & Louth - Ancient (launched in 2021) 2. Kildare and Tipperary - Thoroughbred Country (launched in 2021) 3. Monaghan (launched in 2022) 4. Cork City, Harbour and East Cork (in development) 5. South Tipperary (in development) 6. Waterford (in development)	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		

7. Wexford (in development)
8. Kilkenny (in development)
9. Wicklow (commence in 2023)
10. Laois (commence in 2023)
11. Carlow (commence in 2023)

Collaboration
The key to the success of this strategy will be the strength of collaboration between all partners that include the tourism industry, Local Authorities, state agencies, enterprise and community groups. The **strategy will require close collaboration with the Dublin, Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands** regional teams, particularly in the preparation of DEDPs. This will result in the development and promotion of touring routes and itineraries to encourage new visitor flows and open up opportunities for less-visited destinations.

Cross-border collaboration is also a key feature of this collective approach, particularly the development and promotion of the visitor offering in Louth and Monaghan, in the context of the Ulster Canal redevelopment, cooperation across Carlingford Lough and on the Dublin Belfast Corridor.
A tourism development plan has recently been prepared for the Slieve Blooms which will be delivered in **association with the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands team future planning for Wicklow will be in cooperation** with Dublin.

3.3.2 Developing Vibrant Towns & Villages
Strategic Initiatives:
*   Create a flow of new and enhanced saleable experiences ready for market so that destinations have a rounded day and night-time offering.
*   In partnership with Local Authorities, leverage all funding both public and private to deliver the best to**urism outcomes possible for towns and villages in the Ireland's Ancient East region**

3.3.3 Accommodation Strategy
Strategic Initiatives:
Strategic Objective 1: Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Ireland's Ancient East
1. Increase on-line visibility for all accommodation through the Digital that Delivers Programme.
2. Registration of all unregistered and unapproved accommodation in the region (subject to Short-Term Letting Legislation.
Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism.
1. Conduct destination-based accommodation audits for each county to scope out what additional accommodation (quantity and type) is required in a specific location. These will inform the expansion and improvement of the accommodation sector in the region in line with visitor strategy and its related capacity requirements, and in accordance with planning and environmental regulations.
Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region.
1. Continue accommodation roadshows to recruit additional accommodation into the NQAF.
2. Engage with Local Authorities and the County and City Management Association (CCMA) to **support the growth of facilities for camper vans and 'Aires' in suitable and sustainable locations.**

3.3.4 Accessibility for All
Strategic Initiatives:
As projects are developed across the region, Fáilte Ireland will aspire to:
1. Develop and create accessible facilities, infrastructure and transport in order to create an environment that is varied, stimulating and easily accessible.
2. Work with Cork Airport, Rosslare Port, Cork Port and other major access points to the region.
3. Ensure tourism literature and other promotional material used in tourism should include clear indications of accessible services and facilities.

4. Support staff in tourist venues who play an important role in reducing potential deficiencies in access and provide training in disability awareness and customer care which can minimize the barriers encountered by persons with physical or cognitive needs.
5. Increase the availability of adapted and accessible accommodation and tourism amenities, and ensure booking services and websites are accessible for all.

3.3.5 Transport
Strategic Initiatives:
Strategic Objective 1: Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Ireland**'s Ancient East**
1. Activate new cross-regional strategic development corridors with tour operators and other channel intermediaries as a way of stimulating new and incremental visitor flows that are aligned with the effort of DEDPs.

Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism
1. In partnership with Local Authorities, leverage available funding to deliver the optimum tourism outcomes for key towns with a strong accommodation base, to create a strong evening economy and an attractive public realm, which will retain the visitor longer and maintain competitiveness (URDF/RRDF, Town and Village Renewal, Destination Town funding, Fáilte Ireland Outdoor Animation and Outdoor Dining Funding).
2. Focus on the establishment of a true tourism destination town in the Northern half of the region and further the development of existing tourism destination towns to act as motivators for travel to the region and serve as attractive touring bases from which to explore the broader area.
3. Collaborate accordingly with cross border partners to maximize development opportunities that exist in line with the National Development Plan and All Island Economy programme.

Strategic Objective 3: Ensure region is easy to access, navigate and consume
1. Work with local authorities to develop a network of visitor facing connected greenways including Cork to Dublin.
2. Develop and animate the network of tracks and trails to create a transformational Green infrastructural asset, **growing sustainable tourism in Ireland's Ancient East.**
3. Collaborate with public transport stakeholders (NTA, Local Link etc) to improve connectivity within counties and link major attractions and regional hubs.

Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region
1. Develop and Implement DEDPs for all destinations within the region.
2. Create new industry clusters to execute DEDPs aligned to destinations and natural routes to **create natural itineraries for Ireland's Ancient East to influence visitor flow and dispersion** across the region.

3.4 Product Development Strategy
Strategic Product Initiatives – Visitor Attractions and Activities:
Specific projects for investment at a destination level, especially the provision of strong core and **supporting products for iconic attractions, are included in the region's DEDPs. The DEDPs consider the** investment required to ensure that the right tourism product is available in each destination with a focus on retaining and dispersing the visitor more widely within the region.

Strategic Objective 1: **Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Ireland's Ancient East**
1. Development of new or improved visitor attractions of scale in partnership with local authorities, other government departments, private sector and other stakeholders that deliver **culturally engaging experiences which shaped Ireland's Ancient East over 5,000 years to** modern day:
    *   Medieval Mile Museum and Tholsel Redevelopment Kilkenny
    *   **Avondale "Beyond the Trees" Experience**
    *   New Ross Norman Experience

- Hook Lighthouse
- Irish National Heritage Park
- Mount Congreve Gardens
- Rock of Cashel Visitor Centre / Cashel Town Plan
- Drogheda attraction of scale feasibility
- Trim Castle
- Scope out potential for an attraction of scale in both Cork and Waterford cities through DEDP process

Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism

2. Work with Local Authorities and other stakeholders to deliver projects that have potential to transform and re-imagine urban centres for the visitor while also creating vibrant and creative communities
   - Deliver Fáilte Ireland schemes including Destination Towns, Outdoor Dining and Urban Animation.
   - Work with Local Authorities on RRDF / URDF and Towns and Village Renewal Schemes to deliver improved amenities and attractions for the visitor.

3. Deliver supporting experiences in key clusters/hubs to improve on the quality and variety of experiences available to visitors to slow the visitor down and increase dwell time and local spend through a small grants scheme. These clustered experiences will contribute to the **establishment of Ireland's Ancient East as one of Europe's leading cultural and heritage** destinations renowned for enjoyment of unique experiences in stunning landscapes.
   - Provide strategy support and cluster platforms for the development of food tourism networks and trails across the region to enable the visitor to experience the food provenance of destinations.
   - Build on the Government focus on the night-time economy to partner with Local Authorities in creating varied and sustainable night-time offerings in key urban hubs within the region.

Strategic Objective 3: Ensure the region is easy to access, navigate and consume

4. Develop the network of visitor facing greenways, blueways, tracks, trails and routes to help the visitor navigate the region, connecting the landscape, hubs and attractors and supporting **the development of sustainable tourism in Ireland's Ancient East:**
   - Develop a series of visitor facing trails and routes throughout the region including:
     - A network of connected Greenways / dedicated cycle routes including a world class visitor proposition connecting Cork to Dubliny.
     - A network of visitor facing coastal and inland walking trails led by Local Authorities and supported by Fáilte Ireland.
     - Development of the International Thoroughbred Trail.
     - Reimagine the Boyne Valley Drive from a driving route to multi modal route linked to towns and connecting world class heritage sites.
     - Redevelopment of the Ancient Táin Trail.
   - Improve trail infrastructure, orientation and navigation in cities and towns through Destination Towns Scheme, ORIS, Active Travel and others in partnership with the local authorities
   - Initial reviews have been undertaken by Fáilte Ireland regarding the development of The Irish Seaway to understand the existing infrastructure. This is a long-term investment project that will require dedicated Government investment to deliver. In the meantime, we will ensure that coastal trails are integrated into the visitor offering and seek to influence a connected network of trails where possible

5. **Improve the outdoor infrastructure within Ireland's Ancient East:**
   - Deliver a suite of water sports facility centres across the region (both coastal and inland) to enhance and expand the quality and seasonality of water-based activities.
   - In partnership with Coillte, develop new and enhanced mountain bike experiences at Ballinastoe and in the Slieve Blooms with the addition of new visitor trail head buildings and additional and upgraded trail networks.

- Capitalising on the Glendalough Masterplan, Wicklow National Park and the large-scale investment in Avondale to develop Wicklow as a key national outdoor destination by leveraging the Dublin Mountains to create an activity hub of scale.
- Support the development of Carlingford and Cooley Peninsula as an iconic adventure **destination in the northern part of Ireland's Ancient East. This will motivate target market segments to visit and stay in the northern part of the region in line with Carlingford '31** Masterplan.
- Work **with Ireland's Hidden Heartlands team, local authorities in Laois and Offaly, Coillte** and NPWS through a partnership approach to help the Slieve Bloom realise its potential as an outdoor recreation destination to enhance the visitor experience and provide direction for future action, implementation, resources, and investment over the next three to five years.
- Capitalise on the potential of Cork Harbour and its islands and the docklands regeneration as a leisure tourism destination on the doorstep of the City, integrating the harbour river and City as a USP.
- Support the development of coastal tourism experiences in East Cork, Waterford, Wexford Wicklow, Meath and Louth.

In considering all of the above the following should be noted:

- To ensure that all trail development is undertaken in a sustainable manner, Fáilte Ireland in conjunction with relevant partners will prepare, early in 2023, a guidance document on the protection of the natural heritage in planning, constructing, maintaining and managing recreational trails in Ireland.
- In respect of all tourism development projects, we will ensure that all potential impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services will be avoided or minimised. For example, we will ensure that impacts on bats and other wildlife will be avoided or minimised by choosing appropriate light fittings in both urban and rural settings.

3.4.1 Festivals
Strategic Initiatives:
The Fáilte Ireland International Festival strategy includes the development of a Global Festival Proposition. **These iconic festivals and themed propositions will motivate international visitors to Ireland's Ancient East,** generate significant economic impact and support the night-time economy: Grow Púca as an authentic festival embedded in the international proposition of Ireland, Home of Halloween, to attract international **visitors to the northern part of Ireland's Ancient East.**

1. Develop a Festival of scale in Cork City that assists sector recovery, reduces seasonality, **increase visitor spend, grows bed nights and positions Cork as a 'must see destination'**
2. Examine the opportunity to develop destination festival(s) around the Thoroughbred that offers a compelling international proposition.
3. Partake in Developing Festivals Scheme in both areas of innovation and outdoor activity to **attract domestic and international visitors to Ireland's Ancient East in the shoulder season.** This scheme will allow Failte Irelan**d to leverage the region's extensive greenway and trails** network.
4. Conduct feasibility and research on St. Brigid and its potential as an international festival series proposition.
5. **Continue to develop the Regional St Patrick's Festivals in Kilkenny, Waterf**ord and Cork.
6. Continue to support and develop strategic festivals with the potential to attract both domestic **international visitors to Ireland's Ancient East with multi annual funding commitments.**
7. Continue to work with local authorities on the Regional Festival Fund and focus our investment in local and community tourism focused Festivals.

3.5 Industry Development
Strategic Initiatives:
Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region.

1. **Deliver modular programmes for clusters across DEDP's relevant to their maturity level to** increase collaboration, execute DEDP initiatives and improve industry adoption of the brand.

2. Deliver specific targeted projects with select industry to accelerate growth that will benefit the wider destination.

Strategic Objective 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability so that it can thrive over the period of this strategy and create sustainable jobs in local communities.

1. Ensure industry concerns inform and prioritise the development of Fáilte Ireland support programmes.
2. Step change the digital capability, online presence and connected distribution of industry through the Digital that Delivers Programme.
3. Harness a new online learning platform to ensure all businesses have access to relevant content that can be consumed at a pace that they can control.
4. Provide labour supply and employee development programmes and build sufficient awareness of complementary supports through other bodies such as LEO and ETB within given catchments.

3.6 Distribution and Business Development Strategy
Strategic Initiatives:

1. Continually gather insights from buyers, consumers and key distribution intermediaries in order to inform the development of commercially focussed saleable visitor experiences.
2. **Prepare a Distribution Plan for each DEDP prepared in Ireland's Ancient East in accordance** with destination maturity level.
3. Provide training interventions such as: sales pitching, selling skills, market entry, market diversification, sales plan development to ensure our industry can be the best possible trading **partners supporting our ambitions of 'ease of doing business' in Ireland.**
4. Provide multiple opportunities for experience providers to engage with Irish based inbound agents across a range of platforms.
5. Implement the Fáilte Ireland *Digital that Delivers Programme* to significantly enhance the ability of industry to target consumers at each stage of their path to purchase.
6. Fáilte Ireland will provide a number of additional supports to all elements of the industry such as tour operators in order to support their destination programming.
7. Secure incremental distribution for new products emerging from DEDPs and provide industry with opportunities to rebuild the pipeline of overseas business for their existing product.

3.6.1 Business Tourism in Ireland's Ancient East
Strategic Initiatives:

1. Support Cork Convention Bureau (CCB) to attract global conferences, leveraging the new Cork Convention Centre once open to attract higher yielding visitors to the region. Ensure the necessary leads conversion incentives are in place to support CCB convert opportunities.
2. Knowledge based bidding: targeting research and subsequent bids around the extensive work on sectoral strengths will increase our opportunity to convert business. Bringing to the fore the mix of academia, research and industry, we can benefit clients more and help create a strong impact for their business events.
3. Ensure sustainability is a cornerstone of tourism development and key consideration factor for broader planning, to address the concerns around carbon footprint and the wider UN Sustainable Development Goals in bidding to win business.
4. Develop a gala dinner investment scheme which will close a product gap in the region for attracting conference and incentive business.
5. Continue destination development efforts targeting MICE business through unique experiences such as Thoroughbred Country and resort and incentive product base.
6. Leverage the world-renowned golf product in the region to maximise opportunity to grow business tourism.

3.7 Marketing Strategy
Strategic Initiatives:

1. **International and national marketing campaigns aligned to the DEDP's with** trails, and itineraries and signature experiences to motivate booking of longer breaks across all channels.
2. Domestic and international campaigns to raise awareness of the destination towns and accommodation hubs in the region and the range of visitor experiences in their surrounds.

3. Domestic marketing campaigns to raise awareness of and drive consideration for Ireland's Ancient East, focusing on the 'hidden gems,' and experiences which align with current consumer search preferences and demands.
4. Drive consumers to the discoverireland.ie website , leveraging Keep Discovering campaign to drive profile, referrals and bookings to businesses across the region.
5. Continue to improve the digital shop window, online bookability and connected distribution of the region through the Digital That Delivers Programme.
6. Increase utilisation of all digital assets by marketing and the trade and have social media ambassador programmes/joint marketing campaigns in DEDP areas to align messaging.
7. Deliver on the new segmentation which will highlight core opportunities for the region.
8. Through the Brand Collaboration Group, Fáilte Ireland will partner with colleagues in Tourism Ireland to ensure they have a steady flow of 'new news' to help support their overseas markets-based consumer marketing activities. Both agencies will also pool Ireland's Ancient East destination and product content to support Irish industry in its own marketing and sales development efforts.

SEA Commentary:

The assessment of the Strategy's Section "Industry" Strategic Initiatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L) is consistent with the:
  o *Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and*
  o *Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Strategy provided at Section 7 of this report.*

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

These actions will contribute towards positive environmental effects (see Table 8.3) including through:

* *Sustainability, environmental awareness and protection e.g.:*
  o *3.3.1: "[...] strategic framework for the **sustainable development of the destinations in Ireland's Ancient East** [...] subject to environmental assessment as relevant.*
  o *3.3.5: " [...] support the growth of facilities for camper vans and 'Aires' in suitable and sustainable locations [...]."*
  o *3.3.3: "[...] with planning and environmental regulations.";*
  o *3.6.1: "[...] Ensure sustainability is a cornerstone of tourism development and key consideration factor for broader planning, to address the concerns around carbon footprint and the wider UN Sustainable Development Goals in bidding to win business. "*
  o *3.4: "In respect of all tourism development projects, we will ensure that all potential impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services will be avoided or minimised. For example, we will ensure that impacts on bats and other wildlife will be avoided or minimised by choosing appropriate light fittings in both urban and rural settings."; "To ensure that all trail development is undertaken in a sustainable manner, Fáilte Ireland in conjunction with relevant partners will prepare, early in 2023, a guidance document on the protection of the natural heritage in planning, constructing, maintaining and managing recreational trails in Ireland.", "[...] supporting the development of **sustainable tourism in Ireland's Ancient East [...]."***

* *Visitor management, regionality and seasonality e.g.:*
  o *3.3: " [...] influence visitor flow and dispersion across the region."*
  o *3.4: "[...] focus on retaining and dispersing the visitor more widely within the region."; "[...] enhance and expand the quality and seasonality of water-based activities."*
  o *3.4.1: "[...] reduces seasonality [...]"*

The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the IAE area. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional Strategy measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the Strategy or integration of Strategy provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the IAE area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse 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 are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the coast or estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The

development of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

The Ireland's Ancient East Tourism Strategy Region shares borders with the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and Dublin Regions (all of which are the *subject of related Regional Tourism Strategies) and with Northern Ireland.* **Provisions of the Ireland's Ancient East Strategy that** *have the potential to link with areas beyond the Region and that have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:*

- *Various greenways and blueways, such as the Cork to Dublin Greenway and the Royal and Grand Canals;*
- *Cross-border collaboration regarding the development and promotion of the visitor offering in Louth and Monaghan, in the context of the Ulster Canal redevelopment, cooperation across Carlingford Lough and on the Dublin Belfast Corridor; and*
- *Tourism development in the Slieve Blooms and Cork, for example.*

Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under the Ireland's Ancient East Strategy would *need to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management referred to within the Strategy. Likewise, any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under other Fáilte Ireland Regional Tourism Strategies would need to demonstrate compliance with the measures from those Strategies. Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be* **considered by Northern Ireland for permission would be subject to that country's planning and environmental** *legislation and rules.*

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Strategy has brought about various changes to the emerging Strategy through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Strategy, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:
- *The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Strategy, in combination with the implementation of other provisions from the Strategy and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and*
- *The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Strategy, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Strategy and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.*

8.5.4 Strategic Initiatives: **"Community"**

The Strategy should be referred to for more detail than is produced below	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs

Strategic Initiatives:
Strategic Objective 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability to ensure that it can thrive over the period of this strategy and create sustainable jobs in local communities.
  1. **Encourage usage of Fáilte Ireland's** *Tourism in the Community: A Business Toolkit for Community Tourism Projects*, in working with local community tourism projects by developing an online tutorial and delivering workshops through clusters.
  2. Bespoke training in governance, strategic planning commercial development and operational management for voluntary Boards.
  3. Provide training and mentoring support for community-based tourism enterprises and services to ensure that they are placed on a sustainable footing.
Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region.
  4. Continue to build on the goodwill towards tourism among local communities in the region by engaging them in destination development planning. Ensure that any concerns about potential negative impacts of tourism on local communities are highlighted and addressed at an early stage.
  5. Promote the socio-economic benefits that well-managed and sustainable tourism brings to local communities
  6. **Networking of community enterprises, to create regional brand awareness and sense of 'all** working **together' where enterprises are aware of what each offers; cross**-refer and point visitors onwards to another experience.
  7. Engage local communities as appropriate in relevant interpretation projects that involve their local heritage and culture, in association with other relevant agencies and bodies, to create opportunities for local communities to present and share their own culture, traditions and heritage with visitors to their area.
	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		

8.	Ensure that tourism is one of the sectors that will contribute to the success of the Just Transition initiative, ensuring that it contributes to the creation of sustainable jobs for local communities.			

SEA Commentary:

*The assessment of the Strategy's **Section** "Community" Strategic Initiatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L) is consistent with the:*
- *Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and*
- *Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Strategy provided at Section 7 of this report.*

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

These actions will contribute towards positive environmental effects (see Table 8.3) including through:

Sustainability, environmental awareness and protection e.g.:
- *3: "[...] ensure that they are placed on a sustainable footing."*
- *8: "Ensure that tourism is one of the sectors that will contribute to the success of the Just Transition initiative, ensuring that it contributes to the creation of sustainable jobs for local communities."*

The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the IAE area. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional Plan measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the Strategy or integration of Strategy provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the IAE area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse 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 are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The development of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Strategy has brought about various changes to the emerging Strategy through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Strategy, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:
- *The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Strategy, in combination with the implementation of other provisions from the Strategy and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and*
- *The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Strategy, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Strategy and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.*

8.5.5   Strategic Initiatives: "Environment"

The Strategy should be referred to for more detail than is produced below	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
Strategic Initiatives: *S*trategic Objective 1: **Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Ireland's Ancient East** 1. Undertake a comprehensive audit of all sustainable tourism and ecotourism businesses in the region. 2. Benchmark the destinations within the region against an internationally recognized sustainability standard and create a plan to improve their sustainability rating over the course of this strategy.	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		

<table>
<tr><td>

3. Establish a carbon footprint benchmark for tourism in the region and a carbon reporting framework at both the level of the region and the enterprise and allow the industry to report on carbon reduction and off-setting measures (these will be provided nationally).

4. Implement the Environmental Monitoring Programme, as referenced above, to ensure that the effects of tourism on environmental, heritage and cultural assets is monitored to allow for early detection of any possible issues.

Strategic Objective 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability so that it can thrive over the period of this strategy and create sustainable jobs in local communities.

5. Devise a set of carbon calculators using the carbon reporting framework for tourism businesses and for tourists (these will be provided nationally).

6. Roll out a comprehensive programme of sustainability supports and toolkit (nationally) to industry and host a series of accompanying workshops.

7. Work closely with the hotel sector to achieve a cut in carbon emissions by at least 51% in the **sector by 2030 (compared to 2018 levels) in line with the Government's Climate Action** Plan 2021. This will be achieved by supporting businesses to pursue carbon reduction activities and by promoting green certification programmes for the sector.

Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region.

8. Integrate the principles of regenerative tourism and sustainability actions into all DEDPs, including capability, particularly for communities, at the level of the destination.

9. Promote the Leave No Trace principles to both visitors and tourism providers.

10. Support tourism development in Carbon Neutral Zones as differentiators for the visitor

11. **Establish sustainability as a core principle across all aspects of the DEDP's within Ireland's** Ancient East.

12. Promote responsible tourism practices among tourism providers and encourage them to pursue sustainability certification as appropriate.

*S*trategic Objective 1: **Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Ireland's Ancient East**

1. Benchmark the destinations within the region against an internationally recognized sustainability standard and create a plan to improve their sustainability rating over the course of this strategy.

Strategic Objective 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability so that it can thrive over the period of this strategy and create sustainable jobs in local communities.

2. Promote responsible tourism practices among tourism providers and encourage them to pursue sustainability certification as appropriate.

3. Work closely with the hotel sector to achieve the ambition to have 70% of all 3- and 4-star hotels in the region carbon-neutral by 2030.

Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region.

4. Ensure the conservation and maintenance of key elements of biodiversity as part of any development projects to ensure they do not contribute to biodiversity losses or deterioration (i.e., there should be no net loss of biodiversity).

5. When implementing initiatives associated with land and water-based initiatives, it is our objective to ensure the containment and control of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) with accordance with the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011.

6. Identify opportunities to enhance or create Green Infrastructure (GI) and ecological corridors which can provide important links in the connectivity of European Natura 2000 sites and other protected sites.

7. Ensure that all proposed land development in the RTS incorporates positive biodiversity measures as standard practice. Actions can include simple measures, e.g., all new public buildings incorporate nesting boxes for swifts and/or bat boxes, the creation of wildlife habitats on public open spaces, t**o more ambitious measures that will ensure 'biodiversity net gain' on** public development schemes.

8. Promote the Leave No Trace principles to both visitors and tourism providers.

9. Implement the Environmental Monitoring Programme, as referenced above, to ensure that the effects of tourism on environmental, heritage and cultural assets is monitored to allow for early detection of any possible issues.

</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

10. Undertake a series of initiatives with a range of stakeholders in accordance with good environmental practice to create new sustainable tourism opportunities.			

SEA Commentary:

The assessment of the Strategy's Section "Environment" Strategic Initiatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L) is consistent with the:

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

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

These actions will contribute towards positive environmental effects (see Table 8.3) including through:

- *Sustainability, environmental awareness and protection e.g.:*
  - o *1: " [...] audit of all sustainable tourism and ecotourism **businesses in the region."***
  - o *2: "[...] internationally recognized sustainability standard and create a plan to improve their sustainability rating [...]"*
  - o *4: "Implement the Environmental Monitoring Programme, [...] to ensure that the effects of tourism on environmental, heritage and cultural assets is monitored to allow for early detection of any **possible issues."***
  - o *6: "[...] programme of sustainability supports and toolkit [...]."*
  - o *5: "Integrate the principles of regenerative tourism and sustainability actions into all DEDPs [...]."*
  - o *9: "Promote the Leave No Trace principles to both visitors and tourism providers."*
  - o *11: "Establish sustainability as a core principle across all aspects of the DEDP's within Ireland's Ancient East."*
  - o *"Promote responsible tourism practices among tourism providers and encourage them to pursue sustainability certification as appropriate."*
  - o *1 (1): "Benchmark the destinations within the region against an internationally recognized sustainability standard and create a plan to improve their sustainability rating over the course of this strategy."*
  - o *4 (2): " Promote responsible tourism practices among tourism providers and encourage them to pursue sustainability certification as appropriate."*
  - o *5 (4): "Ensure the conservation and maintenance of key elements of biodiversity as part of any development projects to ensure they do not contribute to biodiversity losses or deterioration (i.e., **there should be no net loss of biodiversity)."***
  - o *5 (5): "When implementing initiatives associated with land and water-based initiatives, it is our objective to ensure the containment and control of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) with accordance with the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011."*
  - o *5 (6): "Identify opportunities to enhance or create Green Infrastructure (GI) and ecological corridors which can provide important links in the connectivity of European Natura 2000 sites and other protected **sites."***
  - o *5 (7): "Ensure that all proposed land development in the RTS incorporates positive biodiversity measures as standard practice. Actions can include simple measures, e.g., all new public buildings incorporate nesting boxes for swifts and/or bat boxes, the creation of wildlife habitats on public open spaces, to more ambitious measure**s that will ensure 'biodiversity net gain' on public development schemes."***
  - o *5 (9): "Implement the Environmental Monitoring Programme, as referenced above, to ensure that the effects of tourism on environmental, heritage and cultural assets is monitored to allow for early detection of any possible issues."*

- *Reducing emissions e.g.:*
  - o *3: "Establish a carbon footprint benchmark for tourism in the region and a carbon reporting framework at both the level of the region and the enterprise and allow the industry to report on carbon reduction and off-setting measures [...]."*
  - o *5: "Devise a set of carbon calculators using the carbon reporting framework for tourism businesses and for tourists [...]."*
  - o *7: "Work closely with the hotel sector to achieve a cut in carbon emissions by at least 51% in the sector by 2030 (compared to 2018 levels) **in line with the Government's Climate Action Plan 2021.** This will be achieved by supporting businesses to pursue carbon reduction activities and by promoting green certification **programmes for the sector."***
  - o *10: "Support tourism development in Carbon Neutral Zones as differentiators for the visitor."*

The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the IAE area. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional Strategy measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the Strategy or integration of Strategy provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.

The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the IAE area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse 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 are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The development

of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

The Ireland's Ancient East Tourism Strategy Region shares borders with the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and Dublin Regions (all of which are the subject of related Regional Tourism Strategies) and with Northern Ireland. **Provisions of the Ireland's Ancient East Strategy that have the potential to link with areas beyond the Region and that have** been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects, include those related to:

- Various greenways and blueways, such as the Cork to Dublin Greenway and the Royal and Grand Canals;
- Cross-border collaboration regarding the development and promotion of the visitor offering in Louth and Monaghan, in the context of the Ulster Canal redevelopment, cooperation across Carlingford Lough and on the Dublin Belfast Corridor; and
- Tourism development in the Slieve Blooms and Cork, for example.

Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under the Ireland's Ancient East Strategy would need to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management referred to within the Strategy. Likewise, any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be funded under other Fáilte Ireland Regional Tourism Strategies would need to demonstrate compliance with the measures from those Strategies. Any land use or infrastructural development or land use activities to be considered by Northern Ireland for permission would be **subject to that country's planning and environmental** legislation and rules.

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

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

Section 9   Mitigation Measures

9.1   Introduction

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

By integrating all SEA and AA recommendations into the Strategy[106], Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:

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

Mitigation was achieved through the following:

- Establishing the status of the Strategy and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework[107]; and
- Integrating Requirements for Environmental Compliance into the Plan[108].

9.2   Establishing the status of the Strategy and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework[109]

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

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

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

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction up to 2040. The NPF is being implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSESs set out various objectives relating tourism

---

[106] All recommendations made by the SEA and AA processes either have already been integrated into the Plan that is being placed on public display or shall be integrated into the Plan in advance of adoption.
[107] This framework includes various environmental requirements.
[108] These requirements include those that have arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.
[109] This framework includes various environmental requirements.

development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment. The RSESs have informed, and continue to inform, the preparation of lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which also set out various objectives relating tourism development and activities that have been subject to environmental assessment.

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

Figure 9.1 provides a schematic of the relationship between Strategy and the existing Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework. Also indicated is the hierarchy of accompanying environmental assessment in force. Note that the Overall Findings of this SEA are provided under Section 8.2 of this SEA Environmental Report.
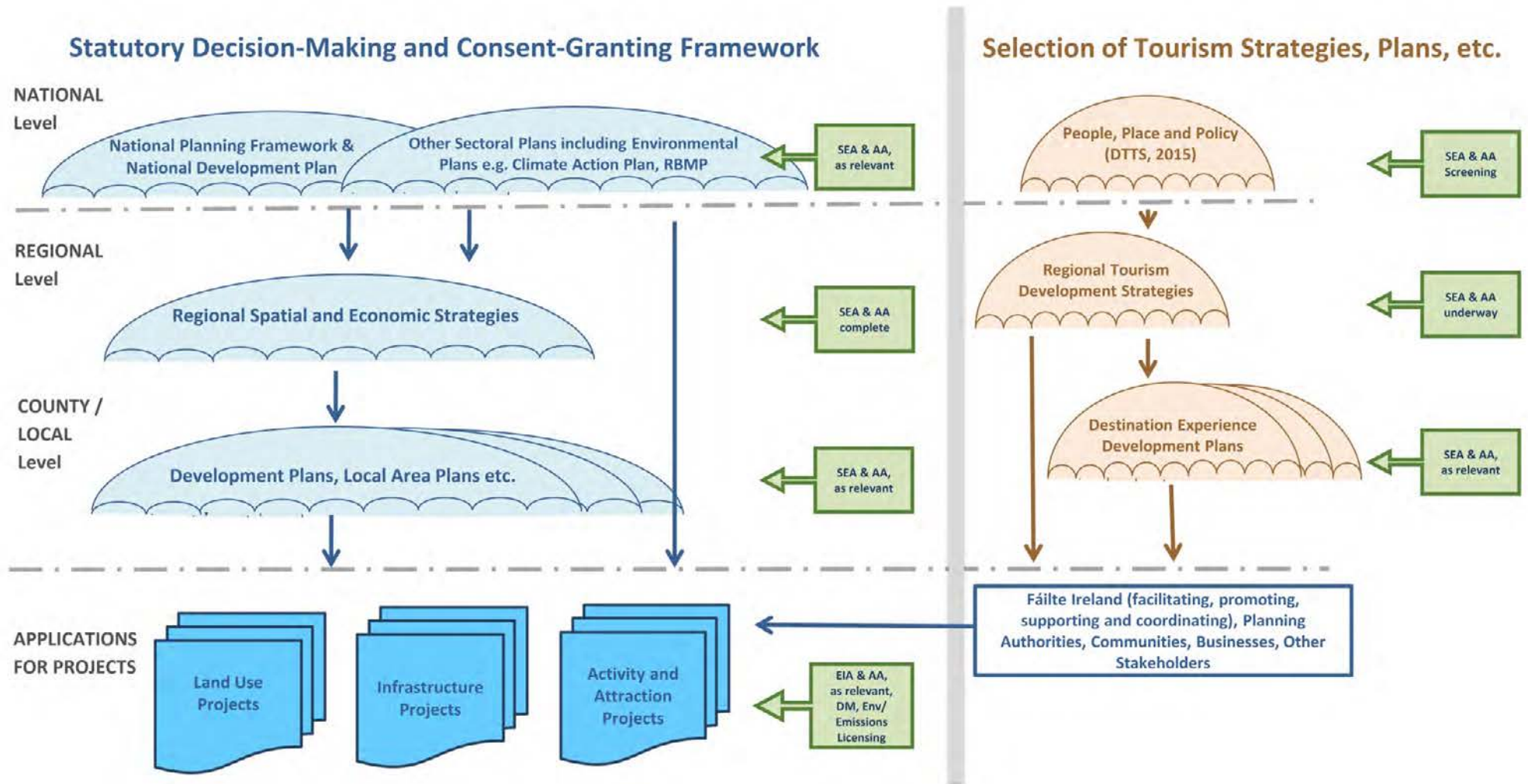
Figure 9.1 Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework, Tourism Plans Regional Tourism Development Strategies and Environmental Assessment Requirements

9.3 Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the Strategy[110]

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

The Strategy provides a new context for how all existing and future tourism projects and initiatives are planned, developed and managed in a sustainable and integrated manner. The VICE (Visitor, Industry, Community and Environment) Model for Sustainable Tourism is the framework that has guided the content of the Strategy.

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

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land **use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate** compliance[111] with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents, where available:

- Site Maintenance Guidelines (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Visitor Management Guidelines (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Environmental Damage Resolution (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Greenway Visitor Experience & Interpretation Toolkit (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion & Campaign Statement (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- Blueway Management & Development Guide (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy) and
- Sustainable Recreational Trail Development & Operation (in preparation).

Even where Fáilte Ireland is not the entity funding a project or controlling the funding for a project, it will seek to ensure the integration of sustainable tourism development into all of its activities and strategic partnerships. This will include taking into account the various mitigation measures integrated into the Strategy that are described in this section of the SEA Environmental Report.

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

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- Relevant land use plans (including the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans) and other sectoral plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, including

---

[110] These requirements include those that have arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.
[111] Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management[112]; and

- The most up to date Climate Action Plan, National Climate Change Adaptation Framework and National Mitigation Plan[113].

Examples of key requirements that have been highlighted by environmental authorities and which Fáilte Ireland has integrated into the Strategy through the SEA/AA/Strategy preparation processes are included on the table below.

Table 9.1   Examples of Key Requirements that have been integrated into the Strategy, including its Appendices[114]

Topic	Requirement
Infrastructure Capacity	• With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) the potential impact on existing infrastructure as well as the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourism-related traffic volumes along any routes resulting from the relevant initiative shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate, where relevant. This consideration and associated mitigation shall take into account the need to provide for climate resilience. • Close collaboration will also be undertaken with the relevant stakeholders, such as Local Authorities and Irish Water, to ensure that any proposed tourism developments align with the capacity of the supporting critical service infrastructure. • Failte Ireland will encourage site owners and operators to consider environmentally sustainable solutions and ensure compliance with the Water Framework Directive.
Visitor Management	• In contributing towards outcomes under the Strategy, partners and stakeholders shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. • Extensive research by Fáilte Ireland has shown improved environmental outcomes (including improved attainment of conservation objectives) in areas with visitor management strategies. Visitor management strategies may be required from partners and stakeholders who are contributing towards outcomes under the Strategy, as relevant and appropriate. • Visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.
Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services	• In contributing towards outcomes under the Strategies, partners and stakeholders shall contribute towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services, taking into account the output of the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services project being undertaken by the NPWS. Proposals for the development of any green infrastructure should demonstrate the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the: provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protection of protected landscape sensitivities. • Where possible, extension of existing greenways and future development of new greenways and blueways should complement and integrate rather than replace existing green infrastructure. Stakeholders considering the development of greenways and blueways should have regard to the Failte Ireland publication "Greenway - Visitor Experience & Interpretation Toolkit" and "Connecting with nature for health and wellbeing" EPA Research Report 2020.
Environmental Damage Resolution	• Action-based responses are essential at site-specific level in response to instances of environmental perturbation. Although the Strategy is not envisaged as being likely to directly result in any such instances of environmental perturbation, it forms part of a hierarchy of tourism initiatives, including lower tier DEDPs, and the wider Statutory planning framework. The Environmental Damage Resolution procedure provides for a consistent approach in responding to such issues and is available for integration at DEDP and site-specific levels.
Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion & Campaign Statement	• Environmental considerations will be integrated into promotional processes and environmentally responsible tourism campaigns will be required. Such campaigns will garner environmental stewardship that will help to ensure environmental protection and management. Promotional processes will be informed by environmental considerations, including available capacity, at a local level.

---

[112] For more information please refer to Appendix II of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.
[113] For more information please refer to Section 4.10 and/or Appendix II of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.
[114] including "Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others"

Topic	Requirement
Site Management	• **Fáilte Ireland's extensive monitoring of the effects of tourism to date has shown predictors of** impact occurrence to include: site type; group type; the number of activities; activity intensity; and the interaction between activity intensity and abundance. Site management must consider these factors in seeking to reduce the potential for impacts to occur and to remove impacts.
Climate Action	• Comply with the most up to date Climate Action Plan, National Climate Change Adaptation Framework and National Mitigation Plan, including contributing towards efforts to decarbonize the tourism sector, improve low carbon travel, such as walking and cycling, and the circular economy. • Various actions under the Climate Action Plan are relevant to Fáilte Ireland as a Lead or Key Stakeholder (No. 31, 47, 88, 89, 90, 97, 98, 178, 179 and 232). • **Fáilte Ireland's 2023 Corporate Strategy will identify progress in re**lation to these actions and the meeting of national and sectoral commitments relating to emission targets.

Section 10   Monitoring Measures

10.1 Introduction

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

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

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

10.2 Indicators and Targets

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

Given the relationship of the Tourism Strategy and lower-tier tourism related projects with the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (see Section 9.2), the measures identified in RSES and lower tier Development Plan SEAs have been used – as they are or having been slightly modified – in many instances. This consistency across the hierarchy of planning will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future monitoring.

Table 10.1 overleaf shows the current indicators and targets that have been selected

for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing relevant Fáilte Ireland Plans, Programmes, etc. These monitoring measures are updated on an ongoing basis.

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

10.3 Sources

The Strategy is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework. In implementing the Monitoring Programme Fáilte Ireland will take into account this hierarchy of planning and environmental monitoring. Furthermore, environmental monitoring for the strategy and other existing/future Fáilte Ireland plans, programmes, etc. may be undertaken and reported on at the same time.

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

Other existing monitoring sources will be used, including:

- Information gathered through existing and new Fáilte Ireland environmental monitoring programmes (including the National Environmental Monitoring Programme 2021-2026) in order to monitor any effects of visitors (see Section 4.6.2);
- Sources maintained by local authorities within the **Ireland's Ancient East Region** (such as those arising from the SEA of land use plans) and the relevant authorities e.g. the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Central Statistics Office; and
- Lower-tier environmental assessment and decision making – including a review of project

approvals granted and associated documents – will also be utilised as part of the Monitoring Programme.

10.4 Reporting and Responsibility

Reporting on environmental monitoring will address the indicators set out below. Fáilte Ireland is responsible for the ongoing review of indicators and targets, collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action, in combination with the relevant authorities.

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

Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action[115]
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures providing for the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Plan measures providing for the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9 • Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes • DHLGH report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years) [116] • DHLGH National Birds Directive Monitoring Report for the under Article 12 (every 3 years) [117] • Consultations with the NPWS (see Section 10.4) [118] • Review of all lower-tier Fáilte Ireland plans • For Water - see below	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy • Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date • For Water – see below
		• Condition of European sites	• Implement the provisions of the Strategy providing for the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna • Require all lower-tier Fáilte Ireland plans to include ecosystem services and green/blue infrastructure provisions and, as a minimum, to have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species		
		• Number of lower-tier Fáilte Ireland plans that have included ecosystem services content, mapping and policy to protect ecosystem services	• Require all lower-tier Fáilte Ireland plans to include ecosystem services and green/blue infrastructure provisions and, as a minimum, to have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species		
		• SEAs and AAs as relevant for new Fáilte Ireland policies, plans, programmes etc.	• Screen for and undertake SEA and AA as relevant for new Fáilte Ireland policies, plans, programmes etc.		
		• Status of water quality in water bodies	• Included under Water below		

---

[115] The occurrence of persistent significant adverse environmental effects that are directly attributable to tourism would necessitate consideration of the effects in the context of the Strategy and a possible review of part(s) of the Strategy. Examples of where consultation with local authorities and others and the possible coordination of remedial action may be required include: complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on any environmental components resulting from development which is funded under the Strategy; court cases taken by the Government Departments regarding impacts upon archaeological heritage from development which is granted permission under the Strategy; failure to meet bathing water Mandatory Values directly attributable to tourism; fish kills directly attributable to tourism; and boil notices on drinking water directly attributable to tourism.

[116] Including confirmation with development management that the following impacts have been considered and including use of monitoring data, where available: biodiversity/habitat loss; nitrogen deposition impacts on Natura 2000 sites; recreational disturbance resulting from implementation of tourism and recreation policies and objectives particularly in riparian areas; biodiversity enhancement; and disturbance /visitor pressure impacts of recreation, amenity and tourism development.

[117] Including confirmation with development management that the following impacts have been considered and including use of monitoring data, where available: biodiversity/habitat loss; nitrogen deposition impacts on Natura 2000 sites; recreational disturbance resulting from implementation of tourism and recreation policies and objectives particularly in riparian areas; biodiversity enhancement; and disturbance /visitor pressure impacts of recreation, amenity and tourism development.

[118] Including confirmation with development management that the following impacts have been considered and including use of monitoring data, where available: biodiversity/habitat loss; nitrogen deposition impacts on Natura 2000 sites; recreational disturbance resulting from implementation of tourism and recreation policies and objectives particularly in riparian areas; biodiversity enhancement; and disturbance /visitor pressure impacts of recreation, amenity and tourism development.

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action[115]
Population and Human Health	PHH	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures providing for: the protection of population and human health; and the development of sustainable tourism, accompanied by public infrastructure and services – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • Number of spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors resulting from development funded under the Strategy	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Strategy measures providing for: the protection of population and human health; and the development of sustainable tourism, accompanied by public infrastructure and services – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of funding under the Strategy	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9 • Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes • Consultations with the Health Service Executive and EPA	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy • Consultations with the Health Service Executive and EPA • Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date
Soil (and Land)	S	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures providing for the protection of soil – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • Instances where contaminated material must be disposed of • Percentage of designated geological sites protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is funded under the Strategy	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Strategy measures providing for the protection of soil – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • Dispose of contaminated material in compliance with EPA guidance and waste management requirements • Protect designated geological sites from adverse effects resulting from development which is funded under the Strategy	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9 • Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy • Consultations with the EPA and review of internal systems • Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date
Water	W	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures providing for the protection of water – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • Status of water bodies as reported by the EPA Water Monitoring Programme for the WFD	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Strategy measures providing for the protection of water – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface **water to achieve 'good status'**	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9 • Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies)	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy • Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action[115]
			• Implementation of the objectives of the River Basin Management Plan	• Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes	• Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date
		• Number of incompatible developments funded within flood risk areas	• Minimise developments funded on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk	• EPA Monitoring Programme for WFD compliance	
Material Assets	MA	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures providing for the protection of material assets – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • Programmed delivery of Irish Water infrastructure for all key growth towns in line with Irish Water Investment Plan and prioritisation programme to ensure sustainable growth can be accommodated • Number of new developments funded which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment and drinking water • Fulfilment of Climate Action Plan measures, including those related to energy, where Fáilte Ireland is Lead or Key Stakeholder	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Strategy measures providing for the protection of material assets – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • New developments funded to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Strategy • Where individual on-site wastewater treatment systems are proposed, for developments only to be funded when applications demonstrate that the outfall from the individual on-site wastewater treatment system will not – in-combination with other septic tanks – contribute towards any surface or ground water body not meeting the objective of good status under the Water Framework Directive • Facilitate, as appropriate, Irish Water in developing water and wastewater infrastructure • Maximise fulfilment of Climate Action Plan measures, including those related to energy, where Fáilte Ireland is Lead or Key Stakeholder • Implement the provisions of the Strategy providing for the protection and management of material assets	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9 • Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes • Consultations with EPA and Irish Water • Internal review of progress with Climate Action Plan measures • Monitoring relating to energy use by tourists where available	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy • Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date
Air	A	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures providing for the protection of air and noise – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • Fulfilment of Climate Action Plan measures where Fáilte Ireland is Lead or Key Stakeholder • Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels of 74%	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Strategy measures providing for the protection of air and noise – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy • Maximise fulfilment of Climate Action Plan measures where Fáilte Ireland is Lead or Key Stakeholder • Decrease in proportion of journeys made by **private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels**	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9 • Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy • Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action[115]
		• NOₓ, SOₓ, PM10 and PM2.5 as part of Ambient Air Quality Monitoring	• Improvement in Air Quality trends, particularly in relation to transport related emissions of NOₓ and particulate matter	• Internal review of progress with Climate Action Plan measures • CSO data • Data from the National Travel Survey • EPA Air Quality Monitoring	to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date
Climatic Factors [119]	C	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures relating to climate action – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Strategy measures relating to climate action – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9 • Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes • Internal review of progress with Climate Action Plan measures • EPA Annual National Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory reporting • Climate Action Regional Office • Consultations with DECC • Monitoring relating to transport use by tourists where available	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy • Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date
		• Fulfilment of Climate Action Plan measures where Fáilte Ireland is Lead or Key Stakeholder	• Maximise fulfilment of Climate Action Plan measures where Fáilte Ireland is Lead or Key Stakeholder		
		• A **competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient** and environmentally sustainable economy	• Contribute towards transition to a competitive, **low-carbon, climate-resilient and** environmentally sustainable economy by 2050		
		• Share of renewable energy in transport	• Contribute towards the targets of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC), for all Member States to reach: a 16% share of renewable energy in Gross Final Consumption (GFC); and a 10% share of renewable energy in transport, by facilitating the development of electricity charging and transmission infrastructure in compliance with the provisions of the Strategy.		
		• Greenhouse gas emissions across related sectors	• Contribute towards greenhouse gas emission reduction targets across related sectors including electricity (75%), transport (50%), buildings (commercial and public) (45%), buildings (residential) (40%), industry (35%), agriculture (25%) and other (gases, petroleum refining and waste) (50%)		
		• Energy consumption, the uptake of renewable options and solid fuels for residential heating	• To promote reduced energy consumption and support the uptake of renewable options and a move away from solid fuels for residential heating		
		• Proportion of journeys made by low carbon transport modes	• Increase in the proportion of journeys made by low carbon transport modes, where survey information is available		
Cultural Heritage,	CH	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures providing for the protection of cultural heritage – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Strategy measures providing for the protection of cultural heritage – Section 9 of the	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy

[119] Please also refer to relevant legislation and requirements under Section 4.10, Section 8, Section 9 and Appendices III and IV. Targets under the national Climate Action Plan are reviewed and updated periodically and include those under the headings of Electricity, Built Environment, Transport, Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use and Enterprise.

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action[115]
		a selection of such measures from the Strategy	SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy	• Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes	• Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date
		• Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, protected from significant adverse effects resulting from development that is funded under the Strategy	• Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context of these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, from significant adverse effects resulting from development that is funded under the Strategy		
		• Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects resulting from development that is funded under the Strategy	• Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from significant adverse effects resulting from development that is funded under the Strategy		
Landscape	L	• Compliance of funding approvals with Strategy measures providing for the protection of the landscape – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy	• For funding only to be provided when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Strategy measures providing for the protection of the landscape – Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report identifies a selection of such measures from the Strategy	• Internal review of grants of funding, including compliance with **Strategy's mitigation** – see Section 9 • Environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing, new or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes	• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Strategy • Where impacts are identified these will be investigated as per the Environmental Damage Resolution procedure • Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion and Campaign Procedure will be available to assist in remedial action, where relevant, at a future date
		• Number of developments funded that result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape designations, resulting from development that is funded under the Strategy	• No developments funded that result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape designations, resulting from development that is funded under the Strategy		

Appendix I SEA Determination[120]

Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Determination
for the Emerging Draft
Regional Tourism Strategies 2022-2026

A Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Determination is being made by Fáilte Ireland regarding the emerging draft Regional Tourism Strategies 2022-2026.

The SEA Directive [Article 3 (2)] requires, subject to certain exceptions, that SEA is carried out for all 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 that are subject to the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended, or

(b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment[1] pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
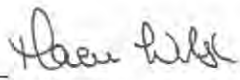
The SEA Directive has been transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument No. (SI No. 435 of 2004), as amended, and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004), as amended. Article 9 of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004), as amended, requires, subject to certain exceptions, that SEA is carried out for all plans and programmes:

(a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and 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 Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or

(b) which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site.

The draft Regional Tourism Strategies 2022-2026 is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site; however, tourism development and activities would have the potential, if unmitigated, to affect the integrity of European Sites[2]. Consequently, it is being determined that it would be prudent and responsible to undertake Stage 2 AA of the Regional Tourism Strategies 2022-2026, aligned with AA requirements under: European Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora; and European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Statutory Instrument No. 477 of 2011), as amended.

Taking the above into account and in order to ensure that environmental considerations are integrated into the draft Regional Tourism Strategies 2022-2026, so that the Strategies can usefully inform future decision-making, it has been determined that it would be prudent and responsible to undertake an SEA of the draft Regional Tourism Strategies 2022-2026, aligned with SEA requirements under: Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers of 27 June 2001 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment; and European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004), as amended.

Date: _____06.10.21_____   Signed: ___ _____

Signatory
Approved Officer

---

[1] Also referred to as an Appropriate Assessment
[2] Tourism development and activities would have the potential to affect the integrity of European Sites, including as a result of:
- Construction effects of land use developments relating to tourism, including tourism developments and infrastructural developments that will serve sectors and users, including tourism and tourists.
- Operation effects of land use developments relating to tourism, including those arising from emissions, including those relating to waste water and lighting, and abstractions, including those relating to drinking water.
- Effects arising from visitor movements, including those related to: destruction of structures, vegetation or fauna; trampling of herbaceous vegetation; disturbance of wildlife; heavy littering or dumping quantities of waste; addition/alteration of site features, transient emissions, noise; removal and throwing of large rocks; fishing activities; removal and throwing of large rocks; and unrestricted dogs causing disturbances to wildlife.

---

[120] The revised title and dates of the Strategy are: "Draft Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027".

Appendix II List of Designations – More Detail

Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	County/Counties
		European sites within or partially within the area to which the Strategy relates		
SAC	000006	Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally) SAC	0.00	Cavan, Meath
SAC	000077	Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC	0.00	Cork
SAC	000391	Ballynafagh Bog SAC	0.00	Kildare
SAC	000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC	0.00	Kildare
SAC	000397	Red Bog, Kildare SAC	0.00	Kildare
SAC	000404	Hugginstown Fen SAC	0.00	Kilkenny
SAC	000407	The Loughans SAC	0.00	Kilkenny
SAC	000412	Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC	0.00	Laois, Offaly
SAC	000453	Carlingford Mountain SAC	0.00	Louth
SAC	000455	Dundalk Bay SAC	0.00	Louth
SAC	000646	Galtee Mountains SAC	0.00	Limerick, Tipperary
SAC	000665	Helvick Head SAC	0.00	Waterford
SAC	000668	Nier Valley Woodlands SAC	0.00	Waterford
SAC	000671	Tramore Dunes and Backstrand SAC	0.00	Waterford
SAC	000696	Ballyteige Burrow SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000697	Bannow Bay SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000700	Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000704	Lady's Island Lake SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000707	Saltee Islands SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000708	Screen Hills SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000709	Tacumshin Lake SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000710	Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	0.00	Dublin, Wicklow
SAC	000714	Bray Head SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	000716	Carriggower Bog SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	000717	Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	000719	Glen of the Downs SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	0.00	Dublin, Wicklow
SAC	000729	Buckroney-Brittas Dunes and Fen SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	000733	Vale of Clara (Rathdrum Wood) SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	000764	Hook Head SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000770	Blackstairs Mountains SAC	0.00	Carlow, Wexford
SAC	000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	000831	Cullahill Mountain SAC	0.00	Kilkenny
SAC	000849	Spahill and Clomantagh Hill SAC	0.00	Kilkenny
SAC	000859	Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog SAC	0.00	Laois, Offaly
SAC	000869	Lisbigney Bog SAC	0.00	Laois
SAC	000934	Kilduff, Devilsbit Mountain SAC	0.00	Tipperary
SAC	001058	Great Island Channel SAC	0.00	Cork
SAC	001387	Ballynafagh Lake SAC	0.00	Kerry
SAC	001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC	0.00	Kerry, Meath
SAC	001459	Clogher Head SAC	0.00	Louth
SAC	001741	Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC	0.00	Wexford

SAC	001742	Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC	0.00	Wexford, Wicklow
SAC	001757	Holdenstown Bog SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	001766	Magherabeg Dunes SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	001786	Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC	0.00	Monaghan
SAC	001810	White Lough, Ben Loughs and Lough Doo SAC	0.00	Meath, Westmeath
SAC	001847	Philipston Marsh SAC	0.00	Tipperary
SAC	001858	Galmoy Fen SAC	0.00	Kilkenny
SAC	001952	Comeragh Mountains SAC	0.00	Waterford
SAC	001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC	0.00	Louth, Meath
SAC	002120	Lough Bane And Lough Glass SAC	0.00	Westmeath
SAC	002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	002123	Ardmore Head SAC	0.00	Waterford
SAC	002125	Anglesey Road SAC	0.00	Tipperary
SAC	002137	Lower River Suir SAC	0.00	Kilkenny
SAC	002141	Mountmellick SAC	0.00	Laois
SAC	002162	River Barrow And River Nore SAC	0.00	Offaly
SAC	002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	0.00	Tipperary
SAC	002170	Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC	0.00	Waterford
SAC	002203	Girley (Drewstown) Bog SAC	0.00	Meath
SAC	002249	The Murrough Wetlands SAC	0.00	Wicklow
SAC	002252	Thomastown Quarry SAC	0.00	Kilkenny
SAC	002256	Ballyprior Grassland SAC	0.00	Laois
SAC	002257	Moanour Mountain SAC	0.00	Tipperary
SAC	002269	Carnsore Point SAC	0.00	Wexford
SAC	002299	River Boyne And River Blackwater SAC	0.00	Louth
SAC	002306	Carlingford Shore SAC	0.00	Louth
SAC	002324	Glendine Wood SAC	0.00	Waterford
SAC	002331	Mouds Bog SAC	0.00	Kildare
SAC	002332	Coolrain Bog SAC	0.00	Laois
SAC	002333	Knockacoller Bog SAC	0.00	Laois
SAC	002340	Moneybeg and Clareisland Bogs SAC	0.00	Meath, Westmeath
SAC	002342	Mount Hevey Bog SAC	0.00	Meath, Westmeath
SPA	004002	Saltee Islands SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004009	Lady's Island Lake SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004019	The Raven SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004020	Ballyteige Burrow SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004022	Ballycotton Bay SPA	0.00	Cork
SPA	004023	Ballymacoda Bay SPA	0.00	Cork
SPA	004026	Dundalk Bay SPA	0.00	Louth
SPA	004027	Tramore Back Strand SPA	0.00	Waterford
SPA	004028	Blackwater Estuary SPA	0.00	Cork
SPA	004030	Cork Harbour SPA	0.00	Cork
SPA	004032	Dungarvan Harbour SPA	0.00	Waterford
SPA	004033	Bannow Bay SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	0.00	Dublin
SPA	004063	Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA	0.00	Kildare
SPA	004065	Lough Sheelin SPA	0.00	Cavan
SPA	004076	Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004078	Carlingford Lough SPA	0.00	Louth
SPA	004080	Boyne Estuary SPA	0.00	Meath

SPA	004091	Stabannan-Braganstown SPA	0.00	Louth
SPA	004092	Tacumshin Lake SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004094	Blackwater Callows SPA	0.00	Cork
SPA	004118	Keeragh Islands SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004127	Wicklow Head SPA	0.00	Wicklow
SPA	004143	Cahore Marshes SPA	0.00	Wexford
SPA	004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA	0.00	Meath
SPA	004160	Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA	0.00	Laois
SPA	004165	Slievefelim to Silvermines Mountains SPA	0.00	Tipperary
SPA	004167	Slieve Beagh SPA	0.00	Monaghan
SPA	004186	The Murrough SPA	0.00	Wicklow
SPA	004192	Helvick Head to Ballyquin SPA	0.00	Waterford
SPA	004193	Mid-Waterford Coast SPA	0.00	Waterford
SPA	004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	0.00	Cavan
SPA	004233	River Nore SPA	0.00	Laois

Other European sites within 15 km of the area to which the Strategy relates				
Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	County/Counties
SAC	000007	Lough Oughter And Associated Loughs SAC	0.87	Cavan
SAC	000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	14.37	Dublin
SAC	000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	8.31	Dublin
SAC	000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	14.00	Dublin
SAC	000208	Rogerstown Estuary SAC	8.99	Dublin
SAC	000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	8.54	Dublin
SAC	000571	Charleville Wood SAC	5.56	Offaly
SAC	000572	Clara Bog SAC	14.78	Offaly
SAC	000582	Raheenmore Bog SAC	12.73	Offaly
SAC	000585	Sharavogue Bog SAC	9.80	Offaly
SAC	000679	Garriskil Bog SAC	12.10	Westmeath
SAC	000685	Lough Ennell SAC	12.06	Westmeath
SAC	000925	The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC	0.57	Offaly
SAC	000930	Clare Glen SAC	12.25	Limerick, Tipperary
SAC	000939	Silvermine Mountains SAC	10.96	Tipperary
SAC	001197	Keeper Hill SAC	8.80	Tipperary
SAC	001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	1.77	Dublin
SAC	001430	Glen Bog SAC	7.18	Limerick
SAC	001432	Glenstal Wood SAC	11.75	Limerick
SAC	002036	Ballyhoura Mountains SAC	13.10	Cork, Limerick
SAC	002037	Carrigeenamronety Hill SAC	11.26	Cork, Limerick
SAC	002121	Lough Lene SAC	2.91	Westmeath
SAC	002124	Bolingbrook Hill SAC	6.79	Tipperary
SAC	002147	Lisduff Fen SAC	12.05	Offaly
SAC	002161	Long Bank SAC	1.97	Wexford
SAC	002201	Derragh Bog SAC	4.60	Westmeath
SAC	002205	Wooddown Bog SAC	11.15	Westmeath
SAC	002206	Scohaboy (Sopwell) Bog SAC	12.06	Tipperary
SAC	002236	Island Fen SAC	8.83	Offaly
SAC	002258	Silvermines Mountains West SAC	11.74	Tipperary
SAC	002274	Wicklow Reef SAC	0.47	Wicklow

SAC	002341	Ardagullion Bog SAC	13.55	Longford
SAC	002953	Blackwater Bank SAC	3.05	Wexford
SAC	003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	4.16	Dublin
SPA	004006	North Bull Island SPA	13.98	Dublin
SPA	004014	Rockabill SPA	10.33	Dublin
SPA	004015	Rogerstown Estuary SPA	9.83	Dublin
SPA	004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	14.37	Dublin
SPA	004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	8.54	Dublin
SPA	004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	8.67	Dublin
SPA	004043	Lough Derravaragh SPA	9.36	Westmeath
SPA	004044	Lough Ennell SPA	12.45	Westmeath
SPA	004049	Lough Oughter SPA	8.55	Cavan
SPA	004061	Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA	3.95	Cavan
SPA	004102	Garriskil Bog SPA	14.74	Westmeath
SPA	004122	Skerries Islands SPA	9.46	Dublin
SPA	004124	Sovereign Islands SPA	8.67	Cork
SPA	004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	6.52	Dublin

Other connected European sites beyond 15 km of the area to which the Strategy relates with hydrological links				
Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	County/Counties
SAC	000216	River Shannon Callows SAC	21.34	Galway, Offaly, Roscommon, Tipperary, Westmeath
SAC	000440	Lough Ree SAC	35.68	Westmeath
SAC	002241	Lough Derg, North-east Shore SAC	17.40	Galway, Tipperary
SPA	004046	Lough Iron SPA	18.49	Westmeath
SPA	004058	Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	16.26	Clare, Galway, Tipperary
SPA	004064	Lough Ree SPA	35.69	Westmeath
SPA	004077	River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	24.96	Clare, Kerry, Limerick
SPA	004086	River Little Brosna Callows SPA	21.48	Tipperary
SPA	004096	Middle Shannon Callows SPA	21.35	Offaly
SPA	004137	Dovegrove Callows SPA	18.01	Offaly
SPA	004151	Donegal Bay SPA	66.96	Donegal

Relevant Sites in Northern Ireland				
Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	County/Counties
NI_SAC	UK0016614	Upper Lough Erne	1.29	Fermanagh
NI_SAC	UK0016615	Eastern Mournes	11.83	Down
NI_SAC	UK0016620	Derryleckagh	4.38	Down
NI_SAC	UK0016621	Magheraveely Marl Loughs	0.00	Fermanagh
NI_SAC	UK0016622	Slieve Beagh	0.00	Fermanagh, Tyrone
NI_SAC	UK0030084	Bann Estuary	83.71	Derry
NI_SAC	UK0030212	Moninea Bog	12.76	Fermanagh
NI_SAC	UK0030268	Rostrevor Wood	2.76	Down
NI_SAC	UK0030277	Slieve Gullion	3.31	Armagh
NI_SPA	UK9020071	Upper Lough Erne	0.00	Fermanagh
NI_SPA	UK9020091	Lough Neagh and Lough Beg	26.28	Antrim, Armagh, Down, Derry, Tyrone
NI_SPA	UK9020161	Carlingford Lough	1.19	Down
NI_SPA	UK9020302	Slieve Beagh-Mullaghfad-Lisnaskea	0.00	Tyrone, Fermanagh
NI_pSPA	UK9020161	Carlingford Marine pSPA	0.49	Down

Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas within the area to which the Strategy relates				
Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	County/Counties
NHA	000652	Monaincha Bog/Ballaghmore Bog NHA	0.00	Tipperary
NHA	000703	Keeragh Islands NHA	0.00	Wexford
NHA	001324	Jamestown Bog NHA	0.00	Meath
NHA	001388	Carbury Bog NHA	0.00	Kildare
NHA	001393	Hodgestown Bog NHA	0.00	Kildare
NHA	001580	Girley Bog NHA	0.00	Meath
NHA	001582	Molerick Bog NHA	0.00	Meath
NHA	001603	Eshbrack Bog NHA	0.00	Monaghan
NHA	001853	Nore Valley Bogs NHA	0.00	Tipperary
NHA	002357	Clonreher Bog NHA	0.00	Laois
NHA	002382	Coan Bogs NHA	0.00	Kilkenny
NHA	002388	Slievenamon Bog NHA	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000001	Dromore Lakes	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	000006	Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally)	0.00	Meath
pNHA	000072	Blackwater River And Estuary	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000073	Blackwater River Callows	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000076	Ballycotton, Ballynamona And Shanagarry	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000077	Ballymacoda (Clonpriest And Pillmore)	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000078	Ballyvergan Marsh	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000083	Capel Island And Knockadoon Head	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000094	Lee Valley	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000099	Ballynaclashy House, North Of Midleton	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000103	Shournagh Valley	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000107	Templebreedy National School, Crosshaven	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000128	Liffey Valley	0.00	Dublin
pNHA	000371	Fountainstown Swamp	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000390	Ballina Bog	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	000391	Ballynafagh Bog	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	000392	Curragh (Kildare)	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	000393	Liffey Valley Meander Belt	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	000395	Mouds Bog	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	000396	Pollardstown Fen	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	000397	Red Bog, Kildare	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	000399	Lower River Suir (Coolfinn, Portlaw)	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000400	Ballykeefe Wood	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000401	Dunmore Cave	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000402	Fiddown Island	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000403	Garryrickin Nature Reserve	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000404	Hugginstown Fen	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000405	Kyleadohir Wood Nature Reserve	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000406	Lough Cullin	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000407	The Loughans	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000408	Mothel Church, Coolcullen	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000409	Rathsnagadan Wood	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000410	Thomastown	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000411	Tibberaghny Marshes	0.00	Kilkenny

pNHA	000412	Slieve Bloom Mountains	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000413	Annaghmore Lough Fen (Offaly)	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000415	Coolrain Bog	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000416	Derries Wood	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000417	Grantstown Wood And Lough	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000418	Cuffsborough	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000419	Knockacoller Bog	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000420	The Curragh And Goul River Marsh	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000421	Timahoe Esker	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000446	Loughs Aderry And Ballybutler	0.00	Cork
pNHA	000452	Carlingford Lough	0.00	Louth
pNHA	000453	Carlingford Mountain	0.00	Louth
pNHA	000455	Dundalk Bay	0.00	Louth
pNHA	000456	Stabannan-Braganstown	0.00	Louth
pNHA	000552	Corstown Loughs	0.00	Meath
pNHA	000553	Crewbane Marsh	0.00	Meath
pNHA	000554	Laytown Dunes/Nanny Estuary	0.00	Meath
pNHA	000556	Lough Shesk	0.00	Meath
pNHA	000557	Rathmoylan Esker	0.00	Meath
pNHA	000558	Emy Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	000559	Glaslough Lake	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	000560	Lough Fea Demesne	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	000561	Lough Naglack	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	000562	Monmurray Grassland	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	000563	Muckno Lake	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	000639	Annacarty Wetlands	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000646	Galtee Mountains	0.00	Limerick
pNHA	000649	Knockavilla National School, Dundrum	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000651	Mitchelstown Caves	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000655	River Suir Below Carrick-On-Suir	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000659	Belle Lake	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000660	Carrickavrantry Reservoir	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000663	Dungarvan Harbour	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000664	Dunmore East Cliffs	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000665	Helvick Head	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000666	Islandtarnsey Fen	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000667	Lismore Woods	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000668	Nier Valley Woodlands	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000669	Portlaw Woods	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000670	Tallow (Disused Church)	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000671	Tramore Dunes And Backstrand	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000695	Ballyhack	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000696	Ballyteige Burrow	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000697	Bannow Bay	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000698	Barrow River Estuary	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000699	Boley Fen	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000700	Cahore Polders And Dunes	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000702	Leskinfere Church, Clogh	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000704	Lady's Island Lake	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000707	Saltee Islands	0.00	Wexford

pNHA	000708	Screen Hills	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000709	Tacumshin Lake	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000711	Tintern Abbey	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000712	Wexford Slobs And Harbour	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000713	Ballyman Glen	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000714	Bray Head	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000716	Carriggower Bog	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000718	Devil's Glen	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000719	Glen Of The Downs	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000724	Kilmacanoge Marsh	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000725	Knocksink Wood	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000729	Buckroney-Brittas Dunes And Fen	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000730	The Murrough	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000731	Poulaphouca Reservoir	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000733	Vale Of Clara (Rathdrum Wood)	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000734	Wicklow Head	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	000741	Ballyconnigar Sand Pits	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000742	Ballyconnigar Upper	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000744	Ballykelly Marsh	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000745	Ballymoney Strand	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000746	Ballynabarney Wood	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000747	Ballyroe Fen And Lake	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000750	Bunclody Slate Quarries	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000755	Clone Fox Covert	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000757	Courtown Dunes And Glen	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000761	Forth Mountain	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000764	Hook Head	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000765	Killoughrum Forest	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000770	Blackstairs Mountains	0.00	Carlow
pNHA	000774	Oaklands Wood	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000781	Slaney River Valley	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000782	St. Helen's Burrow	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000787	Waterford Harbour	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	000788	Ardristan Fen	0.00	Carlow
pNHA	000792	Baggot's Wood	0.00	Carlow
pNHA	000797	Ballymoon Esker	0.00	Carlow
pNHA	000806	Cloghristick Wood	0.00	Carlow
pNHA	000808	John's Hill	0.00	Carlow
pNHA	000810	Oakpark	0.00	Carlow
pNHA	000812	Pollmounty River Valley	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	000821	Ardaloo Fen	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000827	Brownstown Wood	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000830	Clohastia	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000831	Cullahill Mountain	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000832	Esker Pits	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000833	Grannyferry	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000836	Inchbeg	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000837	Inistioge	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000839	Kilkeasy Bog	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000842	Kylecorragh Wood	0.00	Kilkenny

pNHA	000843	Mount Juliet	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000844	Murphy's Of The River	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000845	Newpark Marsh	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000846	Red Bog, Dungarvan	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000849	Spahill And Clomantagh Hill	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000855	Whitehall Quarries	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	000857	Ballylynan	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000858	Barrow Valley At Tankardstown Bridge	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	000859	Clonaslee Eskers And Derry Bog	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000860	Clopook Wood	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000862	Coolacurragh Wood	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000864	Delour River Near Lacca Manor	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000865	Emo Court	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000867	Kilteale Hill	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000868	Mannin Wetland	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000869	Lisbigney Bog	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000874	Forest House Wood	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000876	Ridge of Portlaoise	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000878	Rock Of Dunamase	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000881	The Great Heath Of Portlaoise	0.00	Laois
pNHA	000934	Kilduff, Devilsbit Mountain	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000942	Templemore Wood	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000945	Ardmayle Pond	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000947	Cahir Park Woodland	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000948	Aughnaglanny Valley	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000950	Dundrum Sanctuary	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000952	Glenboy Wood	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000954	Grove Wood	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000956	Inchinsquillib And Dowlings Woods	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000958	Kilcooly Abbey Lake	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000959	Killough Hill	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000961	Knockanavar Wood	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000964	Knockroe Fox Covert	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000965	Laffansbridge	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000966	Moneypark, Fethard	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000969	Power's Wood	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000970	Rockwell College Lake	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000971	Scaragh Wood	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000972	Shanbally Wood	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	000987	Lough Sheelin	0.00	Westmeath
pNHA	001029	Araglin Valley	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001039	Blarney Castle Woods	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001042	Carrigshane Hill	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001046	Douglas River Estuary	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001054	Glanmire Wood	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001058	Great Island Channel	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001064	Leamlara Wood	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001066	Lough Beg (Cork)	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001074	Rockfarm Quarry, Little Island	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001076	Rostellan Lough, Aghada Shore And Poulnabibe Inlet	0.00	Cork

pNHA	001081	Cork Lough	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001082	Dunkettle Shore	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001084	Whitegate Bay	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001183	Clasharinka Pond	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001202	Ballybetagh Bog	0.00	Dublin
pNHA	001235	Ballyquirk Pond	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001249	Ballincollig Cave	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001268	Cordoo Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001293	Blackhall Woods	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001357	Trim	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001387	Ballynafagh Lake	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	001389	Corballis Hill	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	001390	Derryvullagh Island	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	001391	Donadea Wood	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	001394	Kilteel Wood	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	001395	Liffey At Osberstown	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	001396	Liffey Bank Above Athgarvan	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton	0.00	Kildare
pNHA	001408	Carrigacrump Caves	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001451	Liscarragh Marsh	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001454	Ardee Cutaway Bog	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001458	Castlecoo Hill	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001459	Clogher Head	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001461	Darver Castle Woods	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001462	Drumcah, Toprass And Cortial Loughs	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001464	Mellifont Abbey Woods	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001465	Woodland At Omeath Park	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001468	Trumpet Hill (Louth)	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001494	Dunamase Woods	0.00	Laois
pNHA	001495	Lough Ross	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001526	Quarryford Bridge	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001558	Breakey Loughs	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001573	Ballynabarny Fen	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001576	Cromwell's Bush Fen	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001578	Duleek Commons	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001579	Balrath Woods	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001584	Mount Hevey Bog	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001587	Mentrim Lough	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001589	Rossnaree Riverbank	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001591	Slane Riverbank	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001592	Boyne Woods	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001593	Thomastown Bog	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001594	Ballyhoe Lough	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001595	Loughbawn House Loughs	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001596	Black And Derrygoony Loughs	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001599	Creevy Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001600	Drumakill Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001601	Drumgole Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001602	Drumreaske Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001604	Gibson's Lough	0.00	Monaghan

pNHA	001605	Lough Egish	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001606	Rafinny Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001607	Lough Smiley	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001608	Monalty Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001611	Ulster Canal (Aghalisk)	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001612	Wright's Wood	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001616	Louth Hall And Ardee Woods	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001666	Tassan Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001671	Spring And Corcrin Loughs	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001691	Ballin Lough (Waterford)	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001692	Ballyeelinan Wood	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001693	Ballyvoyle Head To Tramore	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001695	Castlecraddock Bog	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001697	Fennor Bog	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001698	Glenanna Wood	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001700	Kilbarry Bog	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001701	Kilsheelin Lake	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001702	King's Channel	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001705	Lissaviron Bog	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001707	Stradbally Woods	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001708	Toor Wood	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001733	Ardamine Wood	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	001736	Cahore Point North Sandhills	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	001737	Donaghmore Sandhills	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	001738	Duncannon Sandhills	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	001741	Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	001742	Kilpatrick Sandhills	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	001745	Arklow Rock-Askintinny	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001746	Arklow Sand Dunes	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001748	Avoca River Valley	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001749	Ballinacor Wood	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001750	Ballinagee Wood	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001751	Ballycore Rath	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001754	Dargle River Valley	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001755	Glencree Valley	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001756	Glenealy Woods	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001757	Holdenstown Bog	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001759	Newtown Marshes	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001764	Lowtown Fen	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001766	Magherabeg Dunes	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001767	Powerscourt Waterfall	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001768	Powerscourt Woodland	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001769	Great Sugar Loaf	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001771	Vartry Reservoir	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001772	Dunlavin Marshes	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001781	Lisarilly Bog	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001782	Killyhoman Marsh	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001783	Corcreeghy Lake And Woodland	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001784	Rosefield Lake And Woodland	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001785	Mullaghmore Lake (South)	0.00	Monaghan

pNHA	001786	Kilroosky Lough Cluster	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001798	Blarney Lake	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001799	Ardamadane Wood	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001800	Stradbally Hill	0.00	Laois
pNHA	001801	Barmeath Woods	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001803	Stephenstown Pond	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001804	King William's Glen	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001805	Ravensdale Plantation	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001806	Kildemock Marsh	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001810	White Lough, Ben Loughs And Lough Doo	0.00	Westmeath
pNHA	001814	Lough Naneagh	0.00	Westmeath
pNHA	001828	Reaghstown Marsh	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001834	Kilgorman River Marsh	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	001835	Lisabuck Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001836	Annagheane Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001837	Mullaglassan Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001838	Kilcorran Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001839	Killyvilly Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001840	Lislannan Bog	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001841	Drumcor Lough	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	001844	Ballydonagh Marsh	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001845	Doonoor Marsh	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001846	Ballyneill Marsh	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001847	Philipston Marsh	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001848	Kilbeg Marsh	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001851	Bilboa And Gortnageragh River Valleys	0.00	Limerick
pNHA	001852	Tomnafinnoge Wood	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001856	Dunany Point	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001857	Blarney Bog	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001858	Galmoy Fen	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	001859	Dunmore Complex	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	001861	Dowth Wetland	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001862	Boyne River Islands	0.00	Louth
pNHA	001914	Lough Macask	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	001923	Shanahoe Marsh	0.00	Laois
pNHA	001929	Wicklow Town Sites	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001930	Ballyteige Marsh	0.00	Wexford
pNHA	001931	Arklow Town Marsh	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	001933	Glenmore Wood	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001934	Cabragh Wetlands	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001952	Comeragh Mountains	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	001957	Boyne Coast And Estuary	0.00	Meath
pNHA	001966	Minane Bridge Marsh	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001978	Ballycotton Islands	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001979	Monkstown Creek	0.00	Cork
pNHA	001980	Lizzy Smyth's Bog	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001981	Marlfield Lake	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001982	Templetney Quarry	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001984	Greenane Marsh	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	001987	Cuskinny Marsh	0.00	Cork

pNHA	001990	Owenboy River	0.00	Cork
pNHA	002043	Bansha Wood	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	002051	Archersgrove	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	002053	Hollywood Glen	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	002060	Aghsmear House	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	002066	Ormond's Mill, Loughmoe, Templemore	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	002076	River Nore/Abbeyleix Woods Complex	0.00	Laois
pNHA	002077	Nafarty Fen	0.00	Monaghan
pNHA	002093	Avondale	0.00	Wicklow
pNHA	002094	Ice House, Near Inistioge, Co. Kilkenny	0.00	Kilkenny
pNHA	002095	Glencairn	0.00	Waterford
pNHA	002096	Dundrum	0.00	Tipperary
pNHA	002103	Royal Canal	0.00	Meath
pNHA	002104	Grand Canal	0.00	Kildare

Other Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas within 15 km from the area to which the Strategy relates				
Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	County/Counties
NHA	000105	Sovereign Islands NHA	8.67	Cork
NHA	000570	Black Castle Bog NHA	1.19	Offaly
NHA	000677	Cloncrow Bog (New Forest) NHA	13.22	Westmeath
NHA	000684	Lough Derravaragh NHA	9.31	Westmeath
NHA	000694	Wooddown Bog NHA	11.16	Westmeath
NHA	000890	Cangort Bog NHA	9.79	Offaly
NHA	000921	Screggan Bog NHA	4.11	Offaly
NHA	000937	Scohaboy Bog NHA	10.92	Tipperary
NHA	000985	Lough Kinale And Derragh Lough NHA	3.89	Cavan
NHA	001218	Skerries Islands NHA	9.46	Dublin
NHA	002033	Daingean Bog NHA	7.92	Offaly
NHA	002186	Grageen Fen And Bog NHA	6.90	Limerick
NHA	002323	Milltownpass Bog NHA	2.59	Westmeath
NHA	002355	Hawkswood Bog NHA	2.08	Offaly
NHA	002385	Mauherslieve Bog NHA	3.16	Tipperary
NHA	002450	Bleanbeg Bog NHA	8.95	Tipperary
pNHA	000003	Cootehill Church	0.86	Cavan
pNHA	000007	Lough Oughter And Associated Loughs	1.29	Cavan
pNHA	000008	Lough Ramor	2.09	Cavan
pNHA	000074	Awbeg Valley (Below Doneraile)	12.70	Cork
pNHA	000079	Bride/Bunaglanna Valley	5.86	Cork
pNHA	000085	Glanworth Ponds	6.53	Cork
pNHA	000178	Santry Demesne	7.84	Dublin
pNHA	000199	Baldoyle Bay	14.37	Dublin
pNHA	000201	Dolphins, Dublin Docks	13.50	Dublin
pNHA	000205	Malahide Estuary	8.30	Dublin
pNHA	000206	North Dublin Bay	12.71	Dublin
pNHA	000207	Rockabill Island	14.16	Dublin
pNHA	000208	Rogerstown Estuary	8.98	Dublin
pNHA	000210	South Dublin Bay	8.55	Dublin
pNHA	000211	Slade Of Saggart And Crooksling Glen	0.50	Dublin
pNHA	000436	Herbertstown Fen	4.72	Limerick

pNHA	000437	Lough Gur	8.55	Limerick
pNHA	000571	Charleville Wood	5.88	Offaly
pNHA	000572	Clara Bog	14.78	Offaly
pNHA	000574	Clonad Wood	2.52	Offaly
pNHA	000579	Kinnitty (Domestic Dwelling, Occupied)	7.19	Offaly
pNHA	000582	Raheenmore Bog	12.74	Offaly
pNHA	000583	Roscrea Bog	1.38	Offaly
pNHA	000585	Sharavogue Bog	13.46	Offaly
pNHA	000650	Lough Ourna	11.51	Tipperary
pNHA	000656	St. Anne's, (Sean Ross Abbey), Roscrea	2.34	Tipperary
pNHA	000672	Aghalasty Fen	2.19	Westmeath
pNHA	000679	Garriskil Bog	14.74	Westmeath
pNHA	000681	Hill Of Mael And The Rock Of Curry	2.83	Westmeath
pNHA	000685	Lough Ennell	12.06	Westmeath
pNHA	000686	Lough Glore	1.25	Westmeath
pNHA	000690	Lough Sheever Fen/Slevin's Lough Complex	13.98	Westmeath
pNHA	000882	Ballintemple Bog	3.13	Offaly
pNHA	000885	Ballyduff Esker	11.61	Offaly
pNHA	000889	Camcor Wood	3.12	Offaly
pNHA	000896	Derrygolan Esker	14.29	Westmeath
pNHA	000897	Derrykeel Meadows	8.27	Offaly
pNHA	000899	Ballindangan Marsh	4.72	Cork
pNHA	000900	Drumakeenan, Eagle Hill And Perry's Mill	7.17	Offaly
pNHA	000903	Golden Grove Woods	6.31	Offaly
pNHA	000906	Kilcormac Esker	5.68	Offaly
pNHA	000909	Lough Coura	11.83	Offaly
pNHA	000913	Mount St.Joseph Woods	5.66	Offaly
pNHA	000916	Pallas Lough	5.19	Offaly
pNHA	000917	Raheen Lough	3.09	Offaly
pNHA	000918	Rahugh Ridge (Kiltober Esker)	13.53	Westmeath
pNHA	000925	The Long Derries, Edenderry	0.61	Offaly
pNHA	000930	Clare Glen	12.21	Limerick
pNHA	000931	Derrygareen Heath	11.12	Tipperary
pNHA	000936	Lough Nahinch (Tipperary)	11.96	Offaly
pNHA	000938	Sheehills Esker	0.30	Tipperary
pNHA	000939	Silvermine Mountains	10.96	Tipperary
pNHA	000943	Willsborough Esker	13.58	Tipperary
pNHA	000974	Annagh Lough (Ballyconnell)	13.86	Cavan
pNHA	000980	Drumkeen House Woodland	10.23	Cavan
pNHA	000984	Lough Garrow And Lough Gubdoo	0.95	Cavan
pNHA	000988	Madabawn Marsh	3.50	Cavan
pNHA	000991	Dodder Valley	6.58	Dublin
pNHA	000992	Lough Gowna	9.83	Cavan
pNHA	001055	Glashgarriff River	13.08	Cork
pNHA	001060	James Fort	8.73	Cork
pNHA	001133	Nenagh River Gorge	4.14	Tipperary
pNHA	001169	Brown's Farm, Togher Cross Roads	8.13	Cork
pNHA	001178	Killavalla Wood	1.20	Tipperary
pNHA	001197	Keeper Hill	8.81	Tipperary
pNHA	001203	Knock Lake	4.70	Dublin

pNHA	001204	Bog Of The Ring	2.54	Dublin
pNHA	001205	Booterstown Marsh	9.87	Dublin
pNHA	001206	Dalkey Coastal Zone And Killiney Hill	3.90	Dublin
pNHA	001207	Dingle Glen	1.73	Dublin
pNHA	001208	Feltrim Hill	10.13	Dublin
pNHA	001209	Glenasmole Valley	1.78	Dublin
pNHA	001211	Loughlinstown Woods	3.55	Dublin
pNHA	001212	Lugmore Glen	3.88	Dublin
pNHA	001215	Portraine Shore	14.26	Dublin
pNHA	001365	Lough Boora	9.66	Offaly
pNHA	001430	Glen Bog	7.17	Limerick
pNHA	001432	Glenstal Wood	11.71	Limerick
pNHA	001515	Bandon Valley Below Inishannon	11.79	Cork
pNHA	001561	Awbeg Valley (Castletownroche)	12.39	Cork
pNHA	001721	Lough Bane	4.79	Westmeath
pNHA	001740	Bandon Valley Above Inishannon	11.73	Cork
pNHA	001753	Fitzsimon's Wood	5.82	Dublin
pNHA	001763	Sluice River Marsh	13.56	Dublin
pNHA	001775	Murphy's Bridge Esker	11.70	Offaly
pNHA	001777	Ballyduff Wood	11.26	Offaly
pNHA	001793	Blackwater Valley (Ballincurrig Wood)	12.61	Cork
pNHA	001794	Blackwater Valley (Kilcummer)	11.44	Cork
pNHA	001795	Blackwater Valley (Killathy Wood)	6.28	Cork
pNHA	001796	Blackwater Valley (Cregg)	4.52	Cork
pNHA	001797	Blackwater Valley (The Beech Wood)	1.88	Cork
pNHA	001829	Ballinaltig Beg Pond	9.33	Cork
pNHA	001849	Ballyvorheen Bog	9.56	Limerick
pNHA	001850	Dromsallagh Bog	8.56	Limerick
pNHA	001996	Skoolhill	13.31	Limerick
pNHA	002000	Loughshinny Coast	11.47	Dublin
pNHA	002035	Glenacurrane River Valley	3.93	Limerick
pNHA	002036	Ballyhoura Mountains	13.11	Limerick
pNHA	002037	Carrigeenamronety Hill	11.18	Cork
pNHA	002050	Cregg Castle	4.87	Cork
pNHA	002058	Bracken's Dwelling, Near Whiteford	14.08	Offaly
pNHA	002063	St. Joseph's, Mountheaton	5.77	Offaly
pNHA	002064	Drumakeenan National School	6.52	Offaly
pNHA	002065	Miltown, Shinrone	6.37	Offaly
pNHA	002069	Ardagullion Bog	13.54	Longford
pNHA	002087	Ballynacourty Wood	11.95	Limerick
pNHA	002089	Ballyroe Hill & Mortlestown Hill	10.45	Limerick
pNHA	002090	Castleoliver Woods	12.49	Limerick
pNHA	002097	Convamore, Ballyhooly (Near Fermoy)	10.48	Cork

Nature Reserves		
Within the area to which the Strategy relates	Partially within or adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates	Relevant sites In Northern Ireland
Knocksink Wood Nature Reserve (County Wicklow)		Rostrevor Forest
Glen of the Downs Nature Reserve (County Wicklow)		Murlough
Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve (County Wicklow)		Brackagh Bog

Vale of Clara Nature Reserve (County Wicklow)		Killard
Glendalough Nature Reserve (County Wicklow)		Hollymount Forest
Glenealo Valley Nature Reserve (County Wicklow)		Quoile Pondage Basin
Pollardstown Fen Nature Reserve (County Kildare)		Cloughy Rocks
Timahoe Esker Nature Reserve (County Laois)		Granagh Bay
Grantsown Wood and Granston Lough Nature Reserve (County Laois)		Dorn
Coolacurragh Wood Nature Reserve (County Laois)		Reilly & Gole Woods
Slieve Bloom Mountains Nature Reserve (County Laois)		Killykeeghan
The Raven Nature Reserve (County Wexford)		Crossmurrin
Wexford Wildfowl Reserve (County Wexford)		Marble Arch
Ballyteigue Burrow Nature Reserve (County Wexford)		Hanging Rock & Rossaa Forest
Ballykeeffe Wood Nature Reserve (County Kilkenny)		Ross Lough
Kyledohir Wood Nature Reserve (County Kilkenny)		Correl Glen Forest
Garryricken Woods Nature Reserve (County Kilkenny)		Lough Naman Bog
Capel Island and Knockadoon Head Nature Reserve (County Cork)		

Ramsar Sites		
Within the area to which the Strategy relates	Partially within or adjacent to the area to which the Strategy relates	Relevant sites in Northern Ireland
Dundalk Bay (County Louth)		Carlingford Lough
Pollardstiwn Fen (County Kildare)		Killough Bay
Slieve Bloom Mountains (County Laois)		Strangford Lough
The Raven (County Wexford)		Turmennan
Wexford Wildfowl Reserve (County Wexford)		Magheraveeley Marl Loughs
Bannow Bay (County Wexford)		Upper Lough Erne
Tramore Backstrand (County Waterford)		Cuilcagh Mountain
Dungarvan Harbour (County Waterford)		Slieve Beagh
Blackwater Estuary (County Waterford)		Fardrum & Roosky Turloughs
Ballycotton Bay (County Cork)		
Cork Harbour (County Cork)		

County Geological Sites		
Site Code	Site Name	County
LH001	Ardee-Newtown Bedform Field	Louth
LH013	Collon Quarry	Louth
KE008	Pollardstown Fen and springs	Kildare
MH022	Nobber	Meath
MH023	Painestown Quarry	Meath
LH007	Barnavave Summit	Louth
WD029	Kilfarrasy Strand	Waterford
KE010	Ballykane Hill	Kildare
LH020	King John's Castle	Louth
SD003	Brittas Gravel Complex	South Dublin
WW048	Mullaghcleevaun	Wicklow
WD034	Tankardstown Mine	Waterford
WD031	Knockmahon and Stage Cove	Waterford
WD026	Bunmahon Head	Waterford
WD025	Ballydowane Bay	Waterford
KK015	Ahenny	Kilkenny
KK016	Coolbaun Valley	Kilkenny

KK017	Deerpark Mine	Kilkenny
KK003	Kiltorcan Old Quarry	Kilkenny
WW003	Avoca - Connary	Wicklow
WW004	Avoca - Cronebane	Wicklow
WW005	Avoca - Sroughmore	Wicklow
MH017	Trim Esker	Meath
MH018	Altmush Stream	Meath
WD047	Raheen Shore	Waterford
KK001	Dunmore Cave	Kilkenny
KK004	Lisdowney Quarry	Kilkenny
MH027	Boyne River, Trim	Meath
MH028	St. Gorman's Spring	Meath
MN001	Aphuca Cave	Monaghan
WD007	Ballynamintra Cave	Waterford
KE014	Liffey Valley	Kildare
KE015	Kilbrook Spring	Kildare
LH025	Port Raised Beach	Louth
WW045	Lugnaquilla	Wicklow
MN013	Mokeeran Quarry	Monaghan
LH022	Linns Moraine	Louth
LH023	Mell Quarry	Louth
LH024	Oriel Brook	Louth
MH013	Mullaghmore	Meath
KE013	Liffey Oxbow	Kildare
KE018	**St. Bridget's Well** - Japanese Gardens	Kildare
KE019	**St. Patrick's Well 1**	Kildare
KE020	**St. Patrick's Well 2**	Kildare
MH019	Bray Hill	Meath
MH020	Duleek Quarry	Meath
KE011	Carbury Castle	Kildare
KE012	Carrick Hill	Kildare
MH015	Rathkenny	Meath
MH016	Rathmolyon Esker	Meath
KE021	**St. Peter's Well**	Kildare
KE022	Rathcore Spring	Kildare
MH014	Murrens	Meath
WD027	Dunabrattin Head	Waterford
WW060	Wicklow-Greystones Coast	Wicklow
WD051	Sluggera Crossroads	Waterford
MH021	Kilbride Quarry	Meath
WW020	Enniskerry Delta	Wicklow
WW021	Glasnamullen	Wicklow
CN018	Scotshouse-Redhills Cross-cutting Ribbed Moraines	Cavan
KK018	Threecastles Quarry	Kilkenny
KK019	Windgap Artesian Borehole	Kilkenny
LH021	King William's Glen	Louth
DLR010	The Scalp	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
WD046	Quillia	Waterford
SD010	Newcastle Buried Channel	South Dublin
WW024	Glencullen River	Wicklow

WD039	Fenor Bog	Waterford
WW001	Athdown Moraine	Wicklow
WW002	Aughrim Quarry	Wicklow
MN006	Creevy Cave	Monaghan
CW001	Ballyellin Quarry	Carlow
CW002	Aclare House	Carlow
MN014	Moylan Lough	Monaghan
WD014	Carrigmurrish Cave	Waterford
WD040	Kilgreany Cave	Waterford
MH002	St. Keeran's Well	Meath
MH003	Bellewstown	Meath
WD010	Bewley Caves	Waterford
WD012	Bridgequarter Cave	Waterford
WW012	Blessington Delta	Wicklow
WW051	River Dargle Valley	Wicklow
WW052	Rocky Valley	Wicklow
WW053	Slieveroe lane and rail cutting	Wicklow
WW054	Snugborough	Wicklow
WW055	The Scalp	Wicklow
KK009	Ballyraggett Quarry	Kilkenny
KK010	Bennettsbridge Quarry	Kilkenny
KK011	Granny Quarry	Kilkenny
KK012	Coolbaun Hill	Kilkenny
KK013	Piltown	Kilkenny
MN019	Tiragarvan	Monaghan
MN020	Tullyvaragh	Monaghan
WD041	Knockalahara Sink	Waterford
WD045	Oonagaloor and Brother's Cave	Waterford
WD050	Shandon Railway Cutting Cave	Waterford
WD013	Cappagh Quarry	Waterford
CW004	Bannagagole Quarry	Carlow
CW005	Clogrenan Quarry	Carlow
CW006	**Morrisey's Quarry**	Carlow
LH031	Templetown Raised |Beach	Louth
LH032	Waterunderbridge-Dry Bridge	Louth
MH001	Gibstown Castle	Meath
WW023	Glen Of The Downs	Wicklow
MH009	Benhead	Meath
LH027	Rathcor Complex	Louth
LH028	Salterstown	Louth
MN007	Donaghmoyne Rising	Monaghan
MN008	Fin McCool's Chair and Kilmactrasna Cave	Monaghan
KK014	Clogh River	Kilkenny
WD016	Comeragh Mountains	Waterford
WD009	Ballyquin Shore	Waterford
WW057	Toor Channel	Wicklow
WW059	Upper River Liffey	Wicklow
MN002	Ballyloughan Turloughs	Monaghan
WD002	Ardoginna	Waterford
WD017	Comeragh Volcanics	Waterford

WD048	Rathmoylan Cove	Waterford
WW036	Greystones Beach	Wicklow
WW009	Ballydonnell	Wicklow
WW011	Ballyrahan Quarry	Wicklow
MN009	Hope Mine	Monaghan
MN010	Knocknacran Gypsum Mine	Monaghan
MN011	Leeg Drumlin	Monaghan
MN012	Lemgare	Monaghan
CW003	Ballymoon Esker, Bagenalstown	Carlow
MN015	Rockcorry-Cootehill Ribbed Moraines	Monaghan
WD030	Kilmurrin Cove	Waterford
KE001	Chair of Kildare	Kildare
WW007	Avoca - Tigroney West	Wicklow
WW008	Avoca - West Avoca	Wicklow
WW034	Great Sugar Loaf	Wicklow
WW035	Greystones (Appinite)	Wicklow
DLR007	Killiney Bay	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
WD005	Ballynahemery Cave	Waterford
WD006	Ballynameelagh Caves	Waterford
MH024	Rockwood Cliffs	Meath
MH025	Carrickleck (Silica Sand)	Meath
MH026	Dunshaughlin	Meath
DLR001	Ballybetagh Bog	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
MH008	Laytown to Gormanston	Meath
LH018	Dundalk Bay	Louth
KE007	Moorhill	Kildare
WW041	Lough Dan, North End (Granite contact)	Wicklow
MN016	Scotshouse-Redhills Cross-Cutting Ribbed Moraines	Monaghan
MN017	Tamlat	Monaghan
MN018	Tassan	Monaghan
KK008	Ballykeefe Quarry	Kilkenny
MH004	Grangegeeth	Meath
MH005	Barley Hill Quarry	Meath
MH006	Cregg	Meath
MH007	Poulmore Scarp	Meath
SD006	Kippure	South Dublin
WW042	Lough Nahanagan	Wicklow
MN003	Calliagh	Monaghan
MN004	Carrickatee Hill	Monaghan
CN017	Rockcorry-Cootehill Ribbed Moraines	Cavan
LH010	Castlebellingham Morainic Complex	Louth
LH011	Clogher Head	Louth
LH012	Clogher Head Wave Cut Platform	Louth
KK007	Archersgrove Quarry	Kilkenny
WW044	Luggala	Wicklow
WW046	Manger-Saundersgrove	Wicklow
WW047	Mottee Stone	Wicklow
KE009	The Curragh	Kildare
LH019	Greenore Raised Beach	Louth
WD053	Tramore	Waterford

WD028	Garrarus Strand	Waterford
WW015	Camaderry Appinite	Wicklow
MH010	Blackwater Valley	Meath
MH011	Boyne Valley	Meath
MH012	Galtrim Moraine	Meath
KK002	Kiltorcan New Quarry	Kilkenny
LH015	Cooley Point	Louth
LH017	Dunany Point	Louth
KE005	Ballysax	Kildare
KE006	Glen Ding	Kildare
LH009	Carlingford Area	Louth
WW049	Powerscourt Deerpark Cave	Wicklow
WW050	Powerscourt Waterfall	Wicklow
LH008	Bush Delta	Louth
WH008	Fore Hills	Westmeath
LH026	Rampark	Louth
LS024	Modubeagh	Laois
LS026	Old Rossmore	Laois
LS012	Flemings Fireclay Quarries	Laois
LS003	Ballyadams Quarry	Laois
WH014	Lough Bane and Lough Glass	Westmeath
WH007	Finnea-Murrens Esker	Westmeath
WW010	Ballyknockan Quarries	Wicklow
WW006	Avoca - Tigroney East	Wicklow
WD003	Ballymacart River	Waterford
WD011	Blackwater Bend	Waterford
WD042	Knockmealdown Gullies	Waterford
LS017	Killeshin Glen	Laois
LS021	Luggacurren Stream Section	Laois
LS025	Moyadd Stream	Laois
LS009	Clopook Cave	Laois
LS027	Poulastore	Laois
CN001	Blackwater Valley	Cavan
KE016	Louisa Bridge Cold Spring	Kildare
KE017	Louisa Bridge Warm Spring	Kildare
LH002	Barnavave Quarry	Louth
LH003	Barnavave Site B	Louth
LH029	Slieve Foy Slate Rock	Louth
LS015	Hollymount	Laois
LS030	Rock of Cashel	Laois
LS020	Luggacurren Fireclay Pit	Laois
LS004	Baunreagh Quarry	Laois
LS013	Glebe Quarry	Laois
LS014	Glenbarrow	Laois
LS022	M7 Road cut - Derryvorrigan	Laois
LS005	Carrolls Quarry	Laois
LH030	Slievenaglogh	Louth
LH033	Windy Gap	Louth
WD001	Ardmore Mine	Waterford
WD054	Tramore Burrow	Waterford

WD037	Dungarvan Harbour	Waterford
WD008	Ballynamuck Boreholes	Waterford
LS019	Lisduff Quarry	Laois
LS023	M8 Road cut - Addergoole	Laois
LS028	Rathleague Spring	Laois
LS031	Rock of Dunamase	Laois
WX025	Kilmore Quay	Wexford
WX040	St. Patrick's Bridge	Wexford
WW019	Dunran Channel	Wicklow
LH004	Barnavave Site C	Louth
WD036	Drumslig	Waterford
WD049	Ross Slate Quarries	Waterford
TY053	Nore Valley Bog	Tipperary
TY036	Horeabbey	Tipperary
TY003	Ardfinnan	Tipperary
TY054	Owenbeg Moraines	Tipperary
WX003	Ballyteige Bay	Wexford
WX020	Greenore Point	Wexford
WX038	St. Helen's Glaciomarine Mud	Wexford
WW058	Upper Lockstown Delta and Kings River	Wicklow
LH005	Barnavave Site D	Louth
LH006	Barnavave Site F	Louth
LH014	Cooley Castle Quarry	Louth
LH016	Drumenagh Quarry	Louth
TY012	Ballytarsna M8 Road Cut	Tipperary
TY013	Bansha and Castle Mary Moraine and Outwash	Tipperary
TY032	Glen of Aherlow	Tipperary
TY014	Bay Lough Corrie	Tipperary
TY061	Rock of Cashel	Tipperary
WX041	Tacumshin Lake	Wexford
WX039	St. Helen's Harbour	Wexford
WX037	Shelmaliere Commons Quarry	Wexford
WX018	Forth Mountain	Wexford
WX034	Saltee Islands	Wexford
WW022	Glen Ding	Wicklow
TY011	Ballyrichard Quarry	Tipperary
TY025	Dangan Mushroom Rock	Tipperary
TY035	Hollyford Mines	Tipperary
TY057	Reafadda Quarry	Tipperary
WX012	Carnsore Point	Wexford
WX028	Lady's Island Lake	Wexford
WX017	Fethard	Wexford
WX006	Blackstairs Mountain	Wexford
WW018	Devil's Glen	Wicklow
TY041	Knockordan Hill	Tipperary
TY050	Mitchelstown Caves	Tipperary
TY060	Roaring Wells	Tipperary
TY066	Tincurry Sink	Tipperary
WX009	Cahore Polders and Dunes	Wexford
WX011	Camaross Pingos	Wexford

WX026	Kilpatrick Sandhills	Wexford
LS018	Kyle Spring	Laois
LS006	Castlecomer Borehole - Swan	Laois
LS007	Clogh River	Laois
LS029	Ridge of Portlaise	Laois
TY065	Thurles Cathedral	Tipperary
TY038	Kilfeacle Quarry	Tipperary
TY008	Ballymacadam	Tipperary
TY016	Borrisnoe and Cloncannon	Tipperary
WX030	Mulmontry Gorge	Wexford
WX043	Wexford Harbour	Wexford
WX015	Cullenstown	Wexford
WX008	Cahore Point	Wexford
WX032	Petit's Bay	Wexford
WX001	Baginbun Head	Wexford
LS032	Sluggory Cross Roads	Laois
LS033	Timahoe Esker	Laois
LS001	Abbeyleix Bog	Laois
LS002	Arless Quarry	Laois
LS008	Clonaslee Eskers	Laois
LS010	Darkin Well	Laois
LS011	Farnans Quarry	Laois
LS016	Killeany Quarry	Laois
TY063	Seefin	Tipperary
TY028	Fantane Quarry	Tipperary
TY010	Ballyoughter Bridge	Tipperary
TY021	Clodiagh River Meanders	Tipperary
TY030	Galtee Mountains	Tipperary
WX033	Pollshone Head - Roney Point	Wexford
WX002	Ballymoney Strand	Wexford
WX022	Harrylock Bay	Wexford
WX031	Oldtown to Harrylock Bay	Wexford
WX023	Hook Head	Wexford
WX035	Sandeel Bay	Wexford
WW056	Tober Demesne	Wicklow
WW013	Bray Head	Wicklow
WW014	Britonstown	Wicklow
WW016	Cloghleagh Mine	Wicklow
WW017	Lough Dan, Lough Tay and Cloghoge River	Wicklow
WW025	Glendalough	Wicklow
WW026	Glendasan - Foxrock	Wicklow
KK022	Danesfort M9 Cutting	Kilkenny
KK023	Dunbell M9 Cutting	Kilkenny
KK020	Barrettstown Quarry	Kilkenny
KK025	Hugginstown M9 Cutting	Kilkenny
TY018	Cabragh Wetlands	Tipperary
TY051	Monaraha Esker	Tipperary
TY047	Littleton Bog	Tipperary
TY039	Killough Hill	Tipperary
WX019	Graigue Great	Wexford

WX029	Loftusacre	Wexford
WX007	Booley Bay	Wexford
WX021	Greenville Farmyard	Wexford
WX013	Carrigadaggan	Wexford
WX005	Barrystown Mine	Wexford
WX014	Coolishall Quarry	Wexford
WX027	Kiltrea	Wexford
WD033	Stradbally Cove	Waterford
WD035	Croaghaun Hill	Waterford
WD038	Dunhill Quarry	Waterford
WD043	N25 Road Cuttings	Waterford
WD044	Newtown	Waterford
WD052	St Declans Stone	Waterford
WW027	Glendasan - Hero	Wicklow
TY042	Laffansbridge Quarry	Tipperary
TY055	Polldonragh and The Bulls Hole of Rocks	Tipperary
TY068	Tobernaloo	Tipperary
TY067	Toberadora	Tipperary
TY022	Cloghleigh Quarry	Tipperary
TY005	Ballingarry Copper	Tipperary
TY009	Ballynunty-Mardyke	Tipperary
WX010	Caim Mine	Wexford
WX004	Bannow Bay	Wexford
WX036	Screen Hills	Wexford
WX016	Curracloe Beach and The Raven Point	Wexford
WW028	Glendasan - Luganure	Wicklow
WW029	Glendasan - Ruplagh	Wicklow
WW030	Glendasan - St. Kevins	Wicklow
WW031	Glenmacnass Valley	Wicklow
WW032	Glenmalure	Wicklow
WW037	Hollywood Glen	Wicklow
KK024	Earlsrath M9 Cutting	Kilkenny
KK026	King's River M9 Cutting	Kilkenny
KK021	Bennettsbridge M9 Cutting	Kilkenny
TY017	Breagaun Hill Quarry	Tipperary
TY023	Coalbrook	Tipperary
TY026	Devilsbit	Tipperary
TY027	Earlshill	Tipperary
TY033	Gortdrum	Tipperary
TY034	Gorteen	Tipperary
WX042	Tincone	Wexford
WW039	Kippure	Wicklow
WW040	Lough Bray	Wicklow
WW043	Lough Ouler	Wicklow
KE002	Dunmurry Hill	Kildare
KE003	Hill of Allen	Kildare
KE004	Slate Quarries	Kildare
WW061	Wicklow Service Area	Wicklow
TY044	Lisheen Mine	Tipperary
TY049	Marlfield	Tipperary

WW062	Woodenbridge Wellfield	Wicklow
WW033	Goldmines River	Wicklow
WW038	Kilmacurra Quarry	Wicklow
WD055	Whiting Bay and Goat Island	Waterford
WD004	Ballynacourty	Waterford
TY024	Commons	Tipperary
TY045	Lissvarrinane Meltwater Channels	Tipperary
WD015	Clonea Strand	Waterford
MN005	Clontibret Stream	Monaghan
KK005	Ballyfoyle Channels	Kilkenny
KK006	Inistioge	Kilkenny

Other Geological Sites	
Site Name	County
Youghal (under light-house)	Cork
Lough Beg Section	Cork
White Bay - Roche's point - Gyleen	Cork
Midleton Distillery Springs	Cork
Dower Spring, Castlemartyr	Cork
Ringaskiddy, Golden Rock	Cork
Ringabella Section - Fountainstown - Myrtleville - Rams Head	Cork
Ballycotton	Cork
Little Island	Cork
St. Joseph's section on Lee Road (Cork city)	Cork
Cork Harbour	Cork
Tubbrid, Millstreet	Cork
Ringabella Bay and Point	Cork
Blackrock diamond quarry	Cork
Corkbeg Island	Cork
Cloyne Clay Pits	Cork
Rock Farm Quarry, Little Island	Cork
Myrtleville to Ram's Head	Cork
Knockadoon Head	Cork
Baneshane Quarry	Cork
Ballycotton Bay	Cork
Cloyne	Cork
Fountaintown Creek to Ringabella Beach	Cork
Minane Bridge (Laharran Quarry)	Cork
Laharran Quarry, Minane Bridge	Cork
Ballycroneen Bay	Cork
Ballygarvan Quarry	Cork

National Monuments in State Care				
Monument Number	Location (Townland)	Name of Monument	Ownership/Guardianship	County/Counties
CW026-011----	Ballyknock, Bauck, Glebe (St. Mullin's Lower By.) (Detached Portion),St. Mullin's	Historic Town	Ownership	Carlow
KD010-014002-	Taghadoe	Round Tower	Ownership	Kildare

KD010-014004-	Taghadoe	Chapel	Ownership	Kildare
KD028-049003-	Oldkilcullen	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kildare
KD028-049002-	Oldkilcullen	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kildare
KD028-049004-	Oldkilcullen	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kildare
KD028-049005-	Oldkilcullen	Church	Ownership	Kildare
KD028-049006-	Oldkilcullen	Round Tower	Ownership	Kildare
KD028-049010-	Oldkilcullen	Architectural Fragment	Ownership	Kildare
KD028-049011-	Oldkilcullen	Graveyard	Ownership	Kildare
KD028-049012-	Oldkilcullen	Graveslab	Ownership	Kildare
KK019-026101-	**Gardens (Kilkenny City By., St. Mary's Par.)**	Religious House - Franciscan Friars	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK031-015001-	Sheepstown	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK031-017003-	Knocktophermanor	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK031-017004-	Knocktophermanor	Tomb - Chest Tomb	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK031-017005-	Knocktophermanor	Graveslab	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK031-017018-	Knocktophermanor	Tomb - Effigial	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK031-017019-	Knocktophermanor	Graveslab	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK031-017021-	Knocktophermanor	Architectural Fragment	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK008-047001-	Grangefertagh	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK008-047004-	Grangefertagh	Round Tower	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK030-008004-	Killamery	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK027-044001-	Kilree (Kells By.)	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK027-044003-	Kilree (Kells By.)	Round Tower	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK027-044004-	Kilree (Kells By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK033-021001-	Clonamery	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK025-038001-	Ullard	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK034-032003-	Castletown (Iverk By)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK034-032004-	Castletown (Iverk By)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK034-032005-	Ballynaboley (Iverk By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK034-032006-	Castletown (Iverk By)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK028-062005-	Jerpointabbey	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Kilkenny
LH012-046003-	Dromiskin	Round Tower	Ownership	Louth
LH012-046001-	Dromiskin	Church	Ownership	Louth
LH023-007002-	Mellifont	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Louth
LH021-062006-	Monasterboice	Round Tower	Ownership	Louth
LH021-062003-	Monasterboice	Church	Ownership	Louth
LH021-062004-	Monasterboice	Church	Ownership	Louth
LH021-062007-	Monasterboice	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Louth
LH021-062008-	Monasterboice	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Louth
LH021-062009-	Monasterboice	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Louth
ME025-015001-	Donaghmore (Navan Lower By.)	Church	Ownership	Meath
ME025-015002-	Donaghmore (Navan Lower By.)	Round Tower	Ownership	Meath
ME016-006001-	Castlekeeran	Cross - High Cross	Guardianship	Meath
ME016-006002-	Castlekeeran	Cross - High Cross	Guardianship	Meath
ME016-006003-	Castlekeeran	Cross - High Cross	Guardianship	Meath
ME016-006004-	Castlekeeran	Cross - High Cross	Guardianship	Meath
ME017-044011-	Town Parks (Kells Upper By.)	Church	Ownership	Meath
ME032-047003-	Skreen	Church	Ownership	Meath
ME032-047008-	Skreen	Cross - Churchyard Cross	Ownership	Meath
ME036-049002-	Newtown (Navan Upper By.)	Cathedral	Ownership	Meath
MO011-010001-	Crossmoyle	Church	Ownership	Monaghan

MO011-010002-	Crossmoyle	Round Tower	Ownership	Monaghan
MO011-010005-	Crossmoyle	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Monaghan
LA027-024----	Errill	Church	Ownership	Laois
LA027-025----	Ballagharahin	Cross - Wayside Cross	Ownership	Laois
LA018-031002-	Timahoe	Church	Ownership	Laois
LA018-031005-	Timahoe	Round Tower	Ownership	Laois
LA019-016----	Fossy Lower	Church	Ownership	Laois
LA032-020002-	Killeshin	Church	Ownership	Laois
LA032-018001-	Sleaty	Church	Ownership	Laois
LA032-018003-	Sleaty	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Laois
LA032-018007-	Sleaty	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Laois
TS068-013----	Athasselabbey North	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Ownership	Tipperary
TN047-030001-	Holycross	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Tipperary
TS077-027001-	Donaghmore	Church	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS084-013----	Ballynoran	Church	Ownership	Tipperary
TS079-007002-	Ahenny	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Tipperary
TS079-007003-	Ahenny	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-024----	Horeabbey	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-025001-	St. Patricksrock	Chapel	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-025002-	St. Patricksrock	Round Tower	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-025003-	St. Patricksrock	Cathedral	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-025004-	St. Patricksrock	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-025005-	St. Patricksrock	College	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-025006-	St. Patricksrock	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-025046-	St. Patricksrock	Graveyard	Ownership	Tipperary
WA040-008001-	Ardocheasty	Church	Ownership	Waterford
WA040-008002-	Ardocheasty	Cathedral	Ownership	Waterford
WA040-008003-	Ardocheasty	Round Tower	Ownership	Waterford
WA007-010001-	Mothel	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Ownership	Waterford
WX015-003012-	Ferns Upper	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003013-	Ferns Upper	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003002-	Ferns Upper	Church	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003004-	Ferns Demesne	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003005-	Ferns Upper	Church	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003017-	Ferns Demesne	Cross	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003010-	Ferns Upper	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003011-	Ferns Upper	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003009-	Ferns Upper	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003018-	Ferns Demesne	Cross	Ownership	Wexford
WI023-003001-	Sevenchurches Or Camaderry	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-008002-	Sevenchurches Or Camaderry	Round Tower	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-008003-	Sevenchurches Or Camaderry	Cathedral	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-008004-	Sevenchurches Or Camaderry	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-009----	Sevenchurches Or Camaderry	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-013----	Brockagh	Cross - Wayside Cross	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-014001-	Brockagh	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-020----	Lugduff (Ballinacor North By.)	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-021----	Lugduff (Ballinacor North By.)	Cave	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-022----	Sevenchurches Or Camaderry	Cross - Wayside Cross	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-024----	Lugduff (Ballinacor North By.)	Cross	Ownership	Wicklow

WI023-025----	Lugduff (Ballinacor North By.)	Ringfort - Cashel	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-026----	Lugduff (Ballinacor North By.)	Cross	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-027----	Lugduff (Ballinacor North By.)	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-028001-	Lugduff (Ballinacor North By.)	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-029----	Lugduff (Ballinacor North By.)	Hut Site	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-030----	Sevenchurches Or Camaderry	Cross - Wayside Cross	Ownership	Wicklow
WI023-031----	Derrybawn	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Ownership	Wicklow
WI013-003----	Woodlands	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI042-019001-	Aghowle Lower (Shillelagh By.)	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
WI042-019002-	Aghowle Lower (Shillelagh By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Wicklow
LH015-012001-	Greenmount	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Ownership	Louth
ME019-044003-	Newgrange	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-045----	Newgrange	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-044004-	Newgrange	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-045002-	Newgrange	Ceremonial Stone Setting	Ownership	Meath
ME019-045003-	Newgrange	Hut Site	Ownership	Meath
ME019-045004-	Newgrange	Habitation Site	Ownership	Meath
ME019-045005-	Newgrange	Stone Circle	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033004-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ring-Ditch	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033002-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ring-Ditch	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033003-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ring-Ditch	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033001-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Hillfort	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033005-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ceremonial Enclosure	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033006-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033007-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033008-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Enclosure - Large Enclosure	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033009-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033010-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Barrow - Unclassified	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033011-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033012-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033013-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033014-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Standing Stone (Present Location)	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033015-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ring-Ditch	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033016-	Castletown Tara	Enclosure	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033017-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033018-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Sheela-Na-Gig	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033019-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Standing Stone	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033020-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Ring-Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033021-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033022-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Bowl-Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033023-	Castletown Tara	Linear Earthwork	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033024-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Ring-Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033025-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Unclassified	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033026-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Unclassified	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033027-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033028-	Castletown Tara	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033029-	Castletown Tara	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033030-	Castletown Tara	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033031-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Unclassified	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033033-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath

ME031-033039-	Castletown Tara	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033040-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033041-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Unclassified	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033042-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Unclassified	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033044-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Ring-Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033045-	Castletown Tara	Ring-Ditch	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033047-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Ring-Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033048-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Ring-Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033053-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ring-Ditch	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033055-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ring-Ditch	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033056-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Ring-Ditch	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033060-	Castletown Tara	Barrow - Ditch Barrow	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033062-	Castletown Tara	Enclosure	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033063-	Castletown Tara	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033064-	Castletown Tara	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033071-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Church	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033072-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Font	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033073-	Castletown Tara	Road - Road/Trackway	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033074-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.),Castletown Tara	Ceremonial Enclosure	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033075-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Graveyard	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033076-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Pit-Burial	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033077-	Castletown Tara	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033078-	Castleboy (Skreen By., Tara Par.)	Mound	Ownership	Meath
ME031-033080-	Castletown Tara	Road - Road/Trackway	Ownership	Meath
ME030-001----	Tlachta	Ringfort - Rath	Guardianship	Meath
ME009-071001-	Patrickstown	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME009-071002-	Patrickstown	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME009-072----	Patrickstown	Ringfort - Rath	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME009-073----	Patrickstown	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME009-074001-	Patrickstown	Enclosure	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME009-074002-	Patrickstown	Standing Stone	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME009-075----	Patrickstown	Cross - Wayside Cross	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-005----	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-007----	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-009001-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-009002-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Standing Stone - Pair	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-010001-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-011----	Corstown (Fore By.)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003001-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003002-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003003-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003004-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003005-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003006-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003007-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003008-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003009-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-003010-	Newtown (Fore By., Moylagh Ed)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-012001-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-012002-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath

ME015-012003-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-012004-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-012005-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-012006-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-012007-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
ME015-010002-	Corstown (Fore By.)	Cairn - Unclassified	Guardianship & Ownership	Meath
WA024-033004-	Drumlohan	Souterrain	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033006-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033007-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033008-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033009-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033010-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033011-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033012-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033013-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033014-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033015-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA024-033017-	Drumlohan	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
ME017-044013-	Town Parks (Kells Upper By.)	Round Tower	Ownership & Guardianship	Meath
ME017-044014-	Town Parks (Kells Upper By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership & Guardianship	Meath
ME017-044015-	Town Parks (Kells Upper By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership & Guardianship	Meath
ME017-044016-	Town Parks (Kells Upper By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership & Guardianship	Meath
ME017-044017-	Town Parks (Kells Upper By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership & Guardianship	Meath
KK024-062004-	Tullaherin	Round Tower	Guardianship	Kilkenny
LH022-041012-	Termonfeckin	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Louth
ME027-038003-	Commons (Duleek Lower By.)	Church	Ownership	Meath
ME027-038004-	Commons (Duleek Lower By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Meath
ME027-038005-	Commons (Duleek Lower By.)	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Meath
ME027-038013-	Commons (Duleek Lower By.)	Church	Ownership	Meath
KK027-029004-	Rathduff (Madden)	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Guardianship	Kilkenny
ME036-048003-	Blackfriary (2nd Division)	House - Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME036-048021-	Blackfriary (2nd Division)	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Ownership	Meath
ME031-026----	Bective	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Guardianship	Meath
ME019-060015-	Slanecastle Demesne	Earthwork	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060002-	Slanecastle Demesne	Church	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060008-	Slanecastle Demesne	Ecclesiastical Residence	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060003-	Slanecastle Demesne	Architectural Fragment	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060004-	Slanecastle Demesne	Stone Head	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060005-	Slanecastle Demesne	Shrine	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060006-	Slanecastle Demesne	Graveslab	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060007-	Slanecastle Demesne	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060009-	Slanecastle Demesne	Gatehouse	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060010-	Slanecastle Demesne	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060011-	Slanecastle Demesne	Stone Sculpture	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060012-	Slanecastle Demesne	Armorial Plaque	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060013-	Slanecastle Demesne	Armorial Plaque	Ownership	Meath
ME019-060014-	Slanecastle Demesne	Architectural Fragment	Ownership	Meath
KD015-007003-	Oughterard	Round Tower	Ownership	Kildare
KD015-007005-	Oughterard	Church	Ownership	Kildare
KK028-040001-	Thomastown	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny

WX039-030001-	Dunbrody	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Wexford
TS061-025007-	St. Dominicks Abbey	Religious House - Dominican Friars	Ownership	Tipperary
ME027-038001-	Commons (Duleek Lower By.)	Church	Ownership	Meath
KD040-002005-	Abbeyland (Castledermot Ed)	Religious House - Franciscan Friars	Ownership	Kildare
WI027-024001-	Baltinglass East	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Wicklow
WA009-005032-	Waterford City	Religious House - Franciscan Friars	Ownership	Waterford
MO029-031002-	Inishkeen Glebe	Round Tower	Ownership	Monaghan
KK020-060006-	Gowran	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
TS043-034001-	Kilcoolyabbey	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Tipperary
WX040-028001-	Rathumney	Castle - Hall-House	Ownership	Wexford
ME041-008----	Donore (Lune By., Killaconnigan Par.)	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Meath
TN041-019----	Ballynahow (Ballycahill Par.)	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Tipperary
WA026-003----	Matthewstown	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Waterford
ME031-002----	Ardsallagh	Church	Ownership	Meath
CO046-001----	Conna	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Cork
LH005-042002-	Liberties Of Carlingford	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Guardianship	Louth
KK043-034001-	Granny	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Kilkenny
ME011-004----	Robertstown (Kells Lower By.)	Castle - Motte	Ownership	Meath
ME038-013----	Killeen	Church	Guardianship	Meath
ME037-008----	Belpere (Skreen By., Killeen Ed),Belpere (Skreen By., Skreen Ed),Odder	Henge	Guardianship	Meath
WI008-004----	Newcourt	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
ME005-094----	Cruicetown (Kells Lower By.)	Church	Ownership	Meath
ME005-094004-	Cruicetown (Kells Lower By.)	Cross - Churchyard Cross	Ownership	Meath
TN042-055001-	Leigh	Church	Ownership	Tipperary
TN042-055003-	Leigh	Church	Ownership	Tipperary
WI013-029001-	Kilcoole	Church	Ownership	Wicklow
KK020-003----	Clara Upper	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Kilkenny
KD020-007005-	Kilteel Upper	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Kildare
KD020-007006-	Kilteel Upper	Redundant Record	Ownership	Kildare
WI005-047001-	Burgage More	Cross - High Cross (Present Location)	Ownership	Wicklow
KK013-018001-	Ballylarkin Upper	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
CO067-029010-	Youghal-Lands	Religious House - Benedictine Monks	Guardianship	Cork
ME025-032001-	Athlumney	Castle - Tower House	Guardianship	Meath
ME024-017001-	Rathmore	Church	Guardianship	Meath
ME024-017002-	Rathmore	Cross - Churchyard Cross	Guardianship	Meath
TS073-011----	Moorabbey	Religious House - Franciscan Friars	Guardianship	Tipperary
LH014-047----	Roodstown	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Louth
KK028-013001-	Kilfane Demesne	Church	Guardianship	Kilkenny
KK028-013003-	Kilfane Demesne	Graveyard	Guardianship	Kilkenny
WI036-010----	Castletimon	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Wicklow
KD024-009001-	Punchestown Great	Standing Stone	Ownership	Kildare
CW007-018002-	Carlow	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Carlow
ME032-007----	Danestown	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Meath
LH011-115002-	Priorstate	Church	Guardianship	Louth
WI006-003----	Scurlocksleap	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship	Wicklow
KK023-071001-	Farmley	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK023-071003-	Farmley	Bawn	Ownership	Kilkenny
ME033-001----	Gaulstown (Skreen By.)	Cross - Wayside Cross	Ownership	Meath
WI008-017----	Kindlestown Upper	Castle - Hall-House	Ownership	Wicklow
KK035-044----	Harristown,Kilmogue	Megalithic Tomb - Portal Tomb	Guardianship	Kilkenny

LH004-032----	Aghnaskeagh	Megalithic Tomb - Portal Tomb	Guardianship	Louth
LH004-033----	Aghnaskeagh	Megalithic Tomb - Court Tomb	Guardianship	Louth
WI027-026001-	Coolinarrig Upper,Pinnacle,Tuckmill Hill	Hillfort	Guardianship	Wicklow
WI027-026003-	Coolinarrig Upper,Pinnacle,Tuckmill Hill	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship	Wicklow
WA029-042010-	Dromore	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA029-042011-	Dromore	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Waterford
WA029-042012-	Dromore	Redundant Record	Guardianship	Waterford
KK019-026068-	Gardens (Kilkenny City By., St. John's Par.)	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Guardianship	Kilkenny
TS075-023----	Toureen	Redundant Record	Guardianship	Tipperary
KK031-030001-	Aghaviller	Round Tower	Ownership	Kilkenny
KK031-030003-	Aghaviller	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
TS054-002001-	Lurgoe	Ecclesiastical Enclosure	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS054-002002-	Lurgoe	Church	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS054-002010-	Lurgoe	Graveslab	Guardianship	Tipperary
WI007-026002-	Fassaroe	Cross	Guardianship	Wicklow
CW013-034----	Aghade	Holed Stone	Guardianship	Carlow
CW019-010001-	Lorum	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Carlow
CW019-010002-	Lorum	Cross	Ownership	Carlow
CW019-018----	Ballyloughan	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Carlow
CW012-048003-	Nurney	Cross - High Cross	Ownership	Carlow
TN018-012----	Cullaun	Anomalous Stone Group	Ownership	Tipperary
TN018-015----	Timoney Hills	Anomalous Stone Group	Ownership	Tipperary
TN018-021----	Timoney	Standing Stone	Ownership	Tipperary
ME032-010----	Balrath (Duleek Lower By.)	Cross - Wayside Cross	Guardianship	Meath
MO012-041----	Tiredigan	Megalithic Tomb - Court Tomb	Ownership	Monaghan
WI042-036----	Moylisha	Megalithic Tomb - Wedge Tomb	Guardianship	Wicklow
TS080-004002-	Burncourt	Bawn	Ownership	Tipperary
KK026-010009-	Westcourt Demesne	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Ownership	Kilkenny
WX020-041----	Ballymoty More	Castle - Motte	Ownership	Wexford
KK013-059001-	Rathealy	Castle - Ringwork	Ownership	Kilkenny
MO028-118001-	Donaghmoyne	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Ownership	Monaghan
MO028-118002-	Donaghmoyne	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Monaghan
WA025-007----	Ballynageeragh	Megalithic Tomb - Portal Tomb	Guardianship	Waterford
LH007-118007-	Castletown (Dundalk Upper By.)	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Guardianship	Louth
WX020-032----	Templeshannon	Windmill	Guardianship	Wexford
CW019-048001-	Killoughternane	Church	Guardianship	Carlow
KD019-024001-	Forenaghts Great	Church	Guardianship	Kildare
CO036-019002-	Coole Upper	Church	Guardianship	Cork
CO036-019004-	Coole Upper	Church	Guardianship	Cork
TS074-010068-	Ardane	Cross-Slab	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010057-	Ardane	Cross-Slab	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010018-	Ardane	Cross-Slab	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010035-	Ardane	Cross-Slab	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010051-	Ardane	Cross-Slab	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010002-	Ardane	Cross - High Cross	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010003-	Ardane	Cross	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010004-	Ardane	Cross	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010053-	Ardane	Cross-Slab	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010034-	Ardane	Cross-Slab	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS074-010081-	Ardane	Cross-Slab	Guardianship	Tipperary

WA017-027----	Gaulstown	Megalithic Tomb - Portal Tomb	Guardianship	Waterford
KK014-017----	Mohil	Cave	Ownership	Kilkenny
ME044-033002-	Dunshaughlin	Church	Guardianship	Meath
KD010-018001-	Rathcoffey Demesne	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Kildare
TS053-012001-	Grallagh (Graystown Par.)	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Tipperary
TS053-012002-	Grallagh (Graystown Par.)	Bawn	Ownership	Tipperary
ME019-030001-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030002-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030003-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030004-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030005-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030006-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030007-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030008-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030009-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030010-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030011-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030012-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030013-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030014-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030015-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030016-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030017-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030018-	Knowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030019-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030020-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030021-	Knowth	Enclosure	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030022-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030023-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030024-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030025-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030026-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030027-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030028-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030029-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030030-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030031-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030032-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030033-	Knowth	Timber Circle	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030057-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030058-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030034-	Knowth	Habitation Site	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030035-	Knowth	Habitation Site	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030036-	Knowth	Habitation Site	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030037-	Knowth	Structure	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030038-	Knowth	Habitation Site	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030039-	Knowth	Habitation Site	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030040-	Knowth	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030041-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030042-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath

ME019-030043-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030044-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030059-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030045-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030046-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030047-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030060-	Knowth	Settlement Cluster	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030048-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030049-	Knowth	House - Early Medieval	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030050-	Knowth	Habitation Site	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030051-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030052-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030053-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030054-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030055-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030056-	Knowth	Souterrain	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030061-	Knowth	Burial	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030062-	Knowth	Enclosure	Ownership	Meath
ME019-030063-	Knowth	House - Neolithic	Ownership	Meath
ME020-012----	Dowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
CO045-003----	Mohera	Religious House - Carmelite Friars	Guardianship	Cork
WI015-010----	Athgreany	Stone Circle	Guardianship	Wicklow
WI007-030----	Kilcroney	Church	Guardianship	Wicklow
WI027-038----	Boleycarrigeen	Ringfort - Rath	Guardianship	Wicklow
WI027-038002-	Boleycarrigeen	Ogham Stone	Guardianship	Wicklow
WI009-010----	Lemonstown	Burial Mound	Guardianship	Wicklow
WA017-034----	Knockeen	Megalithic Tomb - Portal Tomb	Guardianship	Waterford
WI037-016----	Rath East	Hillfort	Ownership	Wicklow
LH005-042008-	Liberties Of Carlingford	Castle - Tower House	Guardianship	Louth
WX054-008001-	Slade	Castle - Tower House	Guardianship	Wexford
WX042-029001-	Rathmacknee Great	Castle - Tower House	Guardianship	Wexford
CW012-070003-	Leighlinbridge	Castle - Tower House	Guardianship	Carlow
ME027-038010-	Commons (Duleek Lower By.)	Cross - Wayside Cross	Guardianship	Meath
WI021-032----	Castleruddery Lower	Stone Circle - Embanked	Ownership	Wicklow
WI021-033----	Castleruddery Lower	Castle - Motte	Ownership	Wicklow
WX029-013002-	New Ross	Church	Guardianship	Wexford
WX037-032009-	Wexford	Church	Guardianship	Wexford
TS085-004001-	Town Parks	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Tipperary
WI028-030----	Derrynamuck	House - 18th/19th Century	Ownership	Wicklow
CW003-017002-	Straboe	Graveslab	Ownership	Carlow
KK026-010012-	Callan South	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
WX053-006----	Fence	Windmill	Guardianship	Wexford
LH003-029001-	Roche (Dundalk Upr By; Roche Par.)	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Guardianship	Louth
ME036-048011-	Blackfriary (2nd Division)	Gateway	Ownership	Meath
KD040-002012-	Castledermot	Cross	Guardianship	Kildare
KD040-002002-	Castledermot	Round Tower	Guardianship	Kildare
KD040-002004-	Castledermot	Cross - High Cross	Guardianship	Kildare
KD040-002010-	Castledermot	Cross - High Cross	Guardianship	Kildare
KD040-002011-	Castledermot	Cross - High Cross	Guardianship	Kildare
ME033-028001-	Fourknocks	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship	Meath

ME033-028002-	Fourknocks	Burial Mound	Guardianship	Meath
ME033-028003-	Fourknocks	Cist	Guardianship	Meath
ME033-028004-	Fourknocks	Pit-Burial	Guardianship	Meath
ME033-028005-	Fourknocks	Passage Tomb Art	Guardianship	Meath
LH011-020----	Rathiddy	Standing Stone	Guardianship	Louth
KK026-010016-	Callan North	Religious House - Augustinian Friars	Guardianship	Kilkenny
LH004-074----	Proleek	Megalithic Tomb - Portal Tomb	Guardianship	Louth
LH004-075----	Proleek	Megalithic Tomb - Wedge Tomb	Guardianship	Louth
LH015-004001-	Bawn	Church	Guardianship	Louth
ME025-018002-	Dunmoe	Castle - Hall-House	Ownership	Meath
KD005-015----	Maynooth	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Kildare
CW016-055001-	Ballymoon	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Guardianship	Carlow
ME037-019----	Dunsany	Church	Ownership	Meath
WI005-031----	Threecastles	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Wicklow
ME026-011----	Realtoge	Ringfort - Rath	Guardianship	Meath
ME025-007----	Ardmulchan	Ringfort - Rath	Guardianship	Meath
KD038-045001-	Skenagun	Religious House - Fratres Cruciferi	Guardianship	Kildare
WX045-027001-	Tintern	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Wexford
WX045-028002-	Tintern	Bridge	Ownership	Wexford
WX045-029001-	Tintern	Church	Ownership	Wexford
TS075-048001-	Townparks (Caher Par.)	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Tipperary
ME036-048004-	Manorland (1st Division)	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Meath
WX044-009001-	Ballyhack	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Wexford
WX015-003001-	Castleland (Scarawalsh By.)	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Guardianship	Wexford
KK019-026074-	Gardens (Kilkenny City By., St. John's Par.)	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Kilkenny
TS058-023001-	Longstone (Kilcornan Par.)	Habitation Site	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS058-023004-	Longstone (Kilcornan Par.)	Standing Stone	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS058-023002-	Longstone (Kilcornan Par.)	Barrow - Stepped Barrow	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS058-023003-	Longstone (Kilcornan Par.)	Redundant Record	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS058-023005-	Longstone (Kilcornan Par.)	Barrow - Ditch Barrow	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS058-023006-	Longstone (Kilcornan Par.)	Barrow - Ring-Barrow	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS058-023007-	Longstone (Kilcornan Par.)	Barrow - Ditch Barrow	Guardianship	Tipperary
LH006-060001-	Donaghmore	Souterrain	Guardianship	Louth
LH006-060002-	Donaghmore	Souterrain	Guardianship	Louth
KD019-033001-	Jigginstown	House - 17th Century	Ownership	Kildare
LH024-008002-	Townleyhall	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Louth
WI015-034----	Tornant Lower	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Wicklow
WI015-036----	Tornant Upper	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Wicklow
WI015-037----	Tornant Upper	Stone Circle	Ownership	Wicklow
WI015-038----	Tornant Upper	Enclosure	Ownership	Wicklow
WI015-083----	Tornant Upper	Enclosure	Ownership	Wicklow
TS048-035001-	Derryvella	Church	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS048-035003-	Derryvella	Graveyard	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS048-035002-	Derryvella	Ecclesiastical Enclosure	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS069-002001-	Carron (St. John Baptist Par.)	Ceremonial Enclosure	Ownership	Tipperary
ME033-004----	Athcarne	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Meath
LA013-063----	Aghnahily	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Laois
ME032-012----	Gaulstown (Skreen By.)	Barrow - Unclassified	Ownership	Meath
ME011-009----	Robertstown (Kells Lower By.)	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Meath
ME006-027----	Loughbrackan	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Ownership	Meath

ME019-020----	Carrickdexter	Cross - Wayside Cross	Ownership	Meath
CW008-033001-	Castlemore	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Guardianship	Carlow
CW008-033007-	Castlemore	Graveslab (Present Location)	Guardianship	Carlow
ME025-006----	Ardmulchan	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship	Meath
ME028-015----	Sarsfieldstown	Cross - Wayside Cross	Guardianship	Meath
TS073-007----	Shrough	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Tipperary
ME019-073----	Knowth	Enclosure	Ownership	Meath
ME019-074----	Knowth	Mound	Ownership	Meath
TS059-092----	Carron (Tipperary Par.)	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Tipperary
ME028-006----	Ninch	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Guardianship	Meath
ME036-049011-	Saintjohns	Religious House - Fratres Cruciferi	Ownership	Meath
LH008-033----	Rockmarshall	Megalithic Tomb - Court Tomb	Ownership	Louth
MO015-007----	Mullyash,Tavanskeagh	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Guardianship	Monaghan
CW008-031001-	Baunogenasraid	Burial	Ownership	Carlow
CW008-031002-	Baunogenasraid	Linkardstown Burial	Ownership	Carlow
LA037-002----	Coorlaghan	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Laois
WA031-040001-	Dungarvan	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Waterford
TS075-048016-	Townparks (Caher Par.)	House - 18th/19th Century	Ownership	Tipperary
LH015-015001-	Linns	Cliff-Edge Fort	Guardianship	Louth
TS061-094----	Ballycomisk	Barrow - Ring-Barrow	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-095----	Ballyduagh (Railstown Par.)	Settlement Deserted - Medieval	Ownership	Tipperary
TS061-096----	Ballycomisk	Ringfort - Rath	Ownership	Tipperary
TS075-019001-	Knockgraffon	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Guardianship	Tipperary
TS075-019002-	Knockgraffon	Castle - Tower House	Guardianship	Tipperary
KD038-035----	Mullaghreelan	Castle - Ringwork	Ownership	Kildare
TS075-048002-	Caherabbey Upper	Religious House - Augustinian Canons	Ownership	Tipperary
LH004-004----	Ravensdale Park	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Louth
KK031-058----	Ballyboodan	Ogham Stone	Ownership	Kilkenny
CW004-014----	Knockroe (Rathvilly By.)	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Ownership	Carlow
CW007-010----	Kernanstown	Megalithic Tomb - Portal Tomb	Ownership	Carlow
LA013-052----	Aghnahily,Park Or Dunamase,Ballycarroll (Maryborough East By.)	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Ownership	Laois
KK029-018001-	Graiguenamanagh	Religious House - Cistercian Monks	Ownership	Kilkenny
LH005-042013-	Liberties Of Carlingford	Religious House - Dominican Friars	Ownership	Louth
KK027-029001-	Garrynamann Lower	Castle - Motte And Bailey	Guardianship	Kilkenny
KD002-007----	Grange West	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Kildare
ME027-011002-	Calliaghstown (Duleek Lower By.)	Ritual Site - Holy Well	Guardianship	Meath
CO075-018001-	Barryscourt	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Cork
WX046-028----	Coolhull	House - Fortified House	Ownership	Wexford
KK033-027001-	Coolhill	Castle - Tower House	Guardianship	Kilkenny
TS081-076----	Kilcommon More (North)	House - 19th Century	Ownership	Tipperary
ME013-012001-	Mountfortescue	Hillfort	Ownership	Meath
ME020-017----	Dowth	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Meath
TS078-036001-	Kilcash	Church	Ownership	Tipperary
TS078-037----	Kilcash	Castle - Tower House	Ownership	Tipperary
TS078-037003-	Kilcash	Bakery	Ownership	Tipperary
KK034-019001-	Knockroe (Kells By., Killamery Ed)	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb	Ownership	Kilkenny
TS049-062----	Farranrory Upper	House - 19th Century	Ownership	Tipperary
WA009-005001-	Waterford City	Castle - Anglo-Norman Masonry Castle	Guardianship	Waterford
WI005-012----	Deerpark (Talbotstown Lower By.)	Ringfort - Unclassified	Ownership	Wicklow
WX015-023001-	Clone	Church	Ownership	Wexford

TS083-019004-	Burgagery-Lands West	Courthouse	Ownership	Tipperary
WX044-015001-	Duncannon	Bastioned Fort	Guardianship	Wexford
KK018-032001-	Tullaroan	Church	Ownership	Kilkenny
ME036-048053-	Blackfriary (2nd Division)	Road - Hollow-Way	Ownership	Meath
KD011-040----	Barrogstown West	Designed Landscape - Folly	Ownership	Kildare
LH018-040----	Athclare	Castle - Tower House	Guardianship	Louth
ME025-034----	Alexander Reid	Barrow - Mound Barrow	Ownership	Meath

Appendix III Relationship with Legislation and Other Plans and Programmes

Relevance to the Strategy (applicable to all Legislation, Plans and Programmes identified in Appendix III on the table below)
Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Strategy needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
European Level		
SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)	• Contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. • Provide for a high level of protection of the environment by carrying out an environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.	• Carry out and environmental assessment for plans or programmes referred to in Articles 2 to 4 of the Directive. • Prepare an environmental report which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme and reasonable alternatives that consider the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme. • Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission. • Consult the other Member States where the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have transboundary environmental effects. • Inform relevant authorities and stakeholders on the decision to implement the plan or programme. • Issue a statement to include requirements detailed in Article 9 of the Directive. • Monitor and mitigate significant environmental effects identified by the assessment.
EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)	• Requires the assessment of the environmental effects of public and private projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. • Aims to assess and implement avoidance or mitigation measures to eliminate environmental effects, before consent is given of projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects. Those projects are defined in Article 4.	• All projects listed in Annex I are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require an EIA. • For projects listed in Annex II, a "screening procedure" is required to determine the effects of projects on the basis of thresholds/criteria or a case-by-case examination. This should take into account Annex III. • The environmental impact assessment shall identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in the light of each individual case and in accordance with Articles 4 to 12, the direct and indirect effects of a project on the following factors: human beings, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, climate and the landscape, material assets and the cultural heritage, the interaction between each factor. • Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission before a decision is made.
Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)	• Promote the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. • Contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. • Maintain or restore to favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of community interest. • Promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements.	• Propose and protect sites of importance to habitats, plant and animal species. • Establish a network of European sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, to enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. • Carry out comprehensive assessment of habitat types and species present. • Establish a system of strict protection for the animal species and plant species listed in Annex IV.
Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)	• Conserve all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state including their eggs, nests and habitats. • Protect, manage and control these species and comply with regulations relating to their exploitation. • The species included in Annex I shall be the subject of special conservation measures concerning their habitat in order to ensure their survival and reproduction in their area of distribution.	• Preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Annex 1. • Preserve, maintain and establish biotopes and habitats to include the creation of protected areas (Special Protection Areas). • Ensure the upkeep and management in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats inside and outside the protected zones, re-establish destroyed biotopes and creation of biotopes. • Measures for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I is required as regards their breeding, moulting and wintering areas and staging posts along their migration routes. The protection of wetlands and particularly wetlands of international importance.
EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC)	• Reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and - preventing further such pollution.	Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is designed to **prevent pollution of surface waters and** groundwater from agricultural sources and to protect and i**mprove water quality. Ireland's third NAP came into operation in 2014. Each Member State's NAP must include:** • a limit on the amount of livestock manure applied to the land each year • set periods when land spreading is prohibited due to risk • set capacity levels for the storage of livestock manure

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
EU Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive (2008/1/EC)	• The purpose of this Directive is to achieve integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from the activities listed in Annex I. It lays down measures designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions in the air, water and land from the abovementioned activities, including measures concerning waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole, without prejudice to Directive 85/337/EEC and other relevant Community provisions.	The IPPC Directive is based on several principles: • an integrated approach • best available techniques, • flexibility; and • public participation
EU Plant Protection (products) Directive 2009/127/EC	• The Directive aims at reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and • the environment by introducing different targets, tools and measures such as Integrated Pest • Management (IPM) or National Action Plans (NAPs).	• The Framework Directive applies to pesticides which are plant protection products. • Regarding pesticide application equipment already in professional use, the Framework Directive introduces requirements for the inspection and maintenance to be carried out on such equipment.
EU Renewables Directive (2009/28/EC)	• The Renewable Energy Directive establishes an overall policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU. • It requires the EU to fulfil at least 20% of its total energy needs with renewables by 2020 – to be achieved through the attainment of individual national targets. • All EU countries must also ensure that at least 10% of their transport fuels come from renewable sources by 2020.	• The Directive promotes cooperation amongst EU countries (and with countries outside the EU) to help them meet their renewable energy targets. • The Directive specifies national renewable energy targets for each country, taking into account its starting point and overall potential for renewables. • EU countries set out how they plan to meet these targets and the general course of their renewable energy policy in national renewable energy action plans. • Progress towards national targets is measured every two years when EU countries publish national renewable energy progress reports.
Indirect Land Use Change Directive (2012/0288(COD))	• Article 3(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (3) requires Member States to ensure that the share of energy from renewable energy sources in all forms of transport in 2020 is at least 10 % of their final energy consumption. • The blending of biofuels is one of the methods available for Member States to meet this target, and is expected to be the main contributor. • Other methods available to meet the target are the reduction of energy consumption, which is imperative because a mandatory percentage target for energy from renewable sources is likely to become increasingly difficult to achieve sustainably if the overall demand for energy for transport continues to rise, and the use of electricity from renewable energy sources.	• Limit the contribution that conventional biofuels (with a risk of ILUC emissions) make towards attainment of the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive; • Improve the greenhouse gas performance of biofuel production processes (reducing associated emissions) by raising the greenhouse gas saving threshold for new installations subject to protecting installations already in operation on 1st July 2014; • Encourage a greater market penetration of advanced (low-ILUC) biofuels by allowing such fuels to contribute more to the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive than conventional biofuels; • Improve the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by obliging Member States and fuel suppliers to report the estimated indirect land-use change emissions of biofuels.
Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (2014/94/EU)	• This Directive establishes a common framework of measures for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Union in order to minimise dependence on oil and to mitigate the environmental impact of transport.	• This Directive sets out minimum requirements for the building-up of alternative fuels infrastructure, including recharging points for electric vehicles and refuelling points for natural gas (LNG and CNG) and hydrogen, to be implemented by means of Member States' national policy frameworks, as well as common technical specifications for such recharging and refuelling points, and user information requirements.
EU Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU)	• Establishes a set of binding measures to help the EU reach its 20% energy efficiency target by 2020. • Under the Directive, all EU countries are required to use energy more efficiently at all stages of the energy chain, from production to final consumption.	• Energy distributors or retail energy sales companies have to achieve 1.5% energy savings per year through the implementation of energy efficiency measures • EU countries can opt to achieve the same level of savings through other means, such as improving the efficiency of heating systems, installing double glazed windows or insulating roofs • The public sector in EU countries should purchase energy-efficient buildings, products and services • Every year, governments in EU countries must carry out energy efficient renovations on at least 3% (by floor area) of the buildings they own and occupy • Energy consumers should be empowered to better manage consumption. This includes easy and free access to data on consumption through individual metering • National incentives for SMEs to undergo energy audits • Large companies will make audits of their energy consumption to help them identify ways to reduce it • Monitoring efficiency levels in new energy generation capacities.
EU Seveso Directive (2012/18/EU)	• This Directive lays down rules for the prevention of major accidents which involve dangerous substances, and the limitation of their consequences for human health and the environment, with a view to ensuring a high level of protection throughout the Union in a consistent and effective manner.	The Seveso Directive is well integrated with other EU policies, thus avoiding double regulation or other administrative burden. This includes the following related policy areas: • Classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals; • The Union's Civil Protection Mechanism; • The Security Union Agenda including CBRN-E and Protection of critical infrastructure; • Policy on environmental liability and on the protection of the environment through criminal law; • Safety of offshore oil and gas operations.
European Union Biodiversity Strategy for 2030	• **Aims to put Europe's biodiversity on the path to recovery by 2030.** • Aims to build resilience to future threats such as the impacts of climate change, forest fires, food insecurity, disease outbreaks and protecting wildlife and fighting illegal wildlife trade.	The Strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030, including: • Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at sea; • Launching an EU nature restoration plan; • Introducing measures to enable the necessary transformative stage; and • Introducing measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
EU Green Infrastructure Strategy	Aims to create a robust enabling framework in order to promote and facilitate Green Infrastructure (GI) projects.	• Promoting GI in the main EU policy areas. • Supporting EU-level GI projects. • Improving access to finance for GI projects. • Improving information and promoting innovation.
UN Kyoto Protocol (2nd Kyoto Period), the Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II), Paris climate conference (COP21) 2015 (Paris Agreement)	The UN Kyoto Protocol set of policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II) aims to identify and develop all the necessary elements of an EU strategy to implement the Kyoto Protocol. At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal. The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C.	• The Kyoto Protocol is implemented through the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II). • EU member states implement measures to improve on or compliment the specified measures and policies arising from the ECCP. • Under COP21, governments agreed to come together every 5 years to set more ambitious targets as required by science; report to each other and the public on how well they are doing to implement their targets; track progress towards the long-term goal through a robust transparency and accountability system.
EU 2020 Climate and Energy Package	• Binding legislation which aims to ensure the European Union meets its climate and energy targets for 2020. • Aims to achieve a 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels. • Aims to raise the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%. • Achieve a 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency.	Four pieces of complimentary legislation: • Reform of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) to include a cap on emission allowances in addition to existing system of national caps. • Member States have agreed national targets for non-EU ETS emissions from countries outside the EU. • Meet the national renewable energy targets of 16% for Ireland by 2020. • Preparing a legal framework for technologies in carbon capture and storage.
EU 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy	• A 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030 that has been agreed by European countries. • Targets include a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels, at least a 27% share of renewable energy consumption and at least 27% energy savings compared with the business-as-usual scenario.	To meet the targets, the European Commission has proposed the following policies for 2030: • A reformed EU emissions trading scheme (ETS). • New indicators for the competitiveness and security of the energy system, such as price differences with major trading partners, diversification of supply, and interconnection capacity between EU countries. • First ideas for a new governance system based on national plans for competitive, secure, and sustainable energy. These plans will follow a common EU approach. They will ensure stronger investor certainty, greater transparency, enhanced policy coherence and improved coordination across the EU.
The Clean Air for Europe Directive (2008/50/EC) (EU Air Framework Directive) Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)	• The CAFE Directive merges existing legislation into a single directive (except for the fourth daughter directive). • Sets new air quality objectives for $PM_{2.5}$ (fine particles) including the limit value and exposure-related objectives. • Accounts for the possibility to discount natural sources of pollution when assessing compliance against limit values. • Allows the possibility for time extensions of three years (PM_{10}) or up to five years (NO_2, benzene) for complying with limit values, based on conditions and the assessment by the European Commission. • The Fourth Daughter Directive lists pollutants, target values and monitoring requirements for the following: arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air.	• Sets objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole. • Aims to assess the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria. • Obtains information on ambient air quality in order to help combat air pollution and nuisance and to monitor long-term trends and improvements resulting from national and community measures. • Ensures that such information on ambient air quality is made available to the public. • Aims to maintain air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases. • Aims to promote increased cooperation between the Member States in reducing air pollution.
Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)	The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction from the source.	The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to: • Draw up strategic noise maps for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels; • Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and • Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise. The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities.
Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	• Establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks • Reduce adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community	• Assess all water courses and coast lines at risk from flooding through Flood Risk Assessment • Prepare flood hazard maps and flood risk maps outlining the extent or potential of flooding and assets and humans at risk in these areas at the River Basin District level (Article 3(2) (b)) and areas covered by Article 5(1) and Article 13(1) (b) in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3. • Implement flood risk management plans and take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce flood risk for the areas covered by the Articles listed above. • Inform the public and allow the public to participate in planning process.
Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)	• Establish a framework for the protection of water bodies to include inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater and their dependent wildlife and habitats. • Preserve and prevent the deterioration of water status and where necessary improve and maintain the **"good status"** of water bodies.	• Protect, enhance and restore all water bodies and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Directive. • Achieve "good status" for all waters. • Manage water bodies based on identifying and establishing river basins districts. • Involve the public and streamline legislation.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
	- Promote sustainable water usage. - The Water Framework Directive repealed the following Directives: - The Drinking Water Abstraction Directive - Sampling Drinking Water Directive - Exchange of Information on Quality of Surface Freshwater Directive - Shellfish Directive - Freshwater Fish Directive - Groundwater (Dangerous Substances) Directive - Dangerous Substances Directive	- Prepare and implement a River Basin Management Plan for each river basin districts identified and a Register of Protected Areas. - Establish a programme of monitoring for surface water status, groundwater status and protected areas. - Recover costs for water services.
Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	- Protect, control and conserve groundwater. - Prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater. - Implements measures to prevent and control groundwater pollution, including criteria for assessing good groundwater chemical status and criteria for the identification of significant and sustained upward trends and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals.	- Meet minimum groundwater standards listed in Annex 1 of Directive. - Meet threshold values adopted by national legislation for the pollutants, groups of pollutants and indicators of pollution which have been identified as contributing to the characterisation of bodies or groups of bodies of groundwater as being at risk, also taking into account Part B of Annex II.
Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)	- Improve and maintain the quality of water intended for human consumption. - Protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean.	- Set values applicable to water intended for human consumption for the parameters set out in Annex I. - Set values for additional parameters not included in Annex I, where the protection of human health within national territory or part of it so requires. The values set should, as a minimum, satisfy the requirements of Article 4(1) (a). - Implement all measures necessary to ensure that regular monitoring of the quality of water intended for human consumption is carried out, in order to check that the water available to consumers meets the requirements of this Directive and in particular the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5. - Ensure that any failure to meet the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5 is immediately investigated in order to identify the cause. - Ensure that the necessary remedial action is taken as soon as possible to restore its quality and shall give priority to their enforcement action. - Undertake remedial action to restore the quality of the water where necessary to protect human health. - Notify consumers when remedial action is being undertaken except where the competent authorities consider the non-compliance with the parametric value to be trivial.
Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)	- This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban wastewater and the treatment and discharge of wastewater from certain industrial sectors. - The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of wastewater discharges.	- Urban wastewater entering collecting systems shall before discharge, be subject to secondary treatment. - Annex II requires the designation of areas sensitive to eutrophication which receive water discharges. - Establishes minimum requirements for urban wastewater collection and treatment systems in specified agglomerations to include special requirements for sensitive areas and certain industrial sectors.
Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) as amended by Directive 2006/21/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC and Directive 2013/30/EU	**Establish a framework of environmental liability based on the 'polluter**-pays' principle, to prevent and remedy environmental damage.	- Relates to environmental damage caused by any of the occupational activities listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities; damage to protected species and natural habitats caused by any occupational activities other than those listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities, whenever the operator has been at fault or negligent. - Where environmental damage has not yet occurred but there is an imminent threat of such damage occurring, the operator shall, without delay, take the necessary preventive measures. - Where environmental damage has occurred the operator shall, without delay, inform the competent authority of all relevant aspects of the situation and take all practicable steps to immediately control, contain, remove or otherwise manage the relevant contaminants and/or any other damage factors in order to limit or to prevent further environmental damage and adverse effects on human health or further impairment of services and the necessary remedial measures, in accordance with Article 7. - The operator shall bear the costs for the preventive and remedial actions taken pursuant to this Directive. - The competent authority shall be entitled to initiate cost recovery proceedings against the operator. - The operator may be required to provide financial security guarantees to ensure their responsibilities under the directive are met. - The Environmental Liability Directive has been amended through a number of Directives that are not of significant relevance to the SEA for the Guidelines. Implementation of the Environmental Liability Directive is contributed towards by a Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) 'Making the Environmental Liability Directive more fit for purpose' that is updated annually to changing developments, growing knowledge and new needs.
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta 1992)	The aim of this (revised) Convention is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.	The Valletta Convention makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It also deals with public access, in particular to archaeological sites, and educational actions to be undertaken to develop public awareness of the value of the archaeological heritage. It also constitutes an institutional framework for pan-European co-operation on the archaeological heritage, entailing a systematic exchange of experience and experts among the various States.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
Convention of the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada 1995)	• The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented.	• The reinforcement and promotion of policies for protecting and enhancing the heritage within the territories of the parties. • The affirmation of European solidarity with regard to the protection of the heritage and the fostering of practical co-operation between states and regions.
Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005)	• Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time. • A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.	• Recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. • Recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage. • Emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal. • Take the necessary steps to apply the provisions of this Convention concerning the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society. • Greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned.
European Landscape Convention 2000	• The developments in agriculture, forestry, industrial and mineral production techniques, together with the practices followed in town and country planning, transport, networks, tourism and recreation, and at a more general level, changes in the world economy, have in many cases accelerated the transformation of landscapes. The Convention expresses a concern to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment. **It aims to respond to the public's** wish to enjoy high quality landscapes.	• Promote protection, management and planning of landscapes. • Organise European co-operation on landscape issues.
The Seventh Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the European Community (2013-2020)	It identifies three key objectives: • **to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital** • to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy • to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing	Four so called "enablers" will help Europe deliver on these objectives (goals): • Better implementation of legislation. • Better information by improving the knowledge base. • More and wiser investment for environment and climate policy. • Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies. Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme: • To make the Union's cities more sustainable. • To help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively.
Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats)	The convention has three main aims: • to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats • to promote cooperation between states • to give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species including endangered and vulnerable migratory species	The Parties under the convention recognise the intrinsic value of nature, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations, they also: • Seek to ensure the conservation of nature in their countries, paying particular attention to planning and development policies and pollution control. • Look at implementing the Bern Convention in central Eastern Europe and the Caucus. • Take account of the potential impact on natural heritage by other policies. • Promote education and information of the public, ensuring the need to conserve species is understood and acted upon. • Develop an extensive number of species action plans, codes of conducts, and guidelines, at their own initiative or in co-operation with other organisations. • Created the Emerald Network, an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest.
Bali Road Map (2007)	The overall goals of the project are twofold: • To increase national capacity to co-ordinate ministerial views, participate in the UNFCCC process, and negotiate positions within the timeframe of the Bali Action Plan; and • To assess investment and financial flows to address climate change for up to three key sectors and/or economic activities.	The Bali Action Plan is centred on four main building Blocks: • mitigation • adaptation • technology • financing
Cancun Agreements (2010)	Set of decisions taken at the COP 16 Conference in Cancun in 2010 which addresses a series of key issues in the fight against climate change. Cancun Agreements' main objectives cover: • Mitigation • Transparency of actions • Technology • Finance • Adaptation • Forests • Capacity building	Among the most prominent agreements is the establishment of a Green Climate Fund to transfer money from the developed to developing world to tackle the impacts of climate change.
Doha Climate Gateway (2012)	Set of decisions taken at the COP 18 meeting in Doha in 2012 which pave the way for a new agreement in Paris in 2015.	The following actions were committed to by governments at this conference: • Set out a timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015 (to come into effect in 2020);

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
		• Complete the work under Bali Action Plan and to focus on new completing new targets; • Strengthen the aim to cut greenhouse gases and help vulnerable countries to adapt; • Amend Kyoto Protocol to include a new commitment period for cutting down the greenhouse gases emissions; and • Provide the financial and technology support and new institutions to allow clean energy investment and sustainable growth in developing countries.
EU Common Agricultural Policy	• To improve agricultural productivity, so that consumers have a stable supply of affordable food; and • To ensure that EU farmers can make a reasonable living.	• **ensuring viable food production that will contribute to feeding the world's population, which is expected to rise** considerably in the future; • Climate change and sustainable management of natural resources; • Looking after the countryside across the EU and keeping the rural economy alive.
EU REACH Regulation (EC 1907/2006)	• Aims to improve the protection of human health and the environment through the better and earlier identification of the intrinsic properties of chemical substances.	The aims are achieved by applying REACH, namely: • Registration, • Evaluation, • Authorisation; and • Restriction of chemicals. REACH also aims to enhance innovation and competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.
Stockholm Convention	• The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants.	• Prohibit and/or eliminate the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A to the Convention • Restrict the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B to the Convention • Reduce or eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C to the Convention • Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner • To target additional POPs • Other provisions of the Convention relate to the development of implementation plans, information exchange, public information, awareness and education, research, development and monitoring, technical assistance, financial resources and mechanisms, reporting, effectiveness evaluation and non-compliance
Ramsar Convention	The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving **sustainable development throughout the world".**	Under the "three pillars" of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to: • Work towards the wise use of all their wetlands; • **Designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and ensure** their effective management; • Cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species.
OSPAR Convention	The mission of OSPAR is to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health in the North-East Atlantic by preventing and eliminating pollution; by protecting the marine environment from the adverse effects of human activities; and by contributing to the sustainable use of the seas.	OSPAR's work is organised under six strategies: • Biodiversity and Ecosystem Strategy • Eutrophication Strategy • Hazardous Substances Strategy • Offshore Industry Strategy • Radioactive Substances Strategy • Strategy for the Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme These six strategies fit together to underpin the ecosystem approach. For each strategy a programme of work is designed and implemented annually.
European 2020 Strategy for Growth	Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities: • Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; • Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; • Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.	In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020: 1. 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed; 2. 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D; 3. the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right); 4. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree; 5. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.
UK Marine Policy Statement and the Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland	• Achieving a sustainable marine economy • Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society • Living within environmental limits • Promoting good governance • Using sound science responsibly UK Marine Policy Statement and the Draft Marine Plan for Northern provide the policy framework for both planning and marine licensing authorities in making their decisions.	The MPS will facilitate and support the formulation of Marine Plans, ensuring that marine resources are used in a sustainable way in line with the high-level marine objectives and thereby: • Promote sustainable economic development; • **Enable the UK's move towards a low-**carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of • climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects; • Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and heritage assets; and Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
Marine (Northern Ireland) Act 2013	Aims to provide for marine plans in relation to the Northern Ireland inshore region; to provide for marine conservation zones in that region; to make further provision in relation to marine licensing for certain electricity works in that region; and for connected purposes.	The Marine Act sets out a new framework for Northern Ireland's seas based on: a system of marine planning that will balance conservation, energy and resource needs; improved management for marine nature conservation and the streamlining of marine licensing for some electricity projects. The main provisions of the Act are outlined below: • Marine Planning • Nature Conservation Marine Licensing
Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Northern Ireland)	Spatial strategy for the future development of Northern Ireland. Strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide public and private sectors.	Aims to provide long-term policy direction with a strategic spatial perspective.
NI Regional Landscape Character Assessment	In recognising the importance of sustaining local identity, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has commissioned Landscape Character Assessments of Northern Ireland from environmental consultants, which resulted in the identification of distinct character areas within Northern Ireland.	The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment provides a strategic overview of the landscape in Northern Ireland and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique.
NI Regional Seascape Character Assessment	The aim of this study is to provide a strategic understanding of different areas of regional seascape character along the entire Northern Ireland coast, complementing similar assessments undertaken elsewhere in the UK. This will contribute to the aims of the European Landscape Convention through promoting the protection, management and planning of the seascape, and to support the European cooperation in landscape issues.	• Identify and map the different regional seascape character areas. • Describe the key features and characteristics of each seascape character area. Relate the description of each seascape character area to its neighbouring terrestrial landscape character areas (as described in the NI Landscape Character Assessment, 2000) and take account of boundaries identified in relation to neighbouring seascape areas for the British and Irish coastline.
European 2020 Strategy for Growth	Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities: • Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; • Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.	In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020: 1. 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed; 2. 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D; 3. the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right); 4. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree; 5. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.
European Parliament resolutions, including: The European Green Deal (EGD) 2020	The deal sets out how to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, boosting the economy, improving people's quality of life, caring for nature and leaving no one behind.	• It sets out a roadmap with actions to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, restore biodiversity and cut pollution. • It outlines investments required, financing tools available and explains how to ensure a just and inclusive transition. In order to meet the goal to become climate neutral by 2050 as part of the European Green Deal, the European Union (EU) Commission proposed on 4th March 2020 to bring about the first European Climate Law and legally bind the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
EU (2020) Biodiversity Strategy	A long-term plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems across the European Union.	The Strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030, including: • Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at sea, building upon existing Natura 2000 areas, with strict protection for areas of very high biodiversity and climate value. • An EU Nature Restoration Plan - a series of concrete commitments and actions to restore degraded ecosystems across the EU by 2030, and manage them sustainably, addressing the key drivers of biodiversity loss. • A set of measures to enable the necessary transformative change: setting in motion a new, strengthened governance framework to ensure better implementation and track progress, improving knowledge, financing and investments and better respecting nature in public and business decision-making. Measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge, demonstrating that the EU is ready to lead by example towards the successful adoption of an ambitious global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity.
EU (2018) Clean Air Policy Package	Aims to substantially reduce air pollution across the EU.	The proposed strategy sets out objectives for reducing the health and environmental impacts of air pollution by 2030, and contains legislative proposals to implement stricter standards for emissions and air pollution.
Leaders Pledge for Nature 2020	Political leaders (including Taoiseach Michael Martin) participating in the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity in September 2020, representing 75 countries from all regions and the European Union, have committed to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030.	As part of the UN Decade of Action to achieve sustainable development, the leaders commit to achieve the vision of Living in Harmony with Nature by 2050 by undertaking ten actions, including: • Putting biodiversity, climate, and the environment at the heart of COVID-19 recovery strategies and investments as well as national and international development and cooperation; • Developing and implementing an ambitious and transformational post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Kunming, China, as a key instrument to reach the SDGs; • Raising ambition and aligning domestic climate policies with the Paris Agreement on climate change, with enhanced nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and long-term strategies consistent with the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement, and the objective of net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by mid-century, and strengthen climate resilience of economies and ecosystems; and

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
		Mainstream biodiversity into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral policies at all levels, including in food production, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, energy, tourism, infrastructure and extractive industries, and trade and supply chains, as well as into key international agreements and processes.
Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011	The aim of the Act is to create a planning system which is quicker, clearer and more accessible, with resources better matched to priorities. The Act also gives effect to local government reform changes which transferred the majority of planning functions and decision making responsibilities for local development plans, development management plus planning enforcement to locally accountable councils	The enactment of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 provided the legislative basis for the most significant reforms of the Northern Ireland planning system in a generation. These reforms impacted on every aspect of planning, including how development plans are drawn up, how development proposals and applications are managed and the way in which these functions are delivered. The key reforms set out to deliver the complete overhaul and redesign of the development plan and development management systems with the aim of improving efficiency and effectiveness. Significant changes were also made in relation to planning appeals and enforcement.
Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995	The Order is one of the primary pieces of legislation used to protect archaeological sites and built heritage.	State Care sites and monuments are those in the ownership of NIEA. The Order (Article 13) provides the statutory remit for NIEA to acquire historic monuments to secure their protection and manage them for the benefit of present and future generations, by providing public access. The Order (Article 3) allows NIEA to schedule monuments for protection. These monuments remain in their existing ownership, but give NIEA powers to control works through Scheduled Monument consent, help to look after sites through Management Agreements or pursue prosecution where damage has been caused.
Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 (NI)	An Act to secure the protection of wrecks in territorial waters and the sites of such wrecks, from interference by unauthorised persons; and for connected purposes.	Section 1 of the act provides for wrecks to be designated because of historical, archaeological or artistic value. Section 2 provides for designation of dangerous sites. Wreck sites must have a known location in order to be designated.
Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 - Spatial strategy for Northern Ireland	The RDS provides an overarching strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide the **public and private sectors. It does not redefine other Departments' strategies but** complements them with a spatial perspective.	The 8 aims of the RDS are: • Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Northern Ireland; • Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Londonderry as the principal city of the North West; • Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential; • Promote development which improves the health and well-being of communities; • Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places; • Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake; • Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaptation to climate change; and • Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world.
Archaeology 2030 - A Strategic Approach for Northern Ireland	This document sets out a strategic approach and recommendations as to how society develop engagement with and understanding of archaeology.	This document is the collaborative product of four cross-sectoral working groups, co-ordinated by a steering group, and **involved people from a wide range of disciplines working in, or related to archaeology. Convened as 'The Way Forward for Archaeology in Northern Ireland',** the aim was to conduct a review of the current position of archaeology in NI, and through a series of workshops, survey and dialogue, to develop a sector-wide, strategic approach, with recommendations for the future.
The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) and relevant Planning Policy Statements (PPS) for Northern Ireland	**The Department of the Environment's 'Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland'** - Planning for Sustainable Development (SPPS), **sets out the Department's regional** planning policies for securing the orderly and consistent development of land in Northern Ireland.	The provisions of the SPPS must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans, and are also material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals. Statements of national policy and principles towards certain aspects of the town planning framework. (It should be **noted that the PPS's will be superseded by Local Development Plans** when they are adopted).
Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland 2020	A strategy for Northern Ireland to meet its international obligations and local targets to protect biodiversity and ensure that the environment can continue to support our people and economy.	The Strategy sets out how Northern Ireland plans to meet its international obligations and local targets to protect biodiversity and ensure that the environment can continue to support our people and economy. It builds upon the first Biodiversity Strategy published in 2002 but adopts the modern and internationally agreed approach that emphasises the management of biological systems to deliver the materials and services upon which people depend – the ecosystem services approach.
Draft Environment Strategy (NI)	The Environment Strategy is intended to be an overarching document setting out Northern **Ireland's environmental priorities for the coming decades and will form part of the Green** Growth agenda.	The Environment Strategy covers: • Air and water quality • A healthy environment we can enjoy • Nature and wildlife • Using our environment to make things without • damaging it • Waste and recycling • Our changing climate
The Draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040	The draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040 Consultation Document provides an outline of the policy drivers for the development of this strategy, the ecosystem services that semi-natural peatlands in Northern Ireland provide, details the current factors affecting our semi-natural peatlands and sets out the objectives and actions which we consider necessary to ensure that our semi-natural peatlands are conserved and restored to functioning ecosystems.	The Draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy provides information on a series of Strategic Objectives and Actions that the Department and its partner organisations intend to take forward. The UK Peatland Strategy was published in 2018 and identifies a common way forward and sets the context for the devolved administrations strategic peatland action plans.
The Draft Green Growth Strategy Consultation on the draft Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland	This Green Growth Strategy sets out an ambitious vision and a framework for delivery with which all other NI government policies and strategies must align. It provides us with a	This draft Strategy establishes the NI Green Growth vision and principles and sets out commitments to tackling the climate crisis. A detailed Climate Action Plan is currently being developed, which will set out what will ne delivered.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
	vitally important opportunity to embed wider climate change, a green economy and environmental considerations into decision-making.	
Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 2050	The long term vision of the Energy Strategy is to have net zero and affordable energy, compatible with the 2015 Paris Agreement, and one which makes a fair contribution to the UK Government's legally binding target of "net zero" emissions by 2050.	The Energy Strategy sets out a pathway for energy to 2030 that will mobilise the skills, technologies and behaviours needed to take us towards our vision of net zero carbon and affordable energy by 2050. It outlines a roadmap to 2030 aiming to deliver a 56% reduction in our energy-related emissions.
The UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS)	The UK Marine Policy Statement provides the policy framework for the marine planning system and taking decisions affecting the marine environment.	The Marine Policy Statement will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom marine area. It has been prepared and adopted for the purposes of section 44 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The Guidance to the UK Marine Policy Statement from 1 January 2020 explains how references to EU law in the UK MPS should be interpreted from 1 January 2021 following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.
Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland	The Marine Plan for Northern Ireland will inform and guide the regulation, management, use and protection of our marine area. It is a single document made up of two plans, one for the inshore region and one for the offshore region.	The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) and the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 (The Marine Act), require the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) as the Marine Plan Authority (MPA), to prepare marine plans. The Marine Plan has been developed within the framework of the UK Marine Policy Statement (UK MPS). This will facilitate the sustainable development of the marine area. The UK Government has published a 25 year Environment Plan that aims to having UK Marine Plans in place by 2021.
Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2026	Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) aims to establish sustainable levels of economic and social activity in our coastal areas while protecting the coastal environment.	ICZM seeks to reconcile the different policies that have an effect on the coast and to establish a framework that facilitates the integration of the interests and responsibilities of those involved in the development, management and use of the coast.
Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022	The Act sets targets for the years 2050, 2040 and 2030 for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland.	The Act commits Northern Ireland to a target of 48% reduction in emissions and 80% renewable electricity by 2030 and carbon net zero by 2050.
National Level		
Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan (2021-2030)	The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between. 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. It is an ambitious plan that balances the significant demand for public investment across all sectors and regions of Ireland with a major focus on improving the delivery of infrastructure projects to ensure speed of delivery and value for money.	The National Planning Framework published alongside the National Development Plan yields ten National Strategic Outcomes as follows: 1. Compact Growth 2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility 3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities 4. Sustainable Mobility 5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills 6. High-Quality International Connectivity 7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage 8. Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society 9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources 10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland [in preparation]	The high-level strategic framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network. This new framework is the Department of Transport's contribution to Project Ireland 2040, Government's long-term strategy for accommodating population growth in a sustainable manner and making Ireland a better country for all of its people. It has been developed to ensure that our transport sectoral strategy is underpinned by and supports the achievement of the spatial objectives and National Strategic Objectives set out in the National Planning Framework.	The draft framework establishes high-level investment priorities to efficiently and effectively address key transport challenges identified by the background analysis and to ensure that transport investment is aligned with and supports Government's overarching spatial and climate change objectives, as articulated in the National Planning Framework and Climate Action Plan.
Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)	The core principal objectives of this Act are to amend the Planning Acts of 2000 – 2009 with specific regard given to supporting economic renewal and sustainable development.	• Development, with certain exceptions, is subject to development control under the Planning Acts and the local authorities grant or refuse planning permission for development, including ones within protected areas. • There are, however, a range of exemptions from the planning system. Use of land for agriculture, peat extraction and afforestation, subject to certain thresholds, is generally exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission. • Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for a range of classes and large scale projects. • Under planning legislation, Development Plans must include mandatory objectives for the conservation of the natural heritage and for the conservation of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed. There are also discretionary powers to set objectives for the conservation of a variety of other elements of the natural heritage.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
Climate Action Plan 2021	The Climate Action Plan 2021 provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting us on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021.	The Plan lists the actions needed to deliver on our climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy. It will be updated annually, including in 2022, to ensure alignment with **Ireland's** legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings.
Draft Territorial Just Transition Plan (EU Just Transition Fund) [in preparation]	Territorial just transition plans will be at the centre of the Just Transition Mechanism, providing targeted support to generate necessary investments to transition to a sustainable and climate-neutral economy. Any plans submitted will be subject to approval by the Commission, as is the case for the programming under the cohesion policy funds.	Under the Structural Reform Support Programme, the Commission made tailor-made expertise available to help national and regional authorities to: • assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of the transition and outline the transition process up to 2030 • build a dialogue among stakeholders, such as citizens, business and civil society, to reach a common vision on how to go about the transition • and identify actions to achieve a successful just transition
Marine Planning Development Management Bill (General Scheme), 2019	The Bill seeks to establish in law a completely new regime for the maritime area which will replace existing State and development consent regimes and streamline arrangements on the basis of a single consent principle.	One of the aims is to establish a legal basis for An Bord Pleanála and coastal local authorities to consent to development in the maritime area, while retaining existing foreshore and planning permission provisions for aquaculture and sea fisheries related development. It will also provide for a single environmental impact assessment (EIA) and a single appropriate assessment (AA), where applicable.
European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011	The purpose of these Regulations is to transpose into Irish law Directive 2001/42/EC of 27 June 2001 (O.J. No. L 197, 21 July 2001) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment — commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.	• The Regulations cover plans and programmes in all of the sectors listed in article 3(2) of the Directive except land-use planning. • These Regulations also amend certain provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide the statutory basis for the transposition of the Directive in respect of land-use planning. • Transposition in respect of the land-use planning sector is contained in the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004).
European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477of 2011, as amended)	These Regulations provide a new for the implementation in Ireland of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on habitats and protection of wild fauna and flora (as amended) and for the implementation of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of wild birds.	• They provide, among other things, for: the appointment and functions of authorized officers; identification, classification and other procedures relative to the designation of Community sites. • The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the CJEU against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.
Waste Management Act 1996, as amended	To make provision in relation to the prevention, management and control of waste; to give effect to provisions of certain acts adopted by institutions of the European communities in respect of those matters; to amend the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, and to repeal certain enactments and to provide for related matters.	The Waste Management Act contains a number of key legal obligations, including requirements for waste management planning, waste collection and movement, the authorisation of waste facilities, measures to reduce the production of waste and/or promote its recovery.
European Communities Environmental Objectives (FPM) Regulations 2009 (S.I 296 of 2009)	The purpose of these Regulations is to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for freshwater pearl mussels	Actions: • Set environmental quality objectives for the habitats of the freshwater pearl mussel populations named in the First Schedule to these Regulations that are within the boundaries of a site notified in a candidate list of European sites, or designated as a Special Area of Conservation, under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94/1997). • Require the production of sub-basin management plans with programmes of measures to achieve these objectives. • Set out the duties of public authorities in respect of the sub-basin management plans and programmes of measure
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I 9 of 2010), as amended (S.I. No. 366 of 2016)	To amend the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) to make further provision to implement Commission Directive 2014/80/EU of 20 June 2014 amending Annex II to Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration.	The substances and threshold values set out in Schedule 5 to S.I. No. 9 of 2010 have been reviewed and amended where necessary, based on existing monitoring information and international guidelines on appropriate threshold values. • Part A of Schedule 6 has been amended to include changes to the rules governing the determination of background levels for the purposes of establishing threshold values for groundwater pollutants and indicators of pollution. • Part B of Schedule 6 has been amended to include nitrites and phosphorus (total) / phosphates among the minimum list of pollutants and their indicators which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must consider when establishing threshold values • Part C of Schedule 6 amends the information to be provided to the Minister by the EPA with regard to the pollutants and their indicators for which threshold values have been established
European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 31 of 2014)	These Regulations, which give effect to Irelands 3rd Nitrates Action Programme, provide statutory support for good agricultural practice to protect waters against pollution from agricultural sources	The Regulations include measures such as: • Periods when land application of fertilisers is prohibited • Limits on the land application of fertilisers • Storage requirements for livestock manure; and • Monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures in terms of agricultural practice and impact on water quality.
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 (and Amendment Bill 2021)	• An Act to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy.	When considering a plan or framework, for approval, the Government shall endeavour to achieve the national transition objective within the period to which the objective relates and shall, in endeavouring to achieve that objective, ensure that such objective is achieved by the implementation of measures that are cost effective and shall, for that purpose, have regard to:

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
	• The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2021 seeks to **amend the principle Act of 2015 (outlined below) by reinforcing Ireland's transition** to Net Zero and achieve its commitment to a climate neutral economy by no later than 2050. It establishes a legally binding framework with clear targets and commitments set in law, and ensure the necessary structures and processes are embedded on a statutory basis to ensure Ireland achieves its national, EU and international climate goals and obligations in the near and long term.	• The ultimate objective specified in Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change done at New York on 9 May 1992 and any mitigation commitment entered into by the European Union in response or otherwise in relation to that objective, • The policy of the Government on climate change, • Climate justice, • Any existing obligation of the State under the law of the European Union or any international agreement referred to in section 2; and • The most recent national greenhouse gas emissions inventory and projection of future greenhouse gas emissions, prepared by the Agency.
The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan (2018 – 2020)	• National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020 is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). • The Plan provides a 'SDG Matrix' which identifies the responsible Government Departments for each of the 169 targets. It also includes a 'SDG Policy Map' indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets.	The Plan identifies four strategic priorities to guide implementation: • Awareness: raise public awareness of the SDGs; • Participation: provide stakeholders opportunities to engage and contribute to follow-up and review processes, and further develop national implementation of the Goals; • Support: encourage and support efforts of communities and organisations to contribute towards meeting the SDGs, and foster public participation; and • Policy alignment: develop alignment of national policy with the SDGs and identify opportunities for policy coherence.
Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan (2016-2021)	**€27 billion multi**-annual Exchequer Capital Investment Plan, which is supported by a programme of capital investment in the wider State sector, and which over the period 2016 to 2021 will help to lay the foundations for continued growth in Ireland.	• **This Capital Plan reflects the Government's commitment to supporting strong and sustainable economic growth** and raising welfare and living standards for all. • It includes allocations for new projects across a number of key areas and funding to ensure that the present stock of national infrastructure is refreshed and maintained.
Aquaculture Acts 1997 to 2006 : (Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 1(3)) • **Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997** (23/1997) • **Fisheries and Foreshore** (Amendment) Act 1998 (54/1998), ss. 2, 3 and 4 • **Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2001** (40/2001) • **Sea**-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 101	The Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division ensures the efficient and effective management of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities.	The Strategic Objectives of the Aquaculture & Foreshore Management Division are: • to develop and manage an efficient and effective regulatory framework in respect of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; • to secure a fair financial return from the State's foreshore estate in the context of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; • to progressively reduce arrears in the clearing of licence applications.
Foreshore Acts 1933 to 2011	The Foreshore Acts require that a lease or licence must be obtained from the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government for the carrying out of works or placing structures or material on, or for the occupation of or removal of material from, State-owned foreshore, which represents the greater part of the foreshore. Construction of permanent structures on privately owned foreshore also required the prior permission of the Minister under the Foreshore Act.	• Developments on the foreshore require planning permission in addition to a Foreshore Lease/Licence/Permission. All Foreshore Leases, Licences and • Permissions are without prejudice to the powers of the local planning authority. Applicants should, therefore, consult initially with the local planning authority regarding their proposal. • In the case of developments on foreshore for, by or on behalf of a Local Authority where an EIS is required, applications should be made to An Bord Pleanála under Part XV, Planning and Development Act 2000.
National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF)	The NMPF details how marine activities will interact with each other in an ocean space that is under increasing spatial pressure, ensuring the sustainable use of **Ireland's** marine resources to 2040. The NMPF has been prepared with an ecosystem-based approach and informed by best available knowledge.	The National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) brings together all marine-based human activities for the first time, outlining the Govern**ment's vision, objectives and marine planning policies for each marine activity.** The NMPF is intended as the marine equivalent to the National Planning Framework. This approach will enable the Government to: • set a clear direction for managing our seas • clarify objectives and priorities • direct decision makers, users and stakeholders towards strategic, plan-led, and efficient use of our marine resources
European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea-Fisheries) Regulations 2013 (S.I. 290 of 2013)	These regulations have been drafted to implement the responsibilities of the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine in relation to sea fisheries in Natura 2000 sites, in accordance with the Habitats and Birds Directives as transposed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).	• Regulation 3 provides for the submission of a Fisheries Natura Plan in relation to planned fisheries; • Regulation 4 provides for a screening of a Fisheries Natura Plan to determine whether or not an appropriate assessment is required; • Regulation 5 provides for an appropriate assessment of a Fisheries Natura Plan and also provides for public and statutory consultation; • Regulation 6 provides for the Minister to make a determination to adopt a Fisheries Natura Plan. The Minister may amend, withdraw or revoke a plan; • Regulation 7 provides for publication of the adopted Fisheries Natura Plan; • Regulation 8 provides for a Risk Assessment of unplanned fisheries and also provides for public and statutory consultation on the assessment;

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
		• Regulation 9 provides for the issue of a Natura Declaration to prohibit, restrict including restricting by permit, control, etc. of sea fishing activities; • Regulation 10 provides for Natura Permits to be issued where required by Natura Declarations; and • Regulations 11 to 31 deal with functions of authorised officers and related matters, offences, etc.
National Seafood Operational Programme (20104-2020)	The Operational Programme (OP) supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in Ireland aims at achieving key national development priorities along with the EU's "Europe 2020" objectives. The OP supports the general reform of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the development of its Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) in Ireland. The OP strategy is designed around the Irish national priorities in the agri-food sector: 'Act Smart' by encouraging knowledge and innovation, 'Think Green' through a responsible and sustainable use of resources, 'Achieve Growth' in order to maintain and create jobs.	The OP is organised around the following priorities • **Union Priority 1 (UP1): €67 million (28% of the total allocation) aim at assuring the sustainable development** of fishing activities, while protecting the marine environment • **Union Priority 2 (UP2): €30 million (12% of the total allocation) will support the Irish National Strategic Plan** for Aquaculture that aims at boosting the competitiveness of the aquaculture sector. • Union Priority 3 (UP3): €84.8 million (35.4% of the total allocation) will go towards compliance with CFP rules regarding control and data collection. • Union Priority 4 (UP4): €12 million (5% of the total allocation) will support local development initiatives — a substantial, eleven-fold increase compared to the 2007-2013 funding period. • Union Priority 5 (UP5): €33 million (13.8% of the total allocation) will go towards creating scale in the Irish marketing and processing sectors, starting from the base of very small-scale businesses. • Union Priority 6 (UP6): €10.6 million (4% of the total allocation) will be used on measures to improve the knowledge on the state of the marine environment and the level of protection of marine areas
Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth: An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland 2012	Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth is an Integrated Marine Plan (IMP), setting out a roadmap for the **Government's vision, high**-level goals and integrated actions across policy, governance and business to enable our marine potential to be realised. Implementation of this Plan will see Ireland evolve an integrated system of policy and programme planning for our marine affairs.	• Sustainable economic growth of marine/ maritime sectors; • Increase the contribution to the national GDP; • Deliver a business friendly yet robust governance, policy and planning framework; • Protect and conserve our rich marine biodiversity and ecosystems; • Manage our living and non-living resources in harmony with the ecosystem; • Implement and comply with environmental legislation; • Building on our maritime heritage, strengthen our maritime identity; • Increase our awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits; and • Engagement and participation by all.
Ireland's National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010 (Irish Government submission to the European Commission)	The National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) sets out the Government's strategic approach and concrete measures to deliver on Ireland's 16% target under Directive 2009/28/EC.	The NREAP sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.
Strategy for Renewable Energy (2012-2020)	• **The Government's overarching strategic objective is to make renewable energy an increasingly significant component of Ireland's energy supply by 2020, so that at a minimum it will achieve its legally binding 2020 target in the most cost efficient manner for consumers.** • Of critical importance is the role which the renewable energy sector plays in job **creation and economic activity as part of the Government's action plan for jobs.**	This document sets out five strategic goals, reflecting the key dimensions of the renewable energy challenge to 2020: • Increasing on and offshore wind, • Building a sustainable bioenergy sector, • Fostering R&D in renewables such as wave & tidal, • Growing sustainable transport; and • Building out robust and efficient networks.
National Climate Mitigation Plan 2017	The Plan represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the deep decarbonisation required in Ireland by mid-century in line with the Government's policy objectives.	The National Mitigation Plan focuses on the following issues: • Climate Action Policy Framework • Decarbonising Electricity Generation • Decarbonising the Built Environment • Decarbonising Transport • An Approach to Carbon Neutrality for Agriculture, Forest and Land Use Sectors
National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (2014)	• The National Policy Position provides a high-level policy direction for the adoption and implementation by Government of plans to enable the State to move to a low carbon economy by 2050. • Statutory authority for the plans is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.	National climate policy in Ireland: • Recognises the threat of climate change for humanity; • Anticipates and supports mobilisation of a comprehensive international response to climate change, and global transition to a low-carbon future; • Recognises the challenges and opportunities of the broad transition agenda for society; and • Aims, as a fundamental national objective, to achieve transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.
National Clean Air Strategy [in preparation]	The Clean Air Strategy will provide the strategic policy framework necessary to identify and promote integrated measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner air while delivering on wider national objectives.	• Having a National Strategy will provide a policy framework by which Ireland can develop the necessary policies and measures to comply with new and emerging EU legislation. • The Strategy should also help tackle climate change. • The Strategy will consider a wider range of national policies that are relevant to clean air policy such as transport, energy, home heating and agriculture. • **In any discussion relating to clean air policy, the issue of people's health is paramount and this will be a strong** theme of the Strategy.
Eirgrid's Grid25 Strategy and associated Grid25 Implementation Programme 2011 -2016	• Eirgrid's mission is to develop, maintain and operate a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system for Ireland.	Grid25, EirGrid's roadmap to uprate the electricity transmission grid by 2025, continues to be implemented so as to increase the capacity of the grid, to satisfy future demand, and to help Ireland meet its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable energy by 2020.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
	• *"Our vision is of a grid developed to match future needs, so it can safely and reliably carry power all over the country to the major towns and cities and onwards to every home, farm and business where the electricity is consumed and so it can meet the needs of consumers and* **generators in a sustainable way."**	
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)	• The objective of this Strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenways users. • It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over the next 10 years with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity.	• A Strategic Greenway network of national and regional routes, with a number of high-capacity flagship routes that can be extended and/or link with local Greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure; • Greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to Ireland and are regularly used by overseas visitors, domestic visitors and locals thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity; • Greenways that provide a substantially segregated off-road experience linking places of interest, recreation and leisure in areas with beautiful scenery of different types with plenty to see and do; and • Greenways that provide opportunities for the development of local businesses and economies, and • Greenways that are developed with all relevant stakeholders in line with an agreed code of practice.
National Water Resources Plan [in preparation]	• The NWRP is a plan on how to provide a safe, secure and reliable water supply to customers for the next 25 years, without causing adverse impact on the environment. • The objective of the NWRP is to set out how we intend to maintain the supply and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term whilst minimising the impact on the environment. The preparation of the NWRP has been divided into two phases, the combination of which will become the final NWRP. The NWRP Framework Plan (Phase 1) has now been adopted. Phase 2 of the NWRP (four Regional Water Resources Plans), currently in preparation, will address the needs across the 535 individual water supplies and identify the solutions to address these needs.	The key objectives of the plan are to: • Identify areas where there are current and future potential water supply shortfalls, taking into account normal and extreme weather conditions • Assess the current and future water demand from homes, businesses, farms, and industry • **Consider the impacts of climate change on Ireland's water resources** • Develop a drought plan advising measures to be taken before and during drought events • Develop a plan detailing how we deal with the material that is produced as a result of treating drinking water • Identify, develop and assess options to help meet potential shortfalls in water supplies • Assess the water resources available at a national level including lakes, rivers and groundwater
National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development (2014-2020)	Vision: **"Aquaculture in RC is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable, with a** *developed infrastructure, strong human potentials and an organized market. The consumption of aquaculture products is equal or above EU average, while the technological* **development of the sector is among the best in the EU."**	General development and growth objectives of marine and freshwater aquaculture (2014 – 2020): • Strengthen the social, business and administrative environment for aquaculture development • Increase in the total production to 24,050 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability • Improvement of the perception and increase in the national consumption of National products
Aquaculture Acts 1997 to 2006 (Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 1(3)) Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997 (23/1997) Fisheries and Foreshore (Amendment) Act 1998 (54/1998), ss. 2, 3 and 4 Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2001 (40/2001) Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006)	The Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division ensures the efficient and effective management of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities.	The Strategic Objectives of the Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division are: • to develop and manage an efficient and effective regulatory framework in respect of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; • to secure a fair financial return from the State's foreshore estate in the context of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; to progressively reduce arrears in the clearing of licence applications.
Construction 2020, A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector	• Construction 2020 sets out a package of measures agreed by the Government and is aimed at stimulating activity in the building industry. • The Strategy aims both to increase the capacity of the sector to create and maintain jobs, and to deliver a sustainable sector, operating at an appropriate level. It seeks to learn the lessons of the past and to ensure that the right structures and mechanisms are in place so that they are not repeated.	This Strategy therefore addresses issues including: • A strategic approach to the provision of housing, based on real and measured needs, with mechanisms in place to detect and act when things are going wrong; • Continuing improvement of the planning process, striking the right balance between current and future requirements; • The availability of financing for viable and worthwhile projects; • Access to mortgage finance on reasonable and sustainable terms; • Ensuring we have the tools we need to monitor and regulate the sector in a way that underpins public confidence and worker safety; • Ensuring a fit for purpose sector supported by a highly skilled workforce achieving high quality and standards; and • Ensuring opportunities are provided to unemployed former construction workers to contribute to the recovery of the sector.
Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)	• The overall aim of this Strategy is to ensure that economy and society in Ireland can develop to their full potential within a well-protected environment, without compromising the quality of that environment, and with responsibility towards present and future generations and the wider international community.	• The Strategy addresses all areas of Government policy, and of economic and societal activity, which impact on the environment. It seeks to re-orientate policies as necessary to ensure that the strong growth Ireland enjoys and seeks to maintain will be environmentally sustainable.
National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 and	• The National Landscape Strategy will be used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention and to establish principles for protecting and	The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
National Landscape Character Assessment (pending preparation)	enhancing the landscape while positively managing its change. It will provide a high-level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape by way of supporting actions. • Landscape Strategy Vision: *"Our landscape reflects and embodies our cultural values and our shared natural heritage and contributes to the well-being of our society, environment and economy. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning."*	• Implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into the approach to sustainable development; • Establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape; • Provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of the landscape; • Ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible.
National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (EPA) 2014-2020 and new National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2021-2027	This Plan sets out the priorities to be pursued over the next six years and beyond to improve the management of hazardous waste, taking into account the progress made since the previous plan and the waste policy and legislative changes that have occurred since the previous plan was published. Section 26 of the Waste Management Act 1996 as amended, sets out the overarching objectives for the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. In this context, the following objectives are included as priorities for the revised Plan period: • To prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste by industry and society generally; • To maximise the collection of hazardous waste with a view to reducing the environmental and health impacts of any unregulated waste; • To strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export; • To minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management.	The Environmental Protection Agency has a statutory responsibility to prepare National Hazardous Waste Management Plans. The National Hazardous Waste Management Plan for the period 2014-2020 was the third such national plan and had 27 recommendations with the following objectives: to prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste; to maximise the collection of hazardous waste; to strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export; and to minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management. The Environmental Protection Agency has prepared a revised National Hazardous Waste Management Plan for the period 2021 to 2027.
Ministerial Guidelines such as Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and Flood Risk Management Guidelines	The Department produces a range of guidelines designed to help planning authorities, An Bord Pleanála, developers and the general public and cover a wide range of issues amongst others, architectural heritage, child care facilities, landscape, quarries and residential density.	The Minister issues statutory guidelines under Section 28 of the Act which planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are obliged to have regard to in the performance of their planning functions.
HSE Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025	The vision is: *"A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility."*	These four goals are interlinked, interdependent and mutually supportive: • Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life • Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities • Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing • Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland
Our Sustainable Future: A framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012	A medium to long term framework for advancing sustainable development and the green economy in Ireland. It identifies spatial planning as a key challenge for sustainable development and sets a series of measures to address these challenges.	• Sets out the challenges facing us and how we might address them in making sure that quality of life and general wellbeing can be improved and sustained in the decades to come.
Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020 (2009)	• Outlines a policy for how a sustainable travel and transport system can be achieved. • Sets out five key goals: 　o To reduce overall travel demand. 　o To maximise the efficiency of the transport network. 　o To reduce reliance on fossil fuels. 　o To reduce transport emissions. 　o To improve accessibility to transport.	• Others lower level aims include: 　o reduce distance travelled by private car and encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in areas of employment and to encourage people to live in close proximity to places of employment 　o ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking 　o improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies 　o strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets
Investing in our Future: A Strategic Framework for Investment in Land Transport (SFILT) – Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	SFILT sets out a set of priorities to guide the allocation of the State's investment to best develop and manage Ireland's land transport network over the coming decades.	The three priorities stated in SFILT are: • Priority 1: Achieve steady state maintenance (meaning that the maintenance and renewal of the existing transport system is at a sufficient level to maintain the system in an adequate condition); • Priority 2: Address urban congestion; and • Priority 3: Maximise the value of the road network. In delivering on the steady state maintenance objective set out in SFILT, the Plan includes for: • Planned replacement programme for the bus fleet operated under Public Service Obligation ("PSO") contracts; • Tram refurbishment and asset renewal in the case of light rail; and • To the extent within the Authority' remit, support for the operation of the existing rail network within the GDA.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework 2007 – 2020 (2007)	• White paper setting out a framework for delivering a sustainable energy future in Ireland. • Outlines strategic Goals for: 　o Security of Supply 　o Sustainability of Energy 　o Competitiveness of Energy Supply	The underpinning Strategic Goals are: • Ensuring that electricity supply consistently meets demand • Ensuring the physical security and reliability of gas supplies to Ireland • Enhancing the diversity of fuels used for power generation • Delivering electricity and gas to homes and businesses over efficient, reliable and secure networks • Creating a stable attractive environment for hydrocarbon exploration and production • Being prepared for energy supply disruptions
National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2018 and forthcoming regional, local and sectoral adaptation plans (including marine)	NAF specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities in their administrative areas in order to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur	• Adaptation under this Framework should seek to minimise costs and maximise the opportunities arising from climate change. • Adaptation actions range from building adaptive capacity (e.g., increasing awareness, sharing information and targeted training) through to policy and finance-based actions. • Adaptation actions must be risk based, informed by existing vulnerabilities of our society and systems and an understanding of projected climate change. • Adaptation actions taken to increase climate resilience must also consider impacts on other sectors and levels of governance
Governments White Paper 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy **Future' (2015 –** 2030)	The White Paper sets out a vision and a framework to guide Irish energy policy between now and 2030. A complete energy policy update informed by the vision to transform Ireland into a low carbon society and economy by 2050.	2030 will represent a significant milestone, meaning: • Reduced GHG emissions from the energy sector by between 80% and 95% • Ensuring that secure supplies of competitive and affordable energy remain available to citizens and businesses.
National Renewable Energy Action Plan (2010)	Sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.	Including Ireland's 16% target of gross final consumption to come from renewables by 2020.
National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland (2009 – 2020)	This is the second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland.	• The Plan reviews the original 90 actions outlined in the first Plan and updates/renews/removes them as appropriate.
Wildlife Act of 1976 Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000	The act provides protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna.	• Provides protection for certain species, their habitats and important ecosystems • Give statutory protection to NHAs • Enhances wildlife species and their habitats • Includes more species for protection
Actions for Biodiversity (2017-2021) **Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan**	Sets out strategic objectives, targets and actions to conserve and restore Ireland's biodiversity and to prevent and reduce the loss of biodiversity in Ireland and globally.	• To mainstream biodiversity in the decision-making process across all sectors. • To substantially strengthen the knowledge base for conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity. • To increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystems services. • To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside. • To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the marine environment. • To expand and improve on the management of protected areas and legally protected species. • To substantially strengthen the effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.
National Broadband Plan (2012)	Sets out the strategy to deliver high speed broadband throughout Ireland.	The Plan sets out: • A clear statement of Government policy on the delivery of High-Speed Broadband. • Specific targets for the delivery and rollout of high-speed broadband and the speeds to be delivered. • The strategy and interventions that will underpin the successful implementation of these targets. • A series of specific complementary measures to promote implementation of Government policy in this area.
The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)	• Sets out comprehensive mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning process. • Ensures flood risk is a key consideration in preparing land use plans and in the assessment of planning applications. • Implementation of the Guidelines is through actions at national, regional, local authority and site-specific levels. • Planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are required to have regard to the Guidelines in carrying out their functions under the Planning Acts.	• Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding. • Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface water run-off. • Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains. • Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth. • Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders. • Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management. The 2009 Flood Risk Management Guidelines were amended by Circular PL 2/2014 (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government) that provides advice on the use of OPW flood mapping in assessing planning applications and clarifies some advice from the 2009 Guidelines.
European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 722 of 2003) European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 350 of 2014)	• Transpose the Water Framework Directive into legislation. • Outlines the general duty of public authorities in relation to water. • Identifies the competent authorities in charge of water policy (amended to Irish Water in 2013) and gives EPA and the CER the authority to regulate and supervise their actions.	• Implements River basin districts and characterisation of RBDs and River Basin Management Plans. • Requires the public to be informed and consulted on the Plan and for progress reports to be published on RBDs. • Implements a Register of protected areas, Classification systems and Monitoring programmes for water bodies. • Allows the competent authority to recover the cost of damage/destruction of status of water body. • Outlines environmental objectives and programme of measures and environmental quality standards for priority substances.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface waters) Regulations of 2009 (SI 272 of 2009)		- Outlines criteria for assessment of groundwater. - Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for surface water bodies. - Outlines surface water quality standards. - Establishes threshold values for the classification and protection of surface waters against pollution and deterioration in quality.
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations of 2010 (SI 9 of 2010)	Transpose the requirements of the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC into Irish Legislation.	- Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for groundwater bodies of groundwater against pollution and deterioration in quality. - Sets groundwater quality standards. - Outlines threshold values for the classification and protection of groundwater.
Water Pollution Acts 1977 to 1990	The Water Pollution Acts allow Local Authorities the authority regulate and supervise actions relating to water in their division.	The Water Pollution Acts enable local authorities to: - Prosecute for water pollution offences. - Attach appropriate pollution control conditions in the licensing of effluent discharges from industry, etc., made to waters. - Issue notices ("section 12 notices") to farmers, etc., specifying measures to be taken within a prescribed period to prevent water pollution. - issue notices requiring a person to cease the pollution of waters and requiring the mitigation or remedying of any effects of the pollution in the manner and within the period specified in such notices: - Seek court orders, including High Court injunctions, to prevent, terminate, mitigate or remedy pollution/its effects. - Prepare water quality management plans for any waters in or adjoining their functional areas.
Water Services Act 2007 Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012 Water Services Act (No. 2) 2013	- Provides the water services infrastructure. - Outlines the responsibilities involved in delivering and managing water services. - Identifies the authority in charge of provision of water and wastewater supply. - Irish Water was given the responsibility of the provision of water and wastewater services in the amendment act during 2013, therefore these services are no longer the responsibility of the 34 Local Authorities in Ireland.	Key strategic objectives include: - Ensuring Irish Water delivers infrastructural projects that meet key public health, environmental and economic objectives in the water services sector. - Ensuring the provision of adequate water and sewerage services in the gateways and hubs listed in the National Spatial Strategy, and in other locations where services need to be enhanced. - Ensuring good quality drinking water is available to all consumers of public and group water supplies, in compliance with national and EU drinking water standards - Ensuring the provision of the remaining infrastructure needed to provide secondary wastewater treatment, for compliance with the requirements of the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive.
Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan (2014-2016)	This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term.	Six strategic objectives as follows: - Meet Customer Expectations. - Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply. - Provide Effective Management of Wastewater. - Protect and Enhance the Environment. - Support Social and Economic Growth. - Invest in the Future.
Raised Bog SAC Management Plan and Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Areas	Aims to meet nature conservation obligations while having regard to national and local economic, social and cultural needs	- Ensure that the implications of management choices for water levels, quantity and quality are fully explored, understood and factored into policy making and land use planning. - Review the current raised bog NHA network in terms of its contribution to the national conservation objective for raised bog habitats and determine the most suitable sites to replace the losses of active raised bog habitat and high bog areas within the SAC network and to enhance the national network of NHAs.
Agri-vision 2015 Action Plan	Outlines the vision for agricultural industry to improve competitiveness and response to market demand while respecting and enhancing the environment	not applicable
Agri-Food Strategy 2030	This 10-year Strategy sets out four high-level "Missions" to be achieved in order to develop such a system in Ireland: 1. A Climate Smart, Environmentally Sustainable Agri-Food Sector 2. Viable and Resilient Primary Producers with Enhanced Wellbeing 3. Food that is Safe, Nutritious and Appealing, Trusted and Valued at Home and Abroad 4. An Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Sector, driven by Technology and Talent	Each of the Missions has a set of Goals which are underpinned by a series of Actions.
Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS) Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS) Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS)	- Agri-environmental funding schemes aimed at rural development for the environmental enhancement and protection. - GLAS is the new replacement for REPS and AEOS which are both expiring.	- Establish best practice farming methods and production methods in order to protect landscapes and maximise conservation. - Protect biodiversity, endangered species of flora and fauna and wildlife habitats. - Ensure food is produced with the highest regard to the environment. - Implement nutrient management plans and grassland management plans. - Protect and maintain water bodies, wetlands and cultural heritage.
National Rural Development Programme	The National Rural Development Programme, prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, sets out a national programme based on the EU framework for rural	At a more detailed level, the programme also:

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
	development and prioritises improving the competitiveness of agriculture, improving the environment and improving the quality of life in rural areas	• Supports structural change at farm level including training young farmers and encouraging early retirement, support for restructuring, development and innovation; • Aims to improve the environment, biodiversity and the amenity value of the countryside by support for land management through funds such as Natura 2000 payments etc.; and • Aims to improve quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity through the implementation of local development strategies such as non-agricultural activities
National Forestry Programme (2014-2020)	**Represents Ireland's proposals for 100% State aid funding for a new Forestry Programme** for the period 2014 – 2020.	Measures include the following: • Afforestation and Creation of Woodland • NeighbourWood Scheme • Forest Roads • Reconstitution Scheme • Woodland Improvement Scheme
River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 3rd Cycle [in preparation]	This draft River Basin Management Plan sets out the measures that are necessary to protect and restore water quality in Ireland. The overall aim of the plan is to ensure that our natural waters are sustainably managed and that freshwater resources are protected **so as to maintain and improve Ireland's water environment.**	The River Basin Management Plan sets out the measures necessary to protect and improve the quality of **Ireland's** waters. These plans are prepared in 6-year cycles, during which a programme of measures must be implemented so as to achieve water quality objectives. Good water quality contributes to protecting human health by improving the quality of drinking water sources and bathing waters. UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 6 *'ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all'* have been integrated into the measures and the governance arrangements for the proposed River Basin Management Plan.
National Peatlands Strategy (2015-2025)	This Strategy aims to provide a long-term framework within which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution to the well-being of this and future generations.	Objectives of the Strategy include: • **To give direction to Ireland's approach to peatland management.** • To apply to all peatlands, including peat soils. • To ensure that the relevant State authorities and state owned companies that influence such decisions contribute to meeting cross-cutting objectives and obligations in their policies and actions. • **To ensure that Ireland's peatlands are** sustainably managed so that their benefits can be enjoyed responsible. • To inform appropriate regulatory systems to facilitate good decision making in support of responsible use
Flood Risk Management Plans arising from National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme	The national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme commenced in Ireland in 2011 and is being overseen by the Office of Public Works. The CFRAM Programme is intended to deliver on core components of the National Flood Policy, adopted in 2004, and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive.	CFRAM Studies have been undertaken for all River Basin Districts. The studies are focusing on areas known to have experienced flooding in the past and areas that may be subject to flooding in the future either due to development pressures or climate change. Flood Risk and Hazard mapping, including Flood Extent Mapping, was finalised in 2017. The final outputs from the studies are the CFRAM Plans, finalised in 2018. The Plans define the current and future flood risk in the River Basin Districts and set out how this risk can be managed.
Draft National Bioenergy Plan 2014 - 2020	The Draft Bioenergy Plan sets out a vision as follows: Bioenergy resources contributing to economic development and sustainable growth, generating jobs for citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner.	Three high level goals, of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development are identified: • To harness the market opportunities presented by bioenergy in order to achieve economic development, growth and jobs. • To increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing bioenergy. • To ensure that bioenergy developments do not adversely impact the environment and its living and non-living resources.
Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE) 2016	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.
National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017- 2030	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: • AFV forecasts • Electricity targets • Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets • Hydrogen targets • Biofuels targets • LPG targets • Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets
All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025	The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is an island-wide attempt to reverse declines in pollinating insects in order to ensure the sustainability of our food, avoid additional economic impacts on agriculture, and protect the health of the environment.	This voluntary Plan identified 81 actions, shared out between over 100 governmental and non-governmental organisations. A large focus of the Plan is to identify actions to improve the quality and amount of flower-rich habitat. Actions range from creating pollinator highways along our transport routes, to supporting pollinators on farmland, in gardens, businesses, and on public land.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
	The main objectives include: • Making farmland, public land and private land in Ireland pollinator friendly; • Raising awareness of pollinators and how to protect them; • Managed pollinators – supporting beekeepers and growers; • Expanding our knowledge of pollinators and pollination service; and • Collecting evidence to track change and measure success.	
Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)	Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten-year plan for the agri-**food sector. It underlines the sector's** unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.	Food Wise 2025 identifies ambitious and challenging growth projections for the industry over the next ten years including: • 85% increase in **exports to €19 billion.** • 70% increase in **value added to €13 billion.** • **60% increase in primary production to €10 billion.** • The creation of 23,000 additional jobs all along the supply chain from producer level to high end value added product development.
National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010	• Outlines objectives and actions aimed at developing a strong cycle network in Ireland • Sets out 19 specific objectives, and details the 109 actions, aimed at ensuring that a cycling culture is developed	• Sets a target where 10% of all journeys will be made by bike by 2020 • Proposes the planning, infrastructure, communication, education and stakeholder participations measures required to implement the initiative
National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030	• This National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport represents the first step in communicating our longer-term national vision for decarbonising transport by 2050, the cornerstone of which is our ambition that by 2030 all new cars and vans sold in Ireland will be zero-emissions capable. • By 2030 it is envisaged that the movement in Ireland to electrically-fuelled cars and commuter rail will be well underway, with natural gas and biofuels developing as major alternatives in the freight and bus sectors.	This policy set out to achieve five key goals in transport: • Reduce overall travel demand • Maximise the efficiency of the transport network • Reduce reliance on fossil fuels • Reduce transport emissions • Improve accessibility to transport These goals remain the cornerstone of transport policy and are fully aligned to the objectives of this National Policy Framework.
Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021	The Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021 sets out actions that the Tourism Leadership Group has identified as priorities to be progressed until 2021 in order to maintain sustainable growth in overseas tourism revenue and employment. Each action involves specific tourism stakeholders, both in the public and private sectors, all of whom we expect to proactively work towards the completion of actions within the specified timeframe.	The Plan contains 27 actions focusing on the following areas: • Policy Context • Marketing Ireland as a Visitor Destination • Enhancing the Visitor Experience • Research in the Irish Tourism Sector • Supporting Local Communities in Tourism • Wider Government Policy • International Context • Co-ordination Structures
Tourism Policy Statement: People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025	The main goal of this policy statement is to have a vibrant, attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country; is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; helps promote a positive image of Ireland overseas, and is a sector in which people want to work.	The Tourism Policy Statement sets three headline targets to be achieved by 2025: • **Overseas tourism revenue of €5 billion per year** • net of inflation excluding carrier receipts; • 250,000 people employed in tourism; and • 10 million overseas visitors to Ireland per year.
Tourism Development and Innovation – A Strategy for Investment 2016-2022, (Fáilte Ireland, 2016)	This strategy sets out the framework and mechanism for the delivery of investment to cities, towns, villages, communities and businesses across the country. It identifies **priorities to support innovation in the sector to retain and grow the country's** competitiveness in the marketplace. Its ultimate aim is to strengthen the appeal of Ireland for international visitors.	The objectives of the Tourism Development and Innovation Strategy are: • To successfully and consistently deliver a world class visitor experience; • To support a tourism sector that is profitable and achieves sustainable levels of growth and delivers jobs; • To facilitate communities to play an enhanced role in developing tourism in their locality, thereby strengthening and enriching local communities; and • **To recognise, value and enhance Ireland's natural e**nvironment as the cornerstone of Irish tourism.
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland	The high-level strategic framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network. **This new framework is the Department of Transport'**s contribution to Project **Ireland 2040, Government's long**-term strategy for accommodating population growth in a sustainable manner and making Ireland a better country for all of its people. It has been developed to ensure that our transport sectoral strategy is underpinned by and supports the achievement of the spatial objectives and National Strategic Objectives set out in the National Planning Framework.	The framework establishes high-level investment priorities to efficiently and effectively address key transport challenges **identified by the background analysis and to ensure that transport investment is aligned with and supports Government's** overarching spatial and climate change objectives, as articulated in the National Planning Framework and Climate Action Plan.
Regional/ County/Local Level		
Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031	The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework.	The Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy includes provisions for its 10 constituent local authorities: Donegal County Council; Galway County Council; Galway City Council; Sligo County Council; Leitrim County Council; Cavan County Council; Monaghan County Council; Mayo County council; and Roscommon County Council.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
Eastern and Midland Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy 2019-2031		The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy includes provisions for its 10 constituent local authorities: Cork City Council; Cork County Council; Clare County Council; Kerry County Council; Limerick City and County Council; Tipperary County Council; Waterford County Council; Carlow County Council; Kilkenny County Council; and Wexford County Council. The Eastern and Midland Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy includes provisions for its 12 constituent local authorities: Fingal County Council; Dublin City Council; South Dublin County Council; Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council; Louth County Council; Kildare County Council; Meath County Council; Wicklow County Council; Longford County Council; Laois County Council; Offaly County Council; and Westmeath County Council.
Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Draft Regional Tourism Strategy 2023-2027 Wild Atlantic Way Draft Regional Tourism Strategy 2023-2027 Dublin Draft Regional Tourism Strategy 2023-2027	Draft Regional Tourism Strategies are a roadmap for the tourism industry and all stakeholders involved in tourism in the region to navigate the current challenges and steer a course towards sustainable recovery and continued success. The Strategies set out a strategic approach to unlocking the commercial potential of the regions. It will ensure focus on tourism development is sustainable and regenerative and that the benefits accrue to local communities and to nature.	The strategic framework has been developed to achieve the vision of each of the Strategies. It consists of: • Sustainability Strategy • Visitor and Brand Strategy • Destination Development Strategy & Product Development Strategy • Industry Development Strategy • Distribution and Business Development Strategy • Marketing Strategy • Community Strategy • Environmental Strategy
Integrated Implementation Plan 2019-2024	The priorities in the Integrated Infrastructure Plan align with the objectives and priorities set out in the Greater Dublin Transport Strategy 2016-2035, focused on improving public and sustainable transport. While the bulk of the Plan relates solely to the Greater Dublin Area, certain areas such as public transport services and activities related to small public service vehicles are dealt with on a national basis.	The Implementation Plan identifies investment proposals for a number of areas including: • Bus; • Light Rail; • Heavy Rai; • Integration Measures and Sustainable Transport Investment; • Integrated Service Plan; and • Integration and Accessibility.
NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs	Management planning for nature conservation sites has a number of aims. These include: • To identify and evaluate the features of interest for a site • To set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest • To describe the site and its management • To identify issues (both positive and negative) that might influence the site • To set out appropriate strategies/management actions to achieve the objectives	Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs (i.e. sites within the Natura 2000 network) have to be set for the habitats and species for which the sites are selected. These objectives are used when carrying out appropriate assessments for plans and projects that might impact on these sites.
Groundwater Protection Schemes	A Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidelines for the planning and licensing authorities in carrying out their functions, and a framework to assist in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.	A Groundwater Protection Scheme aims to maintain the quantity and quality of groundwater, and in some cases improve it, by applying a risk assessment-based approach to groundwater protection and sustainable development.
Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP)	The overarching vision for each LECP is: **"to promote the well**-being and quality of life of citizens and communities"	The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.
Land Use Plans, including County Development Plans and Local Area Plans in force within the area to which the Strategy relates, and in adjoining planning authorities in Northern Ireland	• Outline planning objectives for land use development (including transport objectives). • Strategic framework for planning and sustainable development including those set out in National Planning Framework and Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies. • Set out the policies and proposals to guide development in the specific Local Authority area.	• Identify future infrastructure, development and zoning required. • Protect and enhances amenities and environment. • Guide planning authority in assessing proposals. • Aim to guide development in the area and the amount of nature of the planned development. • Aim to promote sustainable development. • Provide for economic development and protect natural environmental, heritage.
Green Infrastructure Plans/Strategies	• Promotes the maintenance and improvement of green infrastructure in an area. • Aims to protect and enhance biodiversity and habitats.	not applicable
Landscape Character Assessments, including those in force within the area to which the Strategy relates and Local Authorities in adjoining counties and in Northern Ireland	Characterises the geographical dimension of the landscape.	• Identify the quality, value, sensitivity and capacity of the landscape area. • Guide strategies and guidelines for the future development of the landscape.
Connacht-Ulster Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 Eastern and Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021	The plan gives effect to national and EU waste policy, and address waste prevention and management (including generation, collection and treatment) over the period 2015-2021.	To manage wastes in a safe and compliant manner, a clear strategy, policies and actions are required.

Legislation, Plans and Programmes	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.
Noise Action Plans prepared by Local Authorities within the area to which the Strategy relates and Local Authorities in adjoining counties and in Northern Ireland	The Noise Action Plans are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, Statutory Instrument 140 of 2006. These Regulations give effect to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. This Directive sets out a process for managing environmental noise in a consistent manner across the EU and the Noise Regulations set out the approach to meeting the requirements of the Directive in Ireland.	The purpose of this Action Plan is to endeavour to manage the existing noise environment and protect the future noise environment within the action planning area. Management of the existing noise environment may be achieved by prioritising areas for which further assessment and possible noise mitigation may be required. Protection of the future noise environment may be achieved by acoustical planning, which further incorporates noise into the planning process via measures such as land-use planning, development planning, sound insulation measures, traffic planning and control of environmental noise sources.
Climate Change Adaptation Strategies prepared by Local Authorities within the area to which the Strategy relates and Local Authorities in adjoining counties and in Northern Ireland	Climate Change Adaptation Strategies represent a proactive step by Local Authorities in the process of adaptation planning to build resilience and respond effectively to the threats posed by climate change.	The Climate Change Adaptation Strategies takes on the role as the primary instrument at local level to: • Ensure a proper comprehension of the key risks and vulnerabilities of climate change; • Bring forward the implementation of climate resilient actions in a planned and proactive manner; and • Ensure that climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into all plans and policies and integrated into all operations and functions of County Council.
Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES) prepared by Local Authorities within the area to which the Strategy relates and Local Authorities in adjoining counties	The Strategy sets out the framework for the delivery of sustainable and renewable energies throughout the County.	The LARES outlines the potential for a range of renewable energy resources and developments and acknowledges the significant contribution that they can make to the county in terms of energy security, reduced reliance on traditional fossil fuels, enabling future energy exports, meeting assigned national targets and the transition to a low carbon economy.
Fáilte Ireland plans, strategies etc. relating to the Wild Atlantic Way, **Ireland's Ancient East and Dublin** or other brands or initiatives, including the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme, VEDPs and DEDPs and Visitor Management Plans	Fáilte Ireland's work includes preparing various plans and strategies for the Wild Atlantic Way and other brands and initiatives. These plans are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment. The vision for the Wild Atlantic Way brand is: To create a world class, sustainable and unmissable experience brand that engages and energises the visitor so that they become powerful advocates and leaves them wanting to return for more.	Some of Fáilte Ireland's plans and strategies include various projects relating to land use and infrastructural development, including those relating to development of land or on land and the carrying out of land use activities. Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence. The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.
Fáilte Ireland's Corporate Strategy 2021-2023	Fáilte Ireland's Corporate Strategy seeks to guide the industry back to recovery following the Covid-19 global pandemic.	It sets out a course of action based on the following seven strategic pillars, from which this Regional Tourism Strategy takes its cue: 1. To sustain tourism businesses in the short term so they can thrive over the long term. (Survive to Thrive) 2. To support industry to attract and retain talent to support sustainable growth. (Supporting Tourism Careers) 3. To achieve a sustained step change in Irish staycations. (Accelerate Domestic Tourism) 4. To transform Ireland's outdoor tourism experience. (Opening the Outdoors) 5. To transform Irish tourism's online presence and ecommerce capability. (Digital that Delivers) 6. To enhance the destination experience and support the industry in building a pipeline of future international business. (Destination Development and Distribution) 7. To reduce the carbon footprint of the tourism sector and make it much more sustainable. (Driving Climate Action)
Any other plans and projects, or associated proposals	Various other plans and projects which are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment	Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence. The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.

Appendix IV Fáilte Ireland published documents referenced in the Strategy/SEA Environmental Report

Contents of this Appendix:

- A2: Site Maintenance Guidelines (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- A3: Visitor Management Guidelines (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- A4: Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- A5: Environmental Damage Resolution (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- A6: Greenway Visitor Experience & Interpretation Toolkit (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy);
- A7: Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion & Campaign Statement (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy); and
- A8: Blueway Management & Development Guide (appended to this SEA ER and to the Strategy).

WILD ATLANTIC WAY
SLÍ FHIÁIN AN ATLANTAIGH

Site
Maintenance
Guidelines

for launching the

Wild Atlantic Way

Fáilte Ireland
National Tourism Development Authority

thepaulhogarthcompany

BRADY SHIPMAN MARTIN

INTRODUCTION

The *Wild Atlantic Way* will be the longest coastal driving attraction in the world, inviting greater tourism numbers to the west coast of Ireland from overseas tourist markets to explore this unique and varied, but wild landscape and seascape.

The Vision for the *Wild Atlantic Way* is to build on the existing international reputation of the West Coast of Ireland, and to develop an all encompassing World Class tourism product that will invite visitors to experience the unique wild and natural seascape and landscape of the Atlantic Coast.

It will be at once wild, natural, vibrant and authentic; unspoilt, intriguing, exciting and memorable. It will showcase the wild landscapes and seascapes, and the heritage and history of the places along it.

What does it look like?

The *Wild Atlantic Way* is a route along the Atlantic coast from Kinsale in County Cork to the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal, and will be fully developed over a period of 10 years.

Along the **Route** there are **159 Discovery Points**, large and small, each chosen for their potential to offer visitors an authentic and intimate experience of the natural and wild landscape and seascape. The majority of these Discovery Points are alongside or accesses by rural roads, with others being located within village and harbour settings. Additionally, there are **22 Embarkation Points** to island Discovery Points.

Each Discovery Point already has a parking facility in the form of a lay-by or car park, and these will serve as the **Arrival Points** for each site. A number of these Discovery Points will be further enhanced to improve the quality of the visitor experience, subject to compliance with the relevant environmental and habitats regulations.

At this stage, we want the help of the Local Authorities to prepare the Arrival Points to the Discovery Points for the launch of the Wild Atlantic Way in 2014.

This document provides guidelines as to the works that may be required to meet a minimum standard of presentation of these sites. The Guidelines also include an Ecological Method Statement which sets out the ecological standards and procedures which must be complied with by the Local Authorities in implementing any works.

In relation to the further development of the *Discovery Points*, a Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Appropriate Assessment are currently being undertaken of the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme and the findings of these assessments will determine the scope, extent and nature of future works, if any.

These Guidelines, therefore, relate only to the parking facilities at the *Discovery Points*.

Ferry to Island

P Car parks & Lay-bys

Potential *Discovery Points*

2

OVERVIEW

The parking facilities are the *Arrival Points* for vehicles and provide pedestrian access for visitors to the *Wild Atlantic Way* site markers, and in the longer term, to the *Discovery Points.*

In some cases, the parking facility will incorporate the *Discovery Point*, either because there is no access from it into the surrounding landscape for a variety of reasons, or that it is considered that the best view of the surrounding landscape and seascape is to be had from the parking facility.

Parking facilities are not authentic landscape elements, however, it is important that they are well presented and do not compromise visitor experience of the natural landscape or seascape attraction.

By virtue of their remote and unsheltered locations, many are highly exposed to the excesses of wind and rain, and have endured damage to surfaces, boundaries and facilities - in some cases giving rise to a sense of dereliction. **Poor presentation and dereliction** will undermine visitor experience of the sites.

The purpose of this document is to assist Local Authorities in identifying appropriate repair works that **will enhance the presentation** and visitor experience of parking facilities. Included as part of these guidelines is an Ecological Method Statement. All remedial works undertaken by Local Authorities should comply with these Guidelines and the Ecological Method Statement.

All parking facilities should be effective, visually discreet, and compatible with their natural context.

SITE APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

The extent of what is considered the Site Approach will be determined by the particular characteristics and context of each site.

- In the case of lay-bys, the approach will probably only include the section of road alongside it and any defined entrance.
- For small car parks at the end of cul-de-sacs or along very minor roads, the approach may include some or all of the minor road linking to the main route, as well as any defined entrance.
- Car parks adjacent to settlements, beaches and harbours vary considerably in size, and may incorporate and service other facilities or attractions. In such cases, it may be appropriate that the approach be limited to the part of the car park where the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker is to be located.

Typical maintenance works may include:

- Repair of broken road surfaces;
- Repair of rutted road edges;
- Cutting roadside grass verges;
- Trimming of hedgerows;
- Weeding and removal of inappropriate species and dead planting;
- De-cluttering and removal of excessive or obsolete signage;
- Repairing or removing broken or inappropriate entrance structures including height restrictions;
- Removal or tidying up of derelict or abandoned equipment in adjoining fields or areas.

4

PARKING SURFACES

The site car parks, by virtue of their exposed locations, are prone to physical damage by high volumes of drainage, high winds and temperature change, giving rise to broken and uneven surfaces, potholes and surface drainage problems.

Parking surfaces should be **continuous, reasonably firm and durable, be free of tripping hazards**, incorporating free flowing drainage, and should also be **visually compatible** with the surrounding context.

Surface materials will typically include tar and chip or compacted stone for rural sites, whereas village and harbour sites might include bitumen macadam, tar and chip, and possibly concrete.

Hot rolled asphalt incorporating drainage channels, gullies, painted line markings, concrete edgings etc are not generally appropriate, but may be required at specific sites where higher volumes of visitors are anticipated.

Issues to Consider

General: Tidy up sites by removing **debris and gravel piles**, and repairing broken elements.

Drainage: Examine the effectiveness of the site drainage, by considering site levels and gradients, the source and direction of cross flows, and the optimum outlet routes. Determine free **flowing discreet drainage system** that will assist in ensuring the integrity of the parking surface and edges.

Surfaces: Repair any broken surfaces, potholes, sudden level changes or broken or rutted edges that may give rise to tripping and difficulties for buggies and wheelchair users. Use materials that are consistent with the local road, existing car park or surrounding landscape context as appropriate.

Vegetation: Grass and other vegetation can break through compact surfaces after a number of years. In some cases this might be considered part of the **character**; for others, it might be considered **derelict**. An assessment of what is appropriate must be made, and such vegetation either left alone, or the surface renewed to eliminate it. If renewing surfaces, the specification should consider the likelihood of vegetation re-establishing itself.

In general, **do not introduce urban traffic solutions** such as highly finished tarmac, paint marking, bollards, kerbs, barriers or traffic signage in areas that are distinctly rural and natural in appearance.
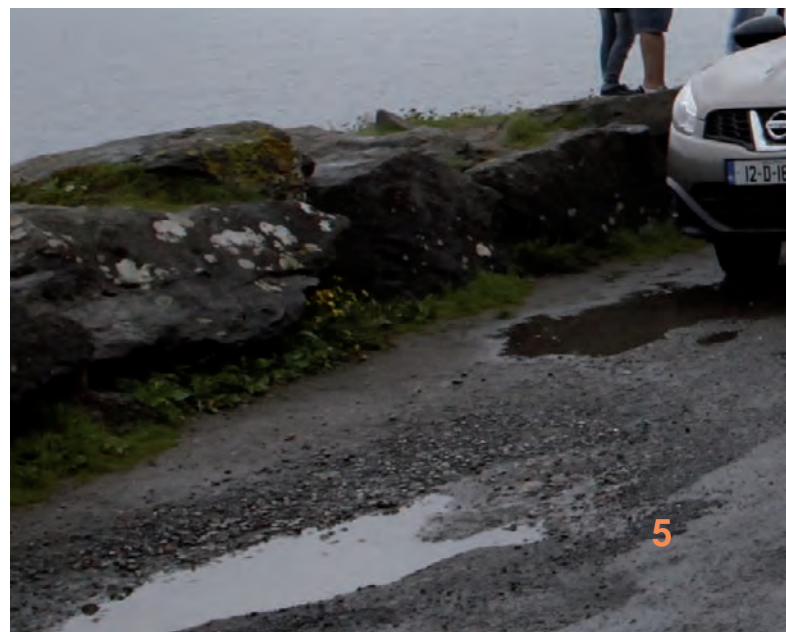
SITE BOUNDARIES

Boundaries for parking facilities vary significantly, and typically in rural settings include earth mounds, sod and stone banks, hedgerows, post and wire fencing etc., that are consistent with the wider landscape setting. In some cases, they may also include examples of local craftsmanship, such as dry stone walls.

Rural boundaries have an **inherent rugged and almost natural appearance**. Undulating lines, off-plumb fence posts, and weathered appearances are perfectly acceptable authentic elements of the landscape.

Repair and maintenance works for improved presentation may require:

Earth mounds: Any broken or eroded parts should be repaired to match the original.

Sod and Stone banks: Reinstate any damaged sections and remove overgrown or dead planting, or any inappropriate species;

Hedgerows: In general, annual trimming to maintain vistas should be undertaken outside bird nesting season, ideally in autumn to allow recovery in advance of the tourism season.

Dry stone walls: Repair any broken or fallen sections to match the original

Post & wire fence: Replace and missing or broken posts or sections of wire

Sand dunes: Natural features with marram grass should not need maintenance.

Inappropriate boundaries might include bollards (concrete, steel, painted timber), boulders, chain link fencing, painted timber fences, crash barriers, and walls made from blockwork, modular materials or concrete.

Where inappropriate boundary treatments are present they should be removed and replaced with an alternative that is consistent with the surrounding landscape context. If vehicular constraints are necessary for safety or for restricting access, consider solutions derived from typical appropriate boundaries.

6

SIGNAGE

Sites should be free of all unnecessary clutter, so as not to detract from the setting and visitor experience. Excesses of signage, for direction, safety, information, interpretation and other purposes needs to be rationalised and simplified.

In many instances, typical actions required that may include:

- Removal of abandoned or derelict signage and signage infrastructure;
- Removal of any urban or otherwise inappropriate signage structures;
- Removal of all commercial advertising;
- Repair and repainting of signage infrastructure.

Local Authorities, in consultation with Fáilte Ireland and other relevant bodies, should seek to remove other tourism and interpretive signage, and if appropriate and necessary, to seek to incorporate other information in conjunction with the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker.

The *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker will incorporate interpretation signage, the content for which will be agreed by means of a separate consultative process.

The objective is that upon arrival, the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker should be readily visible, not confused amongst other signage, and be close to the point of interaction (or departure to) the natural and wild experience identified with each site.

SITE FURNITURE

Where site furniture is provided, it is important that it is appropriate to the natural landscape setting, and well maintained so as to enhance visitor experience of the site.

Actions required may include:

- Removal, replacement or repair of any furniture that is broken or appears derelict;
- Removal of any urban style seating or other site furniture that detracts from the authenticity of the site;
- Removal of any makeshift site furniture such as picnic tables and seating made of block, brick or concrete structures;
- Removal of bins comprising re-used oil barrels and other containers, moulded plastic, and urban council type bins.

Picnic tables and seating should generally be understated, robust and well maintained. Easy access is important, including the approach route and base installation.

Bins, where provided, should be convenient without being prominent, and should generally be of naturally bleaching timber construction. Consideration should be given where possible to the provision of dual bins for rubbish and recycling.

Particular attention should be given to the most appropriate location for the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker. It should be obvious at the point of arrival by car, and also at the point of leaving the car park behind and proceeding by foot to the natural setting, and in time, to the Discovery Point.

Local Communities, themselves part of the *Wild Atlantic Way* experience, may have implemented community projects and in some cases, memorial plaques. It is important that the Local Authority identifies such interventions and their origins, and undertakes any improvement works in a manner that engages with such community participation.

SITE FACILITIES

The majority of sites do not typically incorporate extensive visitor facilities. Toilet facilities are provided at many of the village, beach and harbour locations, either on a permanent or seasonal basis. In addition, some of the parking facilities double as the location for community recycling facilities.

Actions required:

Toilet Blocks	Ensure toilet blocks in use are properly presented and maintained, internally and externally, so as not to undermine visitor experience;
	Some sites incorporate disused and derelict toilet blocks. Where there is a demand, these should be refurbished and well presented. Otherwise, derelict toilet facilities should be demolished and their sites reinstated.
Temporary Toilets	Portaloos, whether temporary or permanent, are substantially below any international or local visitor expectation and should be removed.
	Where there is a demand for toilet facilities, consideration should be given to the provision of proper facilities.
	In exceptional circumstances, if temporary facilities are provided, they should always be fully screened by timber panelling and hedgerows.
Recycling:	Consider possible alternative sites
	Ensure they are located out of sight of visitors;
	Provide screening, perhaps using timber panels and hedgerow surrounds

SITE LIGHTING

The majority of sites are distinctly rural in character with the exception of those located in villages and harbours. In this regard, sites should have no lighting provided as frequently, the dusk, dawn or night time experience of the seascape and skyscape is part of the experience.

Inappropriate lighting installations should be removed.

In village, harbour or promenade locations, lighting may be a reasonable expectation and appropriate. Local Authorities should ensure that such fittings and illumination levels are suitable to the location. Bollard lighting might be considered a good alternative, perhaps in conjunction with lamp standards, to provide suitable wayfinding lighting without compromising the village or harbour character.

SOFT LANDSCAPING

In general, vegetation at sites in the form of indigenous hedgerows, shrubs, grass, marram grass and seasonal flowers is entirely appropriate.

Any vegetation that is dead, not indigenous, or inconsistent with the local landscape context, should be removed and replaced as appropriate in order to reinforce the authenticity of sites.

SUSTAINABILITY

The authenticity of the wild and natural environments being show cased along the *Wild Atlantic Way* is an essential part of the experience. It his regard, sites should be maintained and repaired in a sustainable manner, using, as appropriate, locally sourced materials and indigenous planting, as well as management techniques that are environmentally responsible. Particular regard should be given to safeguarding ecological characteristics, including flora and fauna, and the protection of the natural environments.

MAINTENANCE & SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

All sites that are brought up to an acceptable standard will be awarded a *Wild Atlantic Way* site markers and an interpretative panel, both of which will be placed in a suitable location at the Arrival Point. The high quality presentation of the sites however, will be an ongoing requirement, in order to maximise visitor experience and match expectations.

Fáilte Ireland will require a Service Level Agreement for each site with the relevant Local Authority.

This will serve as a contract between Fáilte Ireland and the Local Authority to ensure that investment in the sites now will continue to be effective for the *Wild Atlantic Way*.

What will the Service Level Agreement include?

Following the identification and agreement of the scope of works required for each site at this stage, a site specific Service Level Agreement will also be prepared. In essence, the Service Level Agreement will seek to ensure that maintenance and improvement works undertaken in the short term are kept at an acceptable standard by the Local Authority into the future.

Typically, they are likely to include:

- Periodic reporting on site condition, including photographs
- Defined management regimes and programmes
- Sites to be kept clean and tidy
- Bins to be emptied and any loose rubbish picked up
- Vegetation to have scheduled seasonal management plans
- Signage is kept clear and well presented, and unauthorised signage or advertisements removed
- Any painted structures should be re-painted as required to maintain good presentation
- Toilet facilities, where provided, are kept clean and stocked with necessary supplies
- Lighting, if appropriate, is maintained in full working order
- Site furniture is kept in good condition
- Parking surfaces to be maintained in good order
- Items that are broken, including by vandalism, are repaired quickly
- Graffiti is removed

Local Authorities will be required to commit to allocating appropriate resources to ensure that the appropriate standard is maintained.

ECOLOGICAL METHOD STATEMENT

1.1   Introduction

All projects must be undertaken in accordance with the Wild Atlantic Way Discovery Points Remedial Works Guidelines, including this Ecological Method Statement, and in accordance with the requirements of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

The purpose of the Ecological Method Statement is to identify what ecological control methods need to be specified to avoid adverse ecological effects arising from remedial works. All projects must comply with all planning, local authority and other statutory requirements both during and after the construction phase of the Project.

Remedial works are being proposed at the majority number of sites. The works vary in scale and are specific to the individual sites and incorporate a combination of the proposed works outlined on Table 1.1.

Proposed works
Extend surfacing in car park
Enlargement of car park/lay-by
Provision of footpath
Provision of site amenities e.g. toilet block, painting, seating
Provide Wild Atlantic Way site marker
Lay-by reshaping
Removal/replacement of bollards
Extension of timber boardwalks to create access locations within car park to boardwalks

Proposed Management Activities
Road repairs (e.g. pot holes)
Repair stone walls, fencing, concrete posts, and furniture
Repair surfacing in car park
Removal of vegetation, tree and hedgerow cutting
Repair and maintain verge around car park and along access road
Rationalise existing information signage, removal of existing barriers, general tidy up of area
Undertake maintenance of grassed amenity areas
Maintenance of site amenities e.g. toilet block, painting, seating
Repair works to paths, slipways, kerbs, steps, etc. due to storm damage
Reinstate rock armour
Drainage clearance works

The location of these sites are often within areas of high ecological sensitivity and therefore it will be necessary to consider the potential effects of such works on the natural environment. Depending on the site and the specific complexities, the works could potentially give rise to the following adverse ecological effects:

- Habitat loss and disturbance
- Disturbance of species
- Introduction and spread of invasive alien species.
- Increased runoff of silt and pollutants to surrounding aquatic ecosystems, which could impact on aquatic habitats and species

1.2   Ecological Control Measures

A number of Ecological Control Measures are to be integrated into the design of each site. The Ecological Control Measures have been detailed and tailored by giving due consideration to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the scale of works proposed. Particular measures (see Table 1.2 below) are listed against each type of works being proposed for each site. It will be necessary for the Local Authority to specify that, when planning works at individual sites, the measures are adhered to and appropriately incorporated into the construction approach. Site specific detail on how these measures will be incorporated into the constriction design will vary depending on the characteristics of each site and will need to be considered prior to the commencement of construction.

Table 1.2 Ecological Control Measures

No.	Description of wording to be included in Works Specification
G1	All rubbish, debris and other waste material shall be segregated to prevent contamination, stored appropriately and covered where required. Removal of waste materials from site shall be undertaken by an approved contractor for treatment/disposal. Hazardous waste material shall be stored separately from other inert waste materials and kept covered in an appropriate area/container(s) to ensure that the material does not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network materials. The hazardous waste materials shall be removed from site by an approved contractor for treatment at a licenced facility - as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G2	Particular care shall be taken in the removal of stockpiles of material such as gravel and chippings. (Such stockpiles are frequently sources of non-native invasive plants, such as Japanese knotweed). Disposal of contaminated material may require transport to an approved, licensed facility. All rubbish, debris and other waste material shall be removed in such a manner as to ensure that none of the material is contaminated and/or released inadvertently to watercourses and other sensitive ecological habitats.
G3	Prior to removal, all vegetation shall be checked by the Ecological Clerk of Works to ensure that it is free of non-native invasive species, such as Japanese knotweed. Should any such species be encountered, the area shall be treated as directed by expert advice on the management of invasive species.
G4	Works involving the removal or clearing of vegetation that would have any impacts on nesting birds shall be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (i.e. outside the period 1st March to 31st August). In addition, the possible presence of roosting bats shall be considered prior to the undertaking any works that may disturb the roosts. Any further safeguards shall be included and provided for subject to the supervision of the Ecological Clerk of Works
G5	Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be stored on-site in a secure, dry and contained area and isolated from drainage connections to any existing surface water drainage network

G6	Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be used in a manner that ensures that contamination of other materials does not occur and that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network
G7	Where possible, machinery shall only operate from existing parking or built surfaces, and shall not enter any sensitive or designated ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G8	All resurfacing works shallould be undertaken within the existing or formerly paved areas
G9	All resurfacing and other minor construction or demolition works (including removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables) should be undertaken in a manner that ensures that no materials can inadvertently enter any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat, and in a manner that ensures there are no impacts on fauna such as birds and bats – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G10	Prior to use, resurfacing materials, including hardcore and sub-surface fill material will be stored in a manner that ensures that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network, or any sensitive ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G11	All timber to be used in works shall be sustainably sourced
G12	Works to define boundary edges shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat on the natural environment – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works and shall consider the following: • Proposed low earth bunds shall be placed within the existing parking or built surface areas. • All material used, including rock, soil, seed and sods shall be sustainably sourced and appropriate to the setting
G13	Removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat.
G14	Works to provide a natural surface to bare areas shalll be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on the natural environment. All material used, including soil, seed and sods shall be sustainably sourced and appropriate to the setting.
G15	Where possible, site markers shall be placed within existing hard standing areas and installed in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G17	An Ecological Clerk of Works shall be retained to advise on and monitor works associated with construction, demolition, resurfacing and/or drainage

1.3   Advisory Measures

Advisory Measures, in addition to the requirements to comply with all planning, local authority and other statutory requirements both during and after the construction phase of the Project are detailed in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2 Advisory Measures

No.	Description
1 Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network	Contribute as appropriate towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Ramsar Sites, Salmonid Waters and Wicklow National Park. The protection of natural heritage and biodiversity, including European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network, will be supported in accordance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents): • EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)[1], the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)[2], the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)[3], the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC). • National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976[4], the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008[5] and the Flora Protection Order 1999. • National policy guidelines, including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010. • Catchment and water resource management Plans. • Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: and Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan; • Ireland's Environment 2012 (EPA, 2012), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.

[1]   Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive.

[2]   Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur)

[3]   Including protected species and natural habitats

[4]   Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats

[5]   Including protected species and natural habitats

2 Appropriate Assessment	All projects will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence and an Appropriate Assessment report to the relevant level of detail, that:
	1. The project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or
	2. The project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or
	3. The project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.
	The methodology followed by the Appropriate Assessment should follow, as relevant and appropriate, that outlined in DEHLG (2009) *Appropriate Assessment of Plans & Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities.*

3	AA and Exemptions	Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42).
		If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost.
		If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be provided*.
		If a planning authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.
		As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.
4	Environmental Control Measures	A number of Environmental Control Measures have been integrated into the design of each site. The Measures have been detailed and tailored by giving due consideration to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the scale of works proposed. These measures should be taken into account by any Appropriate Assessments and are part of the design and are not mitigation.
5	Protection of Natura 2000 Sites	No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects[6]).
6	Coastal Focus	Works undertaken in coastal areas will be in accordance with best practice and support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats. Protect, enhance and conserve the beaches from inappropriate development. Facilitate and Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone.
7	Biodiversity and Ecological Networks	Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

[6] Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:
    a) no alternative solution available,
    b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and
    c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

8	Waters	Protect the water resources, including rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, coastal waters and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU *Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC)*, the *European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended)*, the *North Western International*, the *Western*, the S*hannon International* and the *South Western River Basin Management Plans 2009-2015* (or any such plans that may supersede same) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same).
9	**Non-Designated Sites**	Recognise that nature conservation is not just confined to designated sites and acknowledge the need to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve biological diversity.
10	**Non-native invasive species**	Support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.
11	**Environmental Assessment**	Ensure, as appropriate, that plans, programmes and projects comply with: • EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) - and relevant transposing Regulations.
12	**Cumulative/ In-combination effects**	Any new development that could interact with projects for remedial works would have to comply with the provisions contained in relevant land use and other sectorial plans e.g. Development Plans, River Basin Management Plans. These provisions have been subject to and informed by Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment which have considered in-combination effects. With respect to events (such as a vehicle collision) that are not reasonably foreseeable, contingency plans and procedures are already in place at various levels e.g. emergency plans, local response arrangements. As part of the wider WAW project, environmental monitoring is being coordinated at a number of levels – this includes monitoring related to habitats.
13	**Works to be carried out at Discovery Points and potential impacts**	The methodology for the incorporation of environmental control measures will require consideration at project level for each site to account for individual complexities with regards to the sensitivities and layout of the individual site.

Visitor Management Guidelines for the Wild Atlantic Way

June 2020

Fáilte Ireland
National Tourism Development Authority

DISCLAIMER
The following Guidelines have been prepared by Fáilte Ireland. Any representation, statement, opinion or advice, expressed or implied in this document is made in good faith but on the basis that Fáilte Ireland is not liable (whether by reason of negligence, lack of care or otherwise) to any person for any damage or loss whatsoever which has occurred or may occur in relation to that person taking or not taking (as the case may be) action in respect of any representation, statement or advice referred to in this document.

COVID -19
These Guidelines were produced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Having consideration for this it should be noted that all advise given in these Guidelines must comply first and foremost with Government restrictions and Public Health Guidelines in this respect and should be consulted as the situation evolves.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The success of the Wild Atlantic Way has occurred from rising above the level of individual sites and routes – to create a large-scale and overarching brand that has international visibility.

Similarly, the future success of the endeavour will need everyone to be mindful of the requirement for visitor management approaches and practices that span strategic level in policy and plans right down to individual projects and sites.

These guidelines are set out under two parts[1]:

Part One: Offers an overview of visitor management at a strategic level and is intended to be used by policy and plan makers in the space of tourism strategy and planning.

Part Two: Shares experience and success of good design and management through practical example at project or site level. These can be used for the design of future projects as well as change and improvement at existing sites and are intended for those who own and manage sites as well as for those who design and regulate their improvement.

PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

The intention of these guidelines can be summed up in the following points:

* To make the visitor experience even better – while protecting the natural assets throughout the entire extent of the Wild Atlantic Way,

* To promote a very simple goal that every future decision for every policy, plan, project and action along the Wild Atlantic Way should always keep the experience Wild or make the experience 'More Wild' (refer to Appendix 1 for details on "More Wild"),

* To resolve two opposites - increasing benefit while reducing risk – to allow tourism to grow and to thrive, while also making sure that the reason for visiting – wildness – also grows and thrives, and

* To provide practical help and guidance to parties involved in visitor management both at strategic and site level.

---

1. These guidelines should be considered and applied having consideration for the *"Site Maintenance Guidelines (remedial works guidelines)"* which forms part of the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Plan as well as *"Wild Atlantic Way Signature Discovery Points- Visitor Management and Design Considerations*

PART ONE

Guidelines for Strategic Planning of Visitor Management on the Wild Atlantic Way

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

1.0 PART 1: GUIDELINES FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING OF VISITOR MANAGEMENT ON THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Part 1 of these guidelines provides guidance on strategic concepts as well as explanations about terms, objectives and aims that can be used when preparing documentation that is likely to be used at the early stage of plans and projects along the Wild Atlantic Way.

The guidelines take us through a process which considers asset protection, what is success and guiding the decision-making process. Case study practical examples are set out and useful checklists are provided when considering policy and planning in this space.

1.1 STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION 1 - INVOLVED PARTIES

MANAGED BY ALL - FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL

The Wild Atlantic Way is owned and managed by the whole community, for the benefit of all. Its future needs a shared vision of what needs to be achieved for all, by all. Its future will depend on many actors – landowners, County Councils, local businesses, engineers, designers, scientists - all contributing their best, for the best. 'Wild' is not the result of a 'do nothing' approach. Every acre and mile of the Wild Atlantic Way is owned and managed by someone. Its appearance and character are the results of thousands of everyday decisions and actions, large and small.

A SHARED VISION

The community who own and manage the Wild Atlantic Way need to have a shared vision of the approaches and standards that will sustain its attraction. That needs consistency of strategic approach at a high level and also at the level of design details at site level.

The extraordinary Wild Atlantic Way experience is the result of many small experiences in many places that are owned and managed by many people. Unless every person in every place shares a vision of quality and standards, then the experience will be ordinary and disappointing.

This natural appearance is apparently effortless. In reality it is the result of pains-taking planning, maintenance and partnership in a shared vision.

1.2 STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION 2- ASSET PROTECTION

The continued success of the Wild Atlantic Way depends on establishing and maintaining a brand – not a location. A brand is a promise about a type of experience that the visitor will have. The essence of the promise is to experience a 'wild' place. This sense of 'wildness' is the asset that the brand depends on – it must be protected. This requires a shared understanding under the following headings;

BRAND PROTECTION
Protecting and preserving wildness is critical to protecting and preserving the unique selling proposition and the brand promise of the Wild Atlantic Way. Protect wilderness because it is the brand.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Much of the route passes through areas with the highest level of ecological, landscape and cultural sensitivity. These are the ingredients of the asset. Failure to protect these will diminish the experience and will also create legal liabilities that could result in the loss of access to critical parts of the Wild Atlantic Way. Environmental protection is asset protection.

VISITOR PROTECTION
Near-coastal locations are inherently dangerous – especially during and after weather events. It is critical not to direct visitors towards locations with dangerous access arrangements. The visitor is the most critical asset – they must be protected.

EXPERIENCE PROTECTION
Visitors experiences will be improved by removing traffic congestion, site over-loading and poorly designed facilities that lack distinctiveness and authenticity. Attention to planning, design and detail are key to the improvement and protection of the quality of the asset.

PRODUCT PROTECTION
It is likely that the green credentials of tourism products will be increasingly scrutinised by discerning visitors and professional experts alike. Understanding of the significance and sensitivity of key landscape, heritage and ecological resources is required to protect the authenticity and quality of experience each element of the Wild Atlantic Way.

A safe, exciting experience of the wildness of the Atlantic is the promise. Its successful delivery requires a shared vision at every level from landowner and local entrepreneur to the County Council and national agencies.

1.3 STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION 3 – SUCCESS

Visitor management solutions for the Wild Atlantic Way needs a clear vision about what success will look like.

Success will be the result of a sustained effort by many players in many places. It is crucial that all are aware of and committed to delivering the six fundamental factors for success.

- The Wild Atlantic Way must deliver experiences that are unique, genuine and emotionally fulfilling.
- The Wild Atlantic Way Experience must be Wild and Atlantic.
- The Wild Atlantic Way must be memorable, comfortable, enjoyable – and safe.
- Wild Atlantic Way Products must be less seasonal, more dispersed, more special and more profitable.
- The Wild Atlantic Way brand promises wildness – this asset must be sustained.
- The Wild Atlantic Way is a living community – which must be served as the first priority of any strategy.

The quality of the individual visitor's experience is result of a shared vision sustained by many partners operating at every level from strategic planning to day-to-day management.

The achievement of '*Leave No Trace*' is easily overlooked. Outside peak season this road at Marble Hill has no parking or surfboard hire equipment. Note the beach and dunes in the background where natural processes are dominant with no visibility of any development or structures.

VICE MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The VICE (Visitor, Industry, Community and Environment) Model for Sustainable Tourism is an approach that Fáilte Ireland adopts in all of our activities and outputs and forms the foundation for an approach to successful & sustainable visitor management and asset protection along the Wild Atlantic Way.

1.4 STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION 4 - GUIDING DECISION-MAKING

Here are the basic techniques common to all decisions about Wild Atlantic Way Areas and sites. Use them to explain how proposed plans and projects will help to achieve these.

THE TEST
We need to test every decision by asking – 'Will this make the place More or Less Wild?'

This is achieved by asking; -

- What need are we meeting?
- What problem are we solving?
- What are the options or alternatives?
- What changes will happen?

THE FUNDAMENTALS
Obey the old rule '*Measure Twice – Cut Once*' – by understanding the area first.
- Understanding full picture - ownership, use, management, significance and sensitivities.
- Understand the needs and views of other users too – especially fulltime and year-round farmers and fishermen, residents and those involved in businesses, maintenance and safety.
- Manage first, build as a last resort.
- Seasonal uses first – build as a last resort
- Always consider alternatives – no designing until options are considered.
- Consider the reversibility of what is being proposed.

THE BASICS
- Protect the horizon – keep it horizontal, clear, un-obstructed.
- Accommodate weather - erosion, corrosion, rain, wind, movement.
- Understand vegetation – none or slow, little screening.
- Understand coastal processes especially erosion, deposition by water, wind and storms.
- Access, Privacy, Property, Commonage, Foreshore.

UNDERSTANDING CONSEQUENCES
- Consider the effects of excavations for services and access.
- Consider the effects of drainage and compaction in high-energy environments.
- Anticipate the effects of new access and resultant desire lines.
- Consider future management and maintenance.

Appendix 2 sets out three case studies which demonstrate how the above approach and principles might be considered at a practical level in the instance of coastal planning along the Wild Atlantic Way.

A useful way to make decisions about development is to look at the location and ask, '*Will this place look more wild or less wild afterwards?*'

The highest achievement is to minimise the intrusion of any man-made development between the visitor and the Atlantic. Make do with less. This is what success looks like.

A sense of vastness is one of the Wild Atlantic Way's most powerful characteristics. It can dwarf any human projects. Good site or route selection exposes visitors to these huge vistas – without diminishing them.

1.5 CHECKLIST TO GUIDE DECISION MAKING

Set out below are checklists designed for both policy and plan level to be used by relevant parties when considering tourism related strategies and plans.

POLICIES

		IN NEAR-COASTAL AREAS DO POLICIES INCLUDE: -	YES	NO	UNCERTAIN	ACTION REQUIRED
POLICY REQUIREENT CHECKLIST	1.1	A requirement for an integrated consideration of visitor management – including resilient service hubs, access routes and low-impact parking and coastal facilities?				
	1.2	A requirement to include policies that direct facilities away from the near-coastal zone?				
	1.3	A requirement for plans and projects to have regard to relevant tourism guidance documents?				
	1.4	A requirement to take account of environmental capacity and resilience of near-coastal areas – with new developments being restricted to robust areas?				
	1.5	A requirement to direct high-capacity, standardised facilities for accommodation, catering, transport or entertainment away from the near-coast zone?				
	1.6	A requirement to include policies that emphasize locally distinctive seasonal events?				
	1.7	A requirement to explore potential for a core of winter activities?				
	1.8	A requirement to consider maintenance and daily cleaning of remote sites?				
	1.9	A requirement to provide the preparation and implementation of a Tourism Visitor Management Programme?				
	1.1	A requirement to identify sites that require the presence of specialists during design, construction and particularly during operations?				
	1.11	A requirement to include policies with separate peak and off-peak provisions in intensely used visitor areas?				
	1.12	A requirement to include policies with separate peak and off-peak traffic provisions?				
	1.13	A requirement to include policies to facilitate local pre-application consultation for larger tourism projects in smaller communities?				

2. PLANS

		IN NEAR-COASTAL AREAS DO PLANS INCLUDE: -	YES	NO	UNCERTAIN	ACTION REQUIRED
PLAN REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST	2.1	A requirement to consider the durability and safety of access and viewing points?				
	2.2	A requirement to avoid exposed or unstable locations that will require major works for visitor safety?				
	2.3	A requirement to provide Visitor Management Plans for tourism in near-coastal zones that integrate visitor access, parking and facilities with natural sensitivities?				
	2.4	A requirement to specify 'grades' of access that illustrate locations that are accessible to all as well as those that require appropriate fitness, clothing and knowledge?				
	2.5	A requirement for larger-scale standardised visitor facilities to be located in larger settlements?				
	2.6	A requirement to avoid locating demanding land-uses to hold crowds or large vehicles on sensitive, near-coastal areas?				
	2.7	A requirement to plan for different seasonal uses in the same areas used by tourism and other uses?				
	2.8	A requirement to plan for efficient maintenance of sites.				
	2.9	A requirement to cluster visitor and/or routes for efficient service?				
	2.1	A requirement to specify if sites are manned in peak season?				
	2.11	A requirement for Visitor Sites to be planned and scheduled according to different types and intensity of visitor management regime – according to site sensitivity?				
	2.12	A requirement for Visitor Site Management to be classified according to whether general or specialist staffing is required – according to site sensitivity?				
	2.13	A requirement for plans to include clearly separate provisions for peak and off-peak infrastructure and services?				
	2.14	A requirement for plans to include seasonal traffic patterns?				
	2.15	A requirement for plans to include local concerns to provide pre-design advice to external developers?				

1.6 FROM STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS TO IMPLEMENTATION IN PRACTICE

Set out below is a table which highlights overarching principles of visitor management and how these can cascade from a strategic level down to project and site-specific levels.

HIGH-LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS			IMPLEMENTATION IN PRACTICE		
PRINCIPLES	OBJECTIVES	ISSUES	POLICIES	PLANS	PROJECTS
More Safety and Comfort	**Visitors will experience a genuinely Wild Atlantic – in Safety and Comfort – without barriers**	Steep, elevated areas are favoured viewing points. These can be dangerously exposed to high winds and/or large waves. Visitors can be unaware of the dangers of near-coastal areas.	Include policies that require an integrated consideration of visitor management – including resilient service hubs, access routes and low-impact parking and coastal facilities.	Consider the durability and safety of access and viewing points. Avoid exposed or unstable locations that will require major works for visitor safety.	Ensure that locations of public access offer views towards steep coastal features – but avoid direct access without careful planning for environmentally compatible safety measures. Direct public access to steep areas should be a last resort.
		Areas that feel 'wild' are devoid of man-made features. Providing facilities for the convenience or safety of visitors can lessen the sense of wildness.	Include policies that direct facilities away from the near-coastal zone. Require plans and projects to have regard to relevant guidance documents.	Require Visitor Management Plans for tourism in near-coastal zones to integrate visitor access, parking and facilities with natural sensitivities.	Minimise the extent of new building in the near-coastal zone. Minimise the need for new roads, septic tanks or new piped services. Re-used structures or temporary projects should be the preferred approach
		Visitors to remote areas are often ill-prepared for weather or topography. The provision of facilities – shelters, toilets or paths and steps – can lessen the sense of wildness.	Include policies that recognise the need to take account of environmental capacity and resilience of near-coastal areas – with new developments being restricted to robust areas.	Consider 'grades' of access that illustrate locations that are accessible to all as well as those that require appropriate fitness, clothing and knowledge.	In remote or environmentally fragile areas always give priority to developments that are seasonal, removable or which have a minimal environmental footprint. Build new as a last resort.

HIGH-LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS			IMPLEMENTATION IN PRACTICE		
PRINCIPLES	OBJECTIVES	ISSUES	POLICIES	PLANS	PROJECTS
More Special, Less Seasonal	Tourism Offerings will become more Special, less Seasonal	Larger numbers of visitors have high standards that encourage the adaption of robust, proven approaches. These may be very standardised and may seem bland and placeless.	Include policies to direct high-capacity, standardised facilities for accommodation, catering, transport or entertainment away from the near-coast zone.	Plan for larger-scale standardised visitor facilities to be located in larger settlements	Re-used structures or temporary projects should be the preferred approach in the near-coastal parts of the site.
		Safe design for vehicles and crowds requires adherence to strict rules. Uncompromising Safety Design can be incompatible to sensitive natural, historical or scenic areas.	Include policies to match uses and projects with the environmental capacity and resilience of near-coastal areas.	Avoid locating demanding land-uses to hold crowds or large vehicles on sensitive, near-coastal areas.	Locate demanding features away from sensitive natural, historical or scenic parts of near-coastal sites.
		Tourism in more remote areas has a very short season. Viability can be difficult, and it is difficult to recoup investment. Expensive public facilities such as schools often go un-used in summer.	Include policies that emphasise locally distinctive seasonal events. Include policies to explore potential for a core of winter activities.	Consider land-use plans for different seasonal uses in the same areas used by tourism and other uses.	In small, remote settlements, designs should consider how features such as parking, toilets, halls and green spaces could have different uses during different seasons

HIGH-LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS			IMPLEMENTATION IN PRACTICE		
PRINCIPLES	**OBJECTIVES**	**ISSUES**	**POLICIES**	**PLANS**	**PROJECTS**
More Care and Protection	**Nature, Scenery & Culture will enjoy more Care and Protection**	Wild Places are often remote from settlements or service centres. Maintenance of such areas can be difficult, expensive and slow.	Include policies that require consideration of maintenance and daily cleaning of remote sites.	Plan for efficient maintenance of sites. Consider clustering and/or routes for efficient service. Plans should specify whether or sites are manned in peak season.	Projects should include locations and designs for waste collection that is adequately sized, weather secure and visually unobtrusive. Do not include waste facilities if these cannot be serviced daily during peak season. Un-manned projects should not include high-maintenance grass areas or floral planting.
		Despite extreme weather exposure, Wild Places often contain features that can be both significant and sensitive. Unmanaged Visitors can lead to damage to natural, cultural and scenic resources in remote places	Include policies that require the preparation and implementation of a Tourism Visitor Management Programme.	In accordance with site sensitivity, Visitor Sites should be planned and scheduled according to different types and intensity of visitor management regime.	Projects should include a consideration of the necessity for site and visitor management. Site Management costs and arrangements should be integral to design from the outset, Avoid designs that may require toilets and septic tanks for staff in sensitive remote areas.
		Care of wild places can require specialist knowledge and approaches, which can be more costly and complex than more ordinary places	Include policies that require the identification of sites that require the presence of specialists during design, construction and particularly during operations [eg ecologists during nesting or flowering season]	In accordance with site sensitivity, Visitor Site Management should be classified according to whether general or specialist staffing is required.	Projects should consider the practicality of managing and/or staffing sites that require the on-site presence of specialists.

HIGH-LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS			IMPLEMENTATION IN PRACTICE		
PRINCIPLES	OBJECTIVES	ISSUES	POLICIES	PLANS	PROJECTS
First Priority	**Local Communities will be the First Priority**	Seasonal visitor numbers are often much larger than the year-round population in remote areas. This can create seasonal surges of demand that the local facilities find expensive to maintain.	Include policies with separate peak and off-peak provisions in intensely used visitor areas.	Plans should include clearly separate provisions for peak and off-peak infrastructure and services.	Infrastructure projects and services in intensely used visitor areas should; - be sized to allow efficient peak and off-peak operation - provide for separate charging/ costing that differentiates between year-round local and seasonal visitor use.
		Fatigue during peak season can lessen the patience and welcome of local communities.	Include policies with separate peak and off-peak traffic provisions	Plan for seasonal traffic patterns.	Give circulation priority and convenience to local traffic.
		Large-scale local investment is often not realistic in small, remote areas. External investor can sometimes be insensitive to local concerns.	Include policies to facilitate local pre-application consultation for larger tourism projects in smaller communities.	Plans should reflect local concerns to provide pre-design advice to external developers.	Allow sufficient time and resources for meaningful local pre-application consultation when larger tourism projects are to be located in smaller communities.

PART TWO

Guidelines on Design & Management of Projects on the Wild Atlantic Way

2.0 PART 2: GUIDELINES ON DESIGN & MANAGEMENT OF PROJECTS ON THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Part 2 of these guidelines provides guidance on the design and management more specifically for projects at site level. In order to achieve successful site management at this level these guidelines explore the aim, risks, mistakes, learning from example, getting it right and maintenance.

2.1 THE AIM

The overall aim of these guidelines in to provide practical advice so that the 'Leave No Trace' approach to visitor management can be achieved in ways that are easily implemented by landowners, site managers and those developing services or businesses in the area.

A successful example of how to provide visitor service in a remote and sensitive site. It uses removable structures and natural materials for the summer season only. For the rest of the year the site is wild.

Example of Overall Approach – The image above contains a number of the elements used in the successful provision of facilities and amenities for visitors along the Wild Atlantic Way. It demonstrates the need for the absence of conflict between visitor activity, business and the protection of fragile natural resources, by implementing the correct plan, siting, design and materials.

Plan – to avoid permanent building projects wherever possible. The activities are seasonal and in very harsh weather-exposed locations. This approach provides facilities only when they are required during each day of the summer season. Visitors can stay and be entertained in nearby settlements in the evenings. All mobile structures are removed during the winter months – the wildness is un-affected.

Siting – both the parking, the access and the activity businesses are all located set back from the shore –so that the unspoiled appearance is preserved. This also lessens pressure on the ecology of the beach.

Design – the boundary of the access road and the parking area is formed by an adaptation of local materials [sand] and self-replenishing vegetation [grass].

Materials – the seasonal businesses are inviting and bright – to attract attention and custom – while the permanent features blend in with the appearance of the natural environment.

Before considering any advice or guidelines about good examples it can be instructive to reflect on the risks – both to visitors and to nature.

2.2 ADMIT THE RISKS

KEEP NATURE & VISITORS SAFE

It is important for all parties to accept the existence of risks associated with increasing visitor numbers at sites along the Wild Atlantic Way.

Groupthink, involving a denial of the existence of risk, is the single biggest cause of failure in most systems. Risks can only be anticipated and avoided if they are admitted in the first instance.

• Visitors can be at risk if exposed to steep or unstable coastal edges.

• Nature is at risk from erosion caused by excessive visitor numbers in fragile environments.

Design and choice of materials can increase risks if they fail to take account of the severity of exposure and weathering in coastal locations.

Clifftops offer the best views – but they often contain the most sensitive ecological features – such as the vegetation. **Photos 1 and 2** shows how these can easily be damaged by trampling. This can take many years to recover and can expose visitors to danger see **Photo 3**.

The weather and exposure of the Irish Atlantic shores create very challenging and unforgiving environment for artificial materials and structures See **Photo 4**. Considerable expertise is required to ensure that designs will be robust – without becoming intrusive.

WHAT GOES WRONG & WHY?

Design and management problems occur on coastal projects because of a recurrence, and occasional combination, of four main reasons.

1. LACK OF CO-ORDINATION

The plethora of signs in Photo 1 illustrates that many coastal areas and attractions are often owned and/or managed by a number of groups. All are legitimate and all are well-intentioned – but over time their individual and un-co-ordinated actions can combine to produce visual blight, like this example, that detracts from the wild character of the background. The lack of co-ordination of materials, designs, maintenance and facilities in Photo 2 illustrates how these foreground factors combine to create an unkempt first impression of this beach.

2. OVERDESIGN

Vehicular and marine access, parking and erosion protection are usually designed by civil and structural engineers who, rightly, place great emphasis on strength and durability. Such considerations may not be appropriate when applied to more 'ordinary' features' such as the field edges in Photo 3, where a simple hedge or earth embankment would have retained the rural character needed for an amenity area.

3 INAPPROPRIATE DESIGN DETAILS

A typical example of this would be the development of a conventional path (e.g. excavation, fill, kerbing etc). across a sensitive bog area. A more appropriate design and solution here would be a board walk which would have appeared much more natural, while protecting the ecology.

4. POOR OR ABSENT SITE MANAGEMENT

Many coastal sites are remote, seasonal and have complex, multiple arrangements of ownerships. As a result, access, movement, litter control and maintenance/ repair can be occasional or even haphazard – see Photo 4.

2.3 GETTING THE DETAILS RIGHT

Selection of design solutions is critical. There are a wide range of options for types of development in sensitive coastal zones. Not all of these are equally suitable for all locations.

Considerable care and expertise are needed at every stage from plan conception through to project execution. Consideration for alternatives, siting, design and materials is key.

ALTERNATIVES

A key technique is to ensure that a wide range of alternatives are considered and that each one is evaluated against an appropriate range of criteria, including; -

- Environmental compatibility,
- Quality of visitor experience,
- Health and safety in use,
- Capacity to recover from periodic storm events,
- Need for maintenance [and availability of expertise and resources to implement],
- Cost of maintenance and repair versus initial capital costs, and
- Monitoring and Mitigation Strategy.

SITING

The location of a project or activity is the single most important way of protecting the environment – and of ensuring a safe and enjoyable visitor experience. Sites need to be selected because of suitability – not availability.


Irish tourism lasts for a short season. Temporary structures and facilities – especially in sensitive areas – create lighter and more reversible environmental effects.

A new building is not always the best way to provide new tourism facilities beside the sea. Mobile and seasonal outlets create a small environmental footprint; they are less affected by winter weather and the area remains unchanged after they leave.

In many instances the details of design and materials are secondary to the selection of the correct location. Siting that takes account of natural shelter [both from weather and from visibility] can greatly reduce visual impact – while increasing visitor comfort. The siting of toilets and parking in Malin Head Photo 1 takes full advantage of a local outcrop to minimise the effects on the surrounding landscape – so that the visitor experience of the wildness of the headland is less affected.
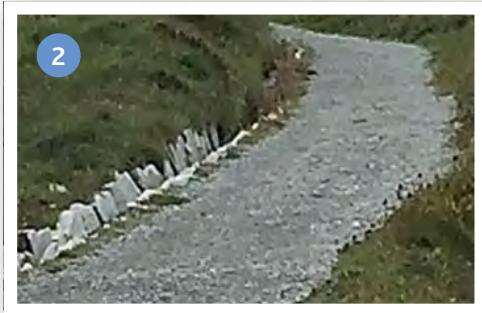
Movement within a site can be significantly governed by slope. Pedestrians follow lines of least resistance. This example, also from Malin Head Photo 2, shows how a small local rise is used to make the path appear to follow or flow around contours very naturally – avoiding harsh straight lines - while confining visitors to the path. This type of skilful blending with local topography means that only a small part of the path is visible – which also reduce visual impacts.

DESIGN

Design of elements must strive to reinforce the wild character of the near-coastal zone. Overdesign is the single biggest cause of loss of character in these locations.

It is very important, from the outset, to ensure that every decision is made by referring to the 'Wild' aspect of the Wild Atlantic Way.

Consider the selection of seating, as an example.

Photo 3 illustrates the common assumption that a 'natural' material – such as timber will automatically fit in with a natural location. The photo shows how the colour, shape and detail all contrast strongly with the natural environment – with the unintended consequence of drawing attention to the chair and detracting from the natural setting.

Photo 4 illustrates a common assumption – especially by professional designers – of the need for 'honest' designs that employ highly contrasting materials shapes and forms – stainless steel and concrete in this example.
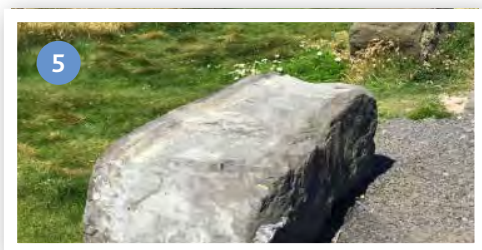
Photo 5 illustrates that sometimes the best chair is not a chair at all. These large rocks provide seating in a way that is not visually intrusive and that fits well with the ecology and natural character of the area.

MATERIALS

Careful and wise selection of materials can significantly improve the perception of the wild and natural character of the area. However, 'natural' materials need to be carefully considered – to take account of the wild and peripheral nature of costal sites.

Everyone is accustomed to thinking about ensuring that their clothes and interior designs consist of 'matching' materials and patterns.

The same applies when considering the selection of materials and patterns for use at the special coastal sites along the Wild Atlantic Way.

In the first place the materials need to fit in with a natural environment – so uncut stone and unpainted timber should be the first choice.

Steel and concrete should be used sparingly because these are durable – but not flexible – which is a requirement in many-near-shore locations.

Ocean exposure, moving sand and winter storms cause rapid weathering and frequent damage to coastal projects.

Materials should be capable of being readily repaired or even partially replaced using locally available materials and labour.

Photos 1 – 3 from Murvagh Beach provide a good illustration of the 'palette' of materials that work best in the near-coastal environment.

Photo 4 from Ros Golli shows how walls made out of unbedded stone fit in well with the appearance and natural environment.

For more details on durability and intrusiveness of materials refer to **Appendix 3**.
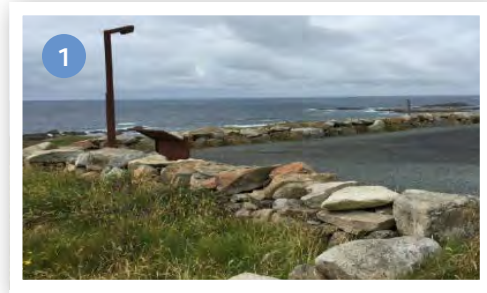
WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

Any proposals for managing or developing parts of the Wild Atlantic Way should commence by considering the range of options that are available to deal with a proposed project. Typically, projects arise from a desire to improve, protect or provide visitor facilities. Typical questions include;

- How to improve the visitor experience?
- How to protect existing assets from overloading?
- How to provide a new visitor attraction?

The following sections provide a range of practical options of how to: -

- Use appropriate approaches to projects
- Use appropriate techniques
- Use appropriate design details
- Match materials and methods to local conditions

It also provides examples with discussions of use, type, issue and suitable locations for each of the main types of potential projects associated with the Wild Atlantic Way including; -

- Pedestrian Access
- Vehicle Access
- Monitoring and Managing – by design

Developments that robustly protect the environment remain unobtrusive, so that a sense of enjoyment and nature remain dominant.

The use of simple material with least embellishment often produces the best and most robust results in near-coastal environs. This example also shows how sharp and clear separation between natural and man-made materials and forms allows the natural elements to be visually dominant.

Many countries now successfully employ seasonal walkways on beaches and in dunes. These can be removed during the winter.

2.4 LEARNING FROM EXAMPLES

The following tables set out practical examples of success, mistakes, details, materials used, access to site and potential ideas for monitoring & maintenance at sites.

	EXAMPLES	USE APPROPRIATE APPROACH TO PROJECT
LEARNING FROM SUCCESS		Layby Developments, like this example, allow views of sensitive coastal areas without any construction within the sensitive near-shore environment. This location – set back from the wave zone and exposed cliffs – allows safer viewing by visitor – with no loss of experience of the wildness.
		Alternative Access Developments – such as this cycleway – permit use of less intrusive projects that can be more compatible with the type of sensitive environs that are found within the near-shore zone. Developments should always explore the option of using less intrusive methods and materials within 'the last kilometre of land' – which defines the more sensitive near-coastal zone
		Seasonal and Temporary Uses and Structures should always be the preferred option in sensitive near-coastal locations. These create less environmental effects, are completely reversible and allow the use of relatively fragile structures that can be removed during the stormy winter season.
		Removable structures – such as this beach walkway through dunes - can be employed during peak visitor season in very sensitive environments. Such environments cannot sustain permanent structures – due to ecological sensitivity as well as exposure to extreme weather.

	EXAMPLES	USE APPROPRIATE TECHNIQUES
LEARNING FROM SUCCESS		Flexible and adaptive structures, such as this partially floating walkway – allow access through sensitive tidal areas – without the requirement for intrusive permanent civil engineering projects.
		Appropriate Techniques that are most suitable for the receiving environment. This example of a boardwalk is fixed directly onto a sandy, well-drained surface – which permits these attractive flowing lines. These are suitable for areas in the vicinity of dunes.
		Appropriate Applications, such as the construction of this boardwalk involves elevation of the structure above the saturated peats in this example. The supporting timber framework results in a very difference appearance – with a defined edge composed of straight segments. These are suitable for areas commonly found near cliff edges and rock shores.

EXAMPLES	INAPPROPRIATE TECHNIQUES
	Good Technique – Wrong Place Boardwalks can be successful in wetland or dune sites – but winter storm waves and surges on exposed beaches can quickly damage them.
	Good Materials – Wrong Place Stainless steel, insitu concrete and grass sward have very high resistance to extreme weather – but not to the actions of the sheep who roam this visitor attraction.
	Good Design – Poor Management Mown grass paths can be unobtrusive and robust. However, they need to be regularly rotated with due consideration to the resilience of the specific species of the underlying vegetation.
	Good Intention – Poor Execution Concerns about controlling erosion, traffic, safety and convenience appear to have squeezed natural features from a number of coastal locations on the coast.
	Good Intentions – Wrong Place Artificial floral displays that are appropriate in parks and urban areas are not compatible with the aim of sustaining the wilderness character of the WAW. They also require levels of care and maintenance that are often unrealistic at more remote coastal sites.

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

EXAMPLES	SMALL DETAILS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE
	In this instance the cliff-top path is located within a fenced-off portion of an ordinary paddock. Spectacular cliff scenery is visible across the field boundary. Visitor safety and ecological protection are assured by the simple detail of locating the path on the correct side of the field boundary.
	This is a very successful example because the path marks the junction between unmanaged wild shore habitats to the right and more conventional farmland to the left. All paths should, where possible, be located along the boundary between wild and farmed areas.
	A simple path through grass creates an orderly appearance – while gently directing visitor access away from sensitivities. This have a very significant advantage of being easily moved from year-to-year to further reduce pressure on the soil and vegetation – while allowing trampled areas to recover.
	The colour of the timber boardwalk together with its location at the lowest point in the gap are important details that allow this vital protection to 'disappear' and sustain the visitor's experience of a wild shore. Protection of visitor safety and ecological integrity must take account of visual amenity.

DETAILS MATTER

EXAMPLES	MATCH MATERIALS & METHODS TO LOCAL CONDITIONS
	Wherever possible, always consider the re-use of existing paths and roads instead of new construction. No matter how skilfully materials and methods are used for new designs, it will take decades to match the experience of using long established routes.
	These timber steps and rail are flexible and suitable for the dynamic environment of a dune system. The use of timber readily lends itself to removal and repair after winter storms – which often disturb or damage the portions nearest the beach. This type of construction requires regular inspection and maintenance – to repair emerging damage and to ensure safety of visitors.
	These concrete and steel materials are durable in the harsh near-coastal environment – but they are only suitable for use on a stable base – such as the rocky foreshore here. The path is also set well back from the area of wave action – which helps to minimise the need for repairs due to winter storms.
	These very large stones have been inserted into an exposed steep slope overlooking coastal cliffs. Such installation requires significant effort and expertise. It also requires regular monitoring to facilitate the detection and correction of emerging patterns of wear. The management of such paths may occasionally require closure or diversion to alternative routes to allow recovery and repair.

USE	TYPE	ISSUE	SUITABLE LOCATION	EXAMPLES
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS **WALKING & CYCLING PATHS AND TRACKS** There is a wide range of options for access. Different types of paths are suitable for different types of locations. **Note** Unsuitable paths in unsuitable locations can be both dangerous and harmful to the environment.	**Temporary Surface** Many proprietary types available – ranging from simple 'roll-up' timber slats to specialist plastic and steel systems.	Some areas only require access in good weather. These are removed in winter or during storms.	Suitable for all areas that are only used on a seasonal or temporary basis. They can be particularly useful in beach areas during peak periods with good weather.	
	Worn path These are formed by regular light traffic – both by walkers and animals. Excessive traffic means paths must be closed.	These must be regularly inspected and repaired. Alternative routes will be needed to cope with potential overloading. Upgrading is not an option	Acceptable in many natural areas – such as shores and uplands areas with regular monitoring, good drainage and very low numbers of users. They are intrinsically unsuitable for large numbers.	
	Mown Grass Path These are formed by regular mowing between areas of meadow or scrub vegetation.	The key to success is to make the path consistently wide, avoid steep areas or concentration	Suitable for many areas with good drainage and low numbers of users. These need to be monitored regularly. More robust paths may need to be installed before damage occurs	
	Boardwalk – elevated. These simple looking structures require a lot of commitment due to significant construction effort as well as annual inspection and repair.	They require very careful site selection and detailed design. A modified version is used in uplands.	Suitable for bogs, heath, wetlands and marshes. These are not suitable for unstable areas such as cliff or stream edges, dunes or beaches.	
	Boardwalk – surface These require very careful site selection and detailed design. They look beautiful and feel lovely in bare feet.	It is very important to avoid waterlogged areas Essential to inspect and repair regularly.	Suitable for dry sandy soil – ideal behind dunes as connections between parking and beaches. They can also play an important role in dune management.	
	Surfaced Path – unsealed. These are very robust, safe and compatible with a wide range of habitats.	The best pathway for coastal access. They require very careful site selection and detailed design. Location along the exact boundary of habitats is critical.	Suitable for junction between improved grassland and splash-zone near the shore. If carefully located and skilfully designed these require low maintenance.	
	Surfaced Path – sealed This is like a miniature road and is particularly suitable for cycling and greenway routes.	These are sturdy, safe and compatible with a wide range of robust habitats. Expensive to develop, low maintenance costs.	Suitable for normal agricultural soils or, occasionally, on the bed of an old existing road/railway in more sensitive areas	

	USE	TYPE	ISSUE	SUITABLE LOCATION	EXAMPLES
VEHICLE ACCESS	**NO VEHICLE** It is important to be clear about where there are no vehicles	**Green Road**s are old tracks for driving stock – they are not used by vehicles or bicycles – but in places are used by walkers and horse riders. Some parts may not have public access.	The rights of way need to be understood and respected.	These are pre-existing routes. These need to be identified and incorporated into visitor access proposals.	
	OCCASIONAL VEHICLE There are many roads that are only used occasionally. These have a lot of potential for walking access in rural areas	**Grass Tracks** These have evolved over time – usually as incursions into natural and semi-natural areas. They are not to be confused with mown grass paths.	These damage soil, and plants, so are generally unable to accommodate increases or intensification of use.	These are pre-existing routes that usually occur at the edges of beaches, commonage, bogs and uplands.	
		Surfaced Tracks These are old public roads that now receive little or no traffic or maintenance. They are usually dead ends. These are suitable for walking, hiking, cycling or horse riding.	Where road may be used for agriculture, turf cutting etc. there may be times of year where there is some level of traffic on these narrow roads	These are very important visitor resources that need to be identified and incorporated into visitor access proposals.	
	CAR, BUS AND TRUCK ACCESS The length of the Wild Atlantic Way means that most journeys will take place in vehicles	**Minor Sealed Road** These are narrow public roads that receive low levels of local traffic or maintenance. These are suitable for walking, hiking, cycling or horse riding.	Where road may be used for agriculture, turf cutting etc. there may be times of year where there is some level of traffic on these narrow roads	These are very important visitor resources that need to be identified and incorporated into visitor access proposals. Local agreement is critical.	
		County Roads The majority of the Wild Atlantic Way occurs on such roads. These are generally the location of all signage and Discovery Points.	Some locations along these roads will require more laybys, foot paths and cycle-routes	The routing of the Way used roads that would not need to be upgraded to carry extra traffic Some may follow routes parallel to the vehicle touring route.	
	PARKING	Laybys Occasional/ Overflow on Grass Occasional/ Overflow on Mats	It is critical to avoid over-specification of parking facilities	Laybys that extend existing roads are the best approach. Always give first preference to temporary uses – such as parking on grass or sand – these can be re-enforced.	
			These can be sensitive and highly seasonal uses	Overflow parking areas made with reinforced grass can be used in highly seasonal sites.	

	USE	TYPE	ISSUE	SUITABLE LOCATION	EXAMPLES
MONITORING AND MANAGING – BY DESIGN	RIDGE TRAILS	Ridge Paths These are formed by regular light traffic – both by walkers and animals	This highly concentrated erosion occurs at the point of maximum natural erosion. Undisturbed, it rapidly reverts to a natural state.	The peaks and final approach ridges of steep-sided hills.	
	HIKING TRAILS	Paved Climbs These are heavily modified steep areas where large shaped boulders are imported and expertly placed to ensure safety and prevent erosion.	These require expert location, design, construction and very regular inspection and repair. Ensure alternatives are available.	These occur on the steeper parts of a climb.	
		Paved Trails These are less modified steep areas where flags and stones are imported and expertly placed to ensure safety and prevent erosion.	These require careful location, design, construction and regular inspection and repair.	These occur on the middle and lower parts of a climb where the route is well defined.	
		Desire Lines Trails of wear in vegetation – that can rapidly become soil-eroding	These can appear gradually or sometimes quickly in response to a local change – such as flooding or a fallen tree. These need to be regularly inspected and repaired.	These occur near the lower parts of a climb – or at transitions where the main trail is not clearly defined	
	EDGE TRAILS	Upland Fences These occur along boundaries of ownership or management	Without forethought, inspection and good maintenance these can rapidly become the location of 'desire-lines' These can be a mixture of animal and visitor trails	Along fences	
		These occur where dune management systems are in place	As above	As above Along dune fencing	
		Cliff Edges These occur along edges of steep ground	These can occur near any cliff edge as a result of regular light traffic – both by walkers and animals	Along edges	

2.5 VISITOR MANAGEMENT

All of the evidence from Ireland's monitoring of visitor activity along the Wild Atlantic Way

demonstrates conclusively that visitor management is the key to ensuring that tourism and environmental protection can be sustainably combined.

Visitor management regimes are established by completing the following steps;

1.   Site Designation for Appropriate Visitor Management

2.   Adopt Appropriate Visitor Management System

3.   Implement Site Maintenance System

SITE DESIGNATION FOR APPROPRIATE VISITOR MANAGEMENT TYPE
From the outset, every site and project should be designated according to the proposed management system.

Key Criteria for the designation of appropriate management system include; -

1. EVIDENCE
- Is there any evidence about existing patterns of use?
- Is there any evidence about existing problems resulting from use?
- The location and type of problem should be mapped and described – ideally the specific cause of the problem should be identified.

2. SIGNIFICANCE
- Is the site subject to any formal designations?
- Are the reasons for the designation known and fully understood?
- Are there legal requirements arising from the designations?

3. SENSITIVITY
- Are there particularly sensitive features on the site?
- Are the threats to this sensitivity known and understood?
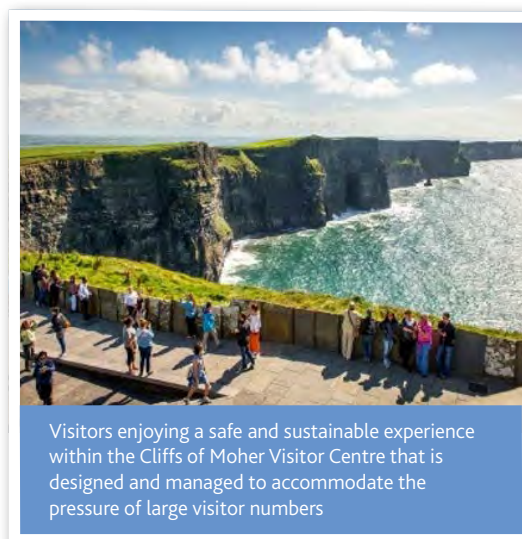- Are the measures to protect this sensitivity known and understood?

4. LOCATION
- Located in or adjacent to an existing settlement?
- Located in or adjacent to established land-uses and structures?
- Located on a site of established visitor activity?
- Located in a remote location?

5. RESOURCES
- Is the site owned or permanently managed by a public authority?
- Is the site owned or permanently managed by a private enterprise?
- Is there an arrangement in place to finance the proposed site management and/ maintenance?
- Does the management require technical or scientific expertise?

6. SUSTAINABILITY
- Are the resources to manage and maintain the site permanent?
- Are the resources to manage and maintain the site tied to a private enterprise?
- Are the resources to manage and maintain the site dependent on a voluntary group?

Visitors enjoying a safe and sustainable experience within the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre that is designed and managed to accommodate the pressure of large visitor numbers

Example of a beach management scheme that helps tourists to clean up after their visit.

VISITOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Once the key criteria for site management systems have been assessed then an appropriate system for management of the site can be designed and implemented. Answering the questions in the previous checklist should help to ensure that the proposed management system is appropriate, effective and sustainable.

There are four types of Visitor Management Systems. These are different and distinct from Site Maintenance Systems – which are considered below;

1. Fully Managed
2. Occasional Managed [Regular weekly inspection - daily at peak]
3. Occasional [Irregular - each season]
4. Rarely/ never

TYPES OF VISITOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	DESCRIPTION	TYPICAL SITE	MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES	TYPICAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES
Fully Managed Sites	Full time staffing with access control	National Monument with Building	• All day, every day. • Often open for most of year	• Daily Opening, Cleaning, supervision and guidance • Ongoing repair and renewal. Annual refurbishment • Expert inspection, monitoring and reporting • Site system maintenance
Regularly Managed Sites	Jointly managed with other sites	Popular Beach	• Daily visit peak season, Weekly visit off-season	• Cleaning and litter removal • Checklist Inspection – condition, erosion • Occasional repair • Annual renewal
Occasionally Managed	Inspected at least monthly	Cliff walk	• Seasonal Inspection • Annual repairs	• Checklist Inspection – condition, erosion • Periodic renewal
Rarely Managed	Annual inspection	Mountain Peak	• No management	• Checklist Inspection – condition, erosion • Condition reporting

SITE MAINTENANCE

Site Maintenance is different, but closely related, to Site Management. It is one of the most critical activities required to ensure both environmental protection as well as ensuring visitor satisfaction. It is critical therefore, that arrangements and resources are considered and provided from the outset. There is strong evidence from surveys of visitors that poor site maintenance creates a disproportionate large and negative impression of the entire landscape and experience.

A site without appropriate maintenance should not be promoted.

Maintenance usually refers to regular activities that include:

DAILY TASKS
- Emptying waste bins and replacing liners
- Collecting litter, debris
- Disposal of waste
- Monitoring for damage and wear and tear
- Making minor repairs

WEEKLY TASKS
- Grass cutting
- Checklist inspection for damage, wear or erosion

SEASONAL TASKS
- Repair, renewal or replacement of damaged or worn site furnishings, surfaces, paths, steps,
- fences, signs
- Repair and re-instatement of damaged or worn natural areas – surfaces, slopes, vegetation, walls etc.

The following checklists should be consulted when considering new projects at sites and site management at new and existing sites.

2.6 CHECKLIST FOR PROJECTS IN NEAR-COASTAL ZONES

	IN NEAR-COASTAL AREAS ARE PROJECTS REQUIRED TO	YES	NO	UNCERTAIN	ACTION REQUIRED
1.1	Ensure that locations of public access offer views towards steep coastal features, while avoiding direct access without careful planning for environmentally compatible safety measures?				
1.2	Direct public access to steep areas as a last resort?				
1.3	Minimise the extent of new building?				
1.4	Minimise the need for new roads, septic tanks or new piped services?				
1.5	Re-use structures or temporary projects as the preferred approach?				
1.6	Build new as a last resort?				
1.7	Always give priority to developments that are seasonal, removable or which have a minimal environmental footprint?				
1.8	Locate demanding features away from sensitive natural, historical or scenic near-coastal areas?				
1.9	Consider how features such as parking, toilets, halls and green spaces could have different uses during different seasons?				
1.10	Include locations and designs for waste collection that is adequately sized, weather secure and visually unobtrusive?				
1.11	Avoid inclusion of waste facilities if these cannot be serviced daily during peak season?				
1.12	Avoid inclusion of high-maintenance grass areas or floral planting in un-manned projects?				
1.13	Include consideration of the necessity for site and visitor management?				
1.14	Ensure that Site Management costs and arrangements are integral to design from the outset?				
1.15	Avoid designs that may require toilets and septic tanks for staff in sensitive remote areas?				
1.16	Consider the practicality of managing and/or staffing sites that require the on-site presence of specialists?				
1.17	Ensure that infrastructure projects and services in intensely used visitor areas are sized to allow efficient peak and off-peak operation?				
1.18	Ensure that infrastructure projects and services in intensely used visitor areas provide for separate charging/ costing that differentiates between year-round local and seasonal visitor use?				
1.19	Give circulation priority and convenience to local traffic?				
1.20	Allow sufficient time and resources for meaningful local pre-application consultation when larger tourism projects are to be located in smaller communities?				

PROJECT REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

2.7 CHECKLIST FOR SITE MANAGEMENT IN NEAR- COASTAL ZONES

	IN NEAR-COASTAL AREAS HAS SITE MANAGEMENT CONSIDERED?	YES	NO	UNCERTAIN	ACTION REQUIRED
2.1	Whether there is any evidence about existing patterns of use?				
2.2	Whether there is any evidence about problems resulting from use?				
2.3	Have the location and type of problem been mapped and described?				
2.4	Is the site subject to any formal designations?				
2.5	Are the reasons for the designation known and fully understood?				
2.6	Are there legal requirements arising from the designations?				
2.7	Are there particularly sensitive features on the site?				
2.8	Are the threats to this sensitivity known and understood?				
2.9	Are the measure to protect this sensitivity known and understood?				
2.10	Is the Site located in or adjacent to an existing settlement?				
2.11	Is the Site located in or adjacent to established land-uses and structures?				
2.12	Is the Site located on a site of established visitor activity?				
2.13	Is the Site located in a remote location?				
2.14	Is the site owned or permanently managed by a public authority?				
2.15	Is the site owned or permanently managed by a private enterprise?				
2.16	Is there an arrangement in place to finance the proposed site management and/ maintenance?				
2.17	Does the management require technical or scientific expertise?				
2.18	Are the resources to manage and maintain the site permanent?				
2.19	Are the resources to manage and maintain the site tied to a private enterprise?				
2.20	Are the resources to manage and maintain the site dependent on a voluntary group?				

PROJECT REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

APPENDIX 1 – WHAT IS WILD?

WHAT IS WILD?

Most definitions of 'Wild' or 'Wilderness' refer to the absence of cultivation or management by humans as the defining factor.

This very human-centred approach does little to say what the Wild is – just what it is not. Such a definition is of little use when we are looking at the North Atlantic in the middle of a winter storm – no plough or fence will ever tame that.

HOW WILD?

It is not enough to use the word 'natural' and 'wild' interchangeably. A reedbed or pond might be natural – though hardly 'wild'.

'Wild' in this context conveys as sense of scale – being both very large and also very energetic – to the degree that there is no possibility of control.

'Wild' is also a sense of otherness, animal, mysterious, unknowable – what we humans are not.

The Wild Atlantic Way offers visitors the opportunity to experience the Wild. But this cannot be offered lightly.

Danger is a very real part of the Wild. Weather, wind tides and heights cannot be controlled or tamed. All must be approached with great caution.

Ireland's Atlantic coastline is the edge of a true wilderness where natural processes are fully dominant. In this dynamic, changing and unpredictable environment human activity needs to be carefully managed.

CARE IN THE WILD

Visitors are also strangers, unfamiliar with the danger that lurks in the Wild. They need to be guided and cared for as they experience the Wild. Similarly, we need to ensure that they pose no threat – by their expectations or requirements of this wild edge of the world. We must care for those who visit our wild places and we must care for the wild places too.

CARE OF THE WILD

Despite its huge scale and energy, parts of the Wild have curiously fragile aspects. Damage heals slow here

The Atlantic wilderness offers opportunities to experience unconfined weather and wildlife that can evoke a sense of the sublime and awe.

Direct personal exposure to wilderness can provide people with profound and emotional experiences. This requires considerable care to protect both the environment as well as the visitor.

APPENDIX 2 – CASE STUDIES

The Brú na Bóinne Visitor Management Strategy has successfully implemented the concept of separating visitor attractions from visitor facilities at a strategic level and has now been reproduced in many international locations.

This Appendix looks at this site specifically as a practical example. It aims to illustrate how this concept could be applied to attractions in the coastal zone along the Wild Atlantic Way. It also illustrates how visitor facilities can gradually be moved away from the most sensitive and significant near coastal zones and into more robust near-by areas of managed agricultural lands.

CASE STUDY 1 – STRATEGIC VISITOR MANAGEMENT - BRU NA BOINNE

A cluster of 3 large Neolithic passage tombs – Knowth, Newgrange and Dowth, are one of Ireland's most important archaeological sites. They are protected by a Visitor Management Plan.

Located less than an hour from Dublin, the site annually attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors. These ancient sites have a limited capacity to accommodate visitors without causing wear and tear to the fabric and context of the monuments – or reducing the quality of the visitor experience.

Landowners, local and state agencies have collaborated since 1995 to devise a strategy to manage visitor numbers - with the objective of accommodating ever increasing numbers – yet reducing pressure on the monuments.

At the core of the strategy lay two simple approaches;

1.   to spread the load more evenly between the three sites
2.   to move parking, shops, cafes and visitor facilities away from the monuments.

The diagrams illustrate how the original overcrowding was reduced by a combination of the removal of direct car access to the monuments and by the provision of new visitor facilities at a site south of the river.

This approach has succeeded in reducing 2017 visitor numbers to the Newgrange monument to levels last experienced in 1988.

This pioneering technique is now being widely adopted.
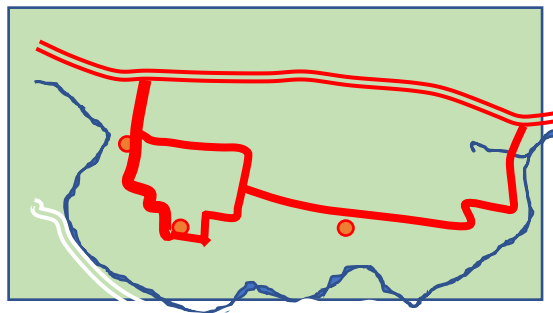
Before the Visitor Centre local roads were congested and the monuments were experiencing unsustainable visitor numbers
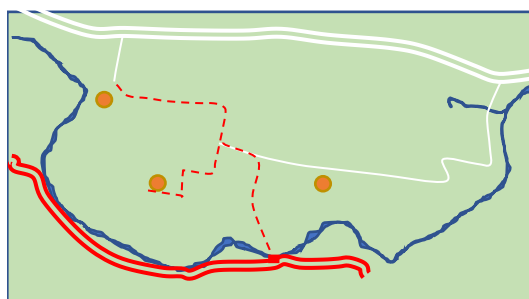
After the Visitor Centre traffic was confined south of the river and pressure on the sites and the monuments was greatly reduced.
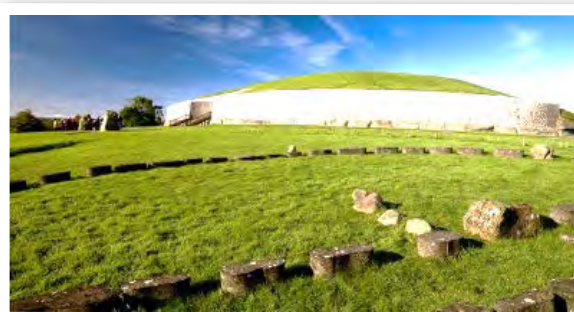
Visitors Experience is greatly improved with better information, more comfort, no traffic congestion, less crowds and full catering and rest facilities.

CASE STUDY 2 - STRATEGIC VISITOR MANAGEMENT – POTENTIAL FUTURE APPLICATION IN BUSY COSTAL ZONE

It is possible to grow visitor numbers while also increasing the wildness of the more intensively used coastal locations by adopting a strategic approach.

The graphic below illustrates the options that might be available to site owners or operators and how considering the "more wild option" could be realised for an iconic cliff-top viewing point. This may be applicable to recommendations and actions coming from the recently completed Wild Atlantic Way Route Review.

As numbers increase, on-site facilities – such as parking, toilets and shops – can be relocated away from the coast to existing nearby settlements and villages. Here, visitors pay for parking in return for a free minibus to the coastal features. Visitors may also opt to hike or cycle to the coast. The visitor facilities would augment the existing business in the settlements, as well as allowing more mixing with locals.
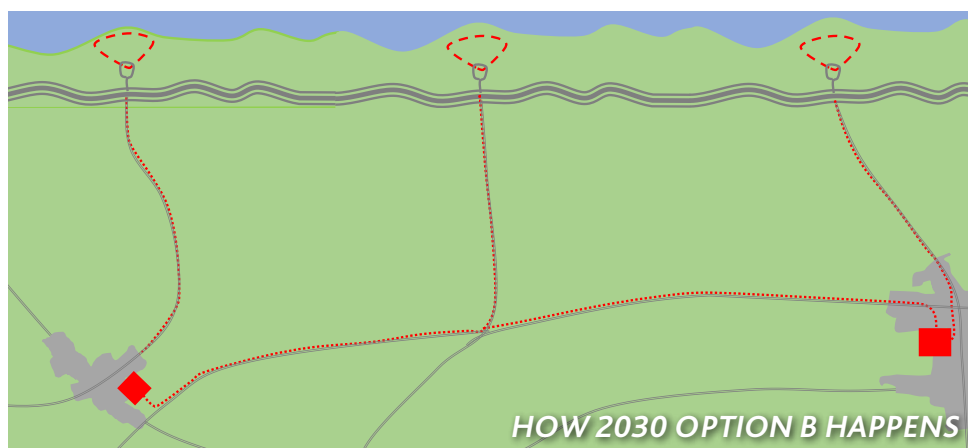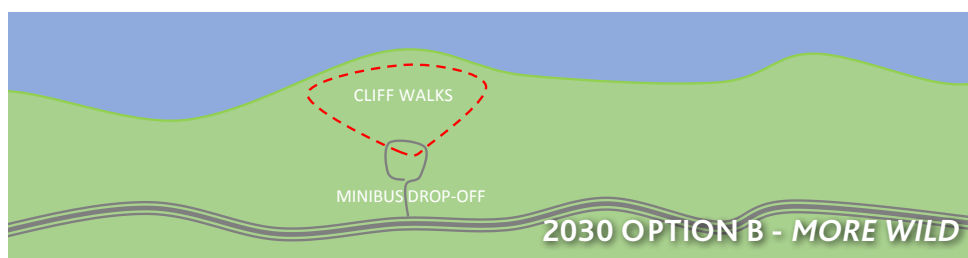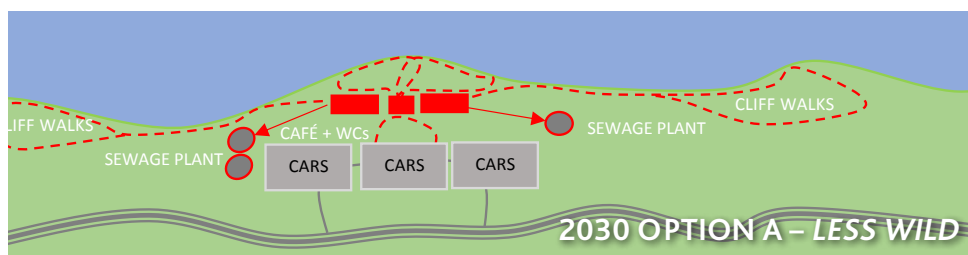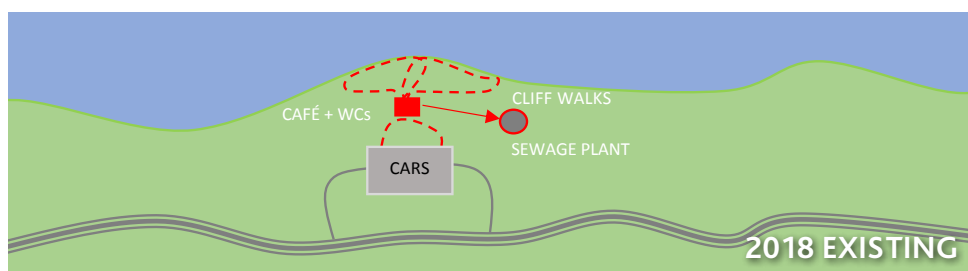
Built elements gradually re-located away from coast to nearby villages. Visitors travel to a number of smaller dispersed cliff-walks.

CASE STUDY 3 - STRATEGIC VISITOR MANAGEMENT – POTENTIAL FUTURE APPLICATION AIMED AT MAKING THE SHORE MORE WILD

It is possible to grow visitor numbers while also increasing the wildness of the more intensively used coastal locations by adopting a strategic approach that involves co-ordination between landowners, local authorities, tourism interests and agencies that care for habitats.

The graphic below illustrates how a typical Irish rocky coastline might be managed into the future to ensure the "more wild" approach might be achieved while also ensuring continued use by all including visitors.
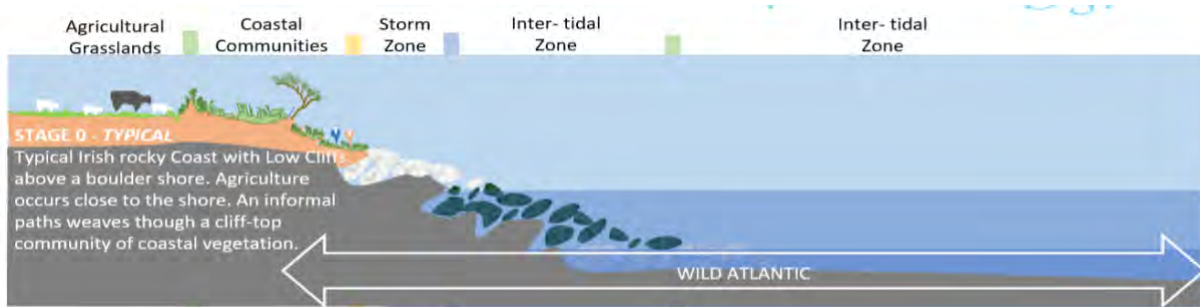
Stage 0 – This very natural situation – an undisturbed wild coast that is followed by a narrow, informal path. This area will be unable to sustain significant increases in visitor numbers without carefully planned management and intervention.
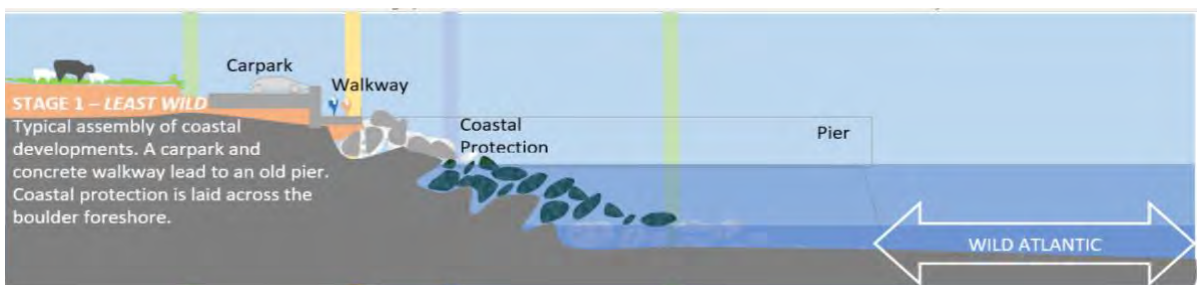
Stage 1 – Many Coastal Sites have a significantly diminished sense of wildness because of an accumulation of un-coordinated and inappropriate projects. Future plans and projects need to halt and gradually reverse this loss of wildness.

Stage 2 'Rewilding' of near-coastal areas can begin to be achieved by gradually moving back all 'hard projects' – carparks, toilets, access roads – so they are not visible from the shore, nor within the special habitats of the coastal environment.
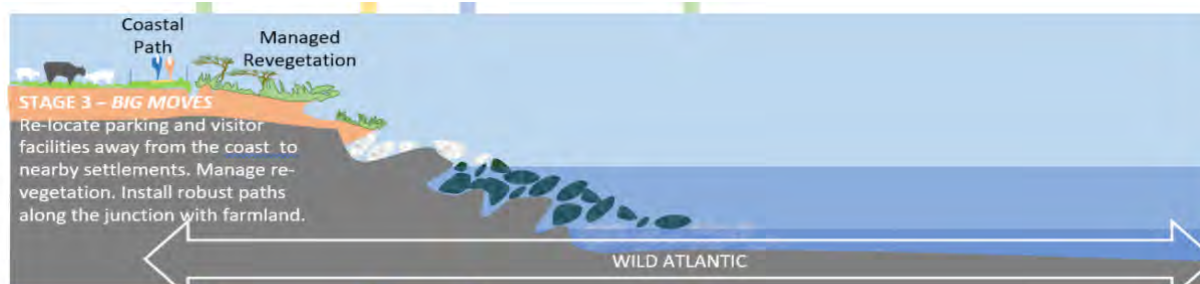
Stage 3 By following the high-level strategy illustrated on the previous page – which applies the lessons learned from Brú na Bóinne – it will eventually become possible to re-establish a completely wild experience of the Atlantic coast. In this strategy a buffer of managed re-vegetation separates [and shelters] the agricultural areas from the natural habitats near the shore. The path follows the junction between the two types of management areas.

APPENDIX 3 – GUIDELINE OF SECTION OF MATERIALS

The tables below compare materials to assist in making selections for their use in the near-coastal zone. Table 1 compares Durability – the ability to resist decay, due to weathering or wear, with visual and natural intrusiveness – the extent to which materials will contrast with the appearance or processes of the natural environment. Table 2 compares Flexibility – the ability to absorb environmental loading – due to waves, wind, erosion or weather - with the ease of repair using local materials and labour.

In general, many designers give excessive priority to durability and insufficient priority to the ease of repair using local materials and labour. Many durable materials – such as stainless steel, brick, toughened glass, paviors and concrete – are very visually intrusive.

Installations in near coastal locations are subject to extreme weathering and wear. When damage occurs in these remote sites – it can be important for repairs to be carried out quickly and inexpensively – often using locally available materials and labour. Visually intrusive materials that have not been repaired can greatly magnify adverse impacts and can quickly give a place a run-down appearance.

More	**Visual and natural intrusiveness**						**Least**
Durability	Stainless Steel	Brick	Paving	Geotextile	Stained timber	Shaped earth, sand	Large Rocks – no mortar, minimal shaping
	Toughened glass	Concrete	Concrete slab	Elevated boardwalk	Treated timber	Hedgerow	Drystone walls
	Weathering steel [Corten®]	Blocks	Tarmacadam	Boardwalk on ground	Painted or varnished timber	Earth berm	Mortared coursed stone
	Painted steel	Composite panels	Gravel	Mown grass	Split paling	Drystone or timber retention	Dressed stone
Less	Plastic coated steel	Wire fencing	Quarry screening and quarry dust	Trail	Logs	Wall or fence	Gabions

Table 1 Comparison of Durability of Materials with their Visual and natural intrusiveness

More	Ease of repair using Local Materials and Labour						Least
Flexibility Durability	Stainless Steel	Brick	Paving	Geotextile	Stained timber	Shaped earth, sand	Large Rocks – no mortar, minimal shaping
	Toughened glass	Concrete	Concrete slab	Elevated boardwalk	Treated timber	Hedgerow	Drystone walls
	Weathering steel [Corten®]	Blocks	Tarmacadam	Boardwalk on ground	Painted or varnished timber	Earth berm	Mortared coursed stone
	Painted steel	Composite panels	Gravel	Mown grass	Split paling	Drystone or timber retention	Dressed stone
Less	Plastic coated steel	Wire fencing	Quarry screening and quarry dust	Trail	Logs	Wall or fence	Gabions

Table 2 Comparison of Flexibility of Materials with the Ease of Repair using Local Materials and Labour

'Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others'

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The SEA which has been undertaken for the Operational Programme, the findings of which have been informed by the Appropriate Assessment (AA) and are presented in an SEA Environmental Report which accompanies Operational Programme, has resulted in the integration of this Appendix into the Operational Programme in order to facilitate environmental protection and sustainable development at lower levels of decision making.

This appendix includes various provisions with which local authorities and others will demonstrate compliance at lower levels of decision making in order to get funding. These decision making processes will include project level Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and AA as appropriate.

Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42).

A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application to An Bord Pleanála is required.

If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought[1]. If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.

Developments or works by other groups or individuals may require planning permission or, if not, may require Ministerial consent in European sites. Local authorities are likely to be responsible for deciding whether there are restrictions on exemptions in the case of exempted development by a group or individual.

---

[1] *As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.*

Topic[2]	Requirement[3]
All	**Regulatory framework for environmental protection and management** Local authorities and others shall cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. Local authorities and others will demonstrate, as appropriate, that plans, programmes and projects comply with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) – and relevant transposing Regulations.
All	**Information to be considered by local authorities and others at lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment** Lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment by local authorities and others, as relevant, should consider the sensitivities identified in Section 4 of the SEA Environmental Report, including the following: • Candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas; • Features of the landscape that provide linkages/connectivity to designated sites (e.g. watercourses, areas of semi-natural habitat such as linear woodlands etc) • Salmonid Waters; • Shellfish Waters; • Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; • Nature Reserves; • Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas; • Areas likely to contain a habitat listed in annex 1 of the Habitats Directive; • Entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and Zones of Archaeological Potential; • Entries to the Record of Protected Structures; • Un-designated sites of importance to wintering or breeding bird species of conservation concern; • Architectural Conservation Areas; and • Relevant landscape designations.
All	**Construction and Environmental Management Plan** Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMPs) shall be prepared in advance of the construction of larger projects and implemented throughout. Such plans shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures indicated in this Appendix to the Operational Programme and any lower tier Environmental Impact Statement or Appropriate Assessment. CEMPs typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development, including: a. location of the sites and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse, b. location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities, c. details of site security fencing and hoardings, d. details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction, e. details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage, f. measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network, g. measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris, h. alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public right of way during the course of site development works, i. details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels, j. containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater, k. disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil, l. a water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains, m. details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan. n. if peat is encountered - a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan. o. measures adopted during construction to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed). p. appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases.
All	**Maintenance Plan** Lower tier assessments should examine the need for Maintenance Plans informed by environmental considerations to be prepared and implemented.
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	**Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network** Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); UNESCO World Heritage and UNESCO Biosphere sites; Ramsar Sites; Salmonid Waters; Shellfish Waters; Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; Flora Protection Order sites; Wildlife Sites (including Nature Reserves); Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas; Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs); Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979) ; and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

---

[2] The SEA Directive identifies a number of environmental topics which must be considered in the assessments being undertaken for plans and programmes. These topics are listed in this column and comprise biodiversity and flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape.

[3] The provisions listed under this column are the requirements which the local authorities and others will have to comply with in order to get funding.

	Local authorities and others shall demonstrate compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents):
	- EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)[4], the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)[5], the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)[6], the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC). - National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976[7], the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008[8] and the Flora Protection Order 1999. - National policy guidelines (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same), including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010. - Catchment and water resource management Plans, including River Basin District Management Plans 2009-2015 (including any superseding versions of same). - Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: Ireland's 2nd National Biodiversity Plan (including any superseding version of same). - Ireland's Environment 2014 (EPA, 2014, including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.
	Appropriate Assessment All projects and plans arising from this programme will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that: 1. The Plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or 2. The Plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or 3. The Plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.
	Protection of Natura 2000 Sites No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this programme (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects[9]).
	NPWS & Integrated Management Plans Regarding, integrated management plans, Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for Special Area of Conservation involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans. The NPWS's current priority is to identify site specific conservation objectives; management plans may be considered after this is done. Where Integrated Management Plans are being prepared for ~~all~~ Natura sites (or parts thereof), Fáilte Ireland and local authorities shall engage with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Operational Programme and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations and with special regard to local communities.

---

[4] Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive.

[5] Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur).

[6] Including protected species and natural habitats.

[7] Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

[8] Including protected species and natural habitats.

[9] Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:
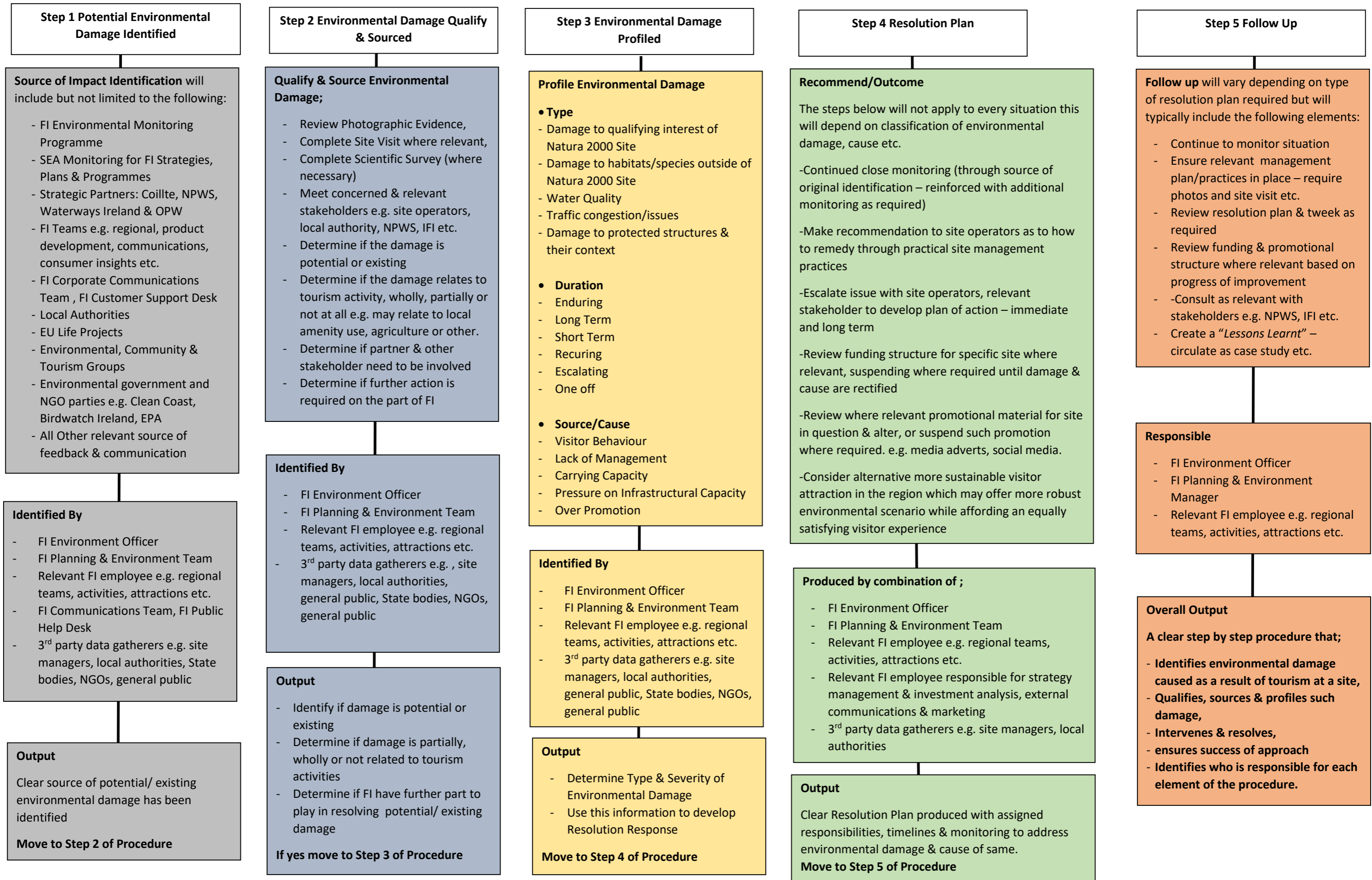a) no alternative solution available,
b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and
c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

	Coastal Zone Management Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice and local authorities and others shall, as appropriate: support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats; and facilitate an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone.
	Biodiversity and Ecological Networks Local authorities and others shall demonstrate, as appropriate, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.
	Protection of Riparian Zone and Waterbodies and Watercourses Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that waterbodies and watercourses are protected from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in riverine, wetland and coastal areas, as appropriate.
	Non-Designated Sites Local authorities and others shall demonstrate the appropriate protection of non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve the biological diversity.
	Non-native invasive species Local authorities and others shall support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.
Population and human health	Human Health Local authorities and others shall assess proposals for development in terms of, inter alia, potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, local authorities and others shall ensure the introduction of mitigation measures in order to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level.
Soil	Soil Protection and Contamination Local authorities and others shall ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.
	Areas of geological interest Local authorities and others shall demonstrate protection and maintenance of the character, integrity and conservation value of features or areas of geological interest.
Water	Water Framework Directive and associated legislation Local authorities and others shall contribute towards, as appropriate, the protection of existing and potential water resources, and their use by humans and wildlife, including rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, coastal waters and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009), the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same). Local authorities and others shall support the application and implementation of a catchment planning and management approach to development and conservation, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage System techniques for new development.
	River Basin Management Plan Local authorities and others shall support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the various River Basin Management Plans 2009 – 2015, and associated Programmes of Measures, or any such plans that may supersede same during the lifetime of the Operational Programme, as well as relevant recommendations contained in the Water Quality in Ireland 2007 – 2009 (EPA, 2011, and any updated/superseding document). Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that proposals for development would not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands and coastal waters. Also local authorities and others shall have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 which provides guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
	Bathing Water Local authorities and others shall contribute towards the achievement of the requirements of the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008) and EU Mandatory Values, as a minimum, and EU Guide Values, where possible.
	Flood Risk Management Guidelines Local authorities and others shall support, as appropriate, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC), the Flood Risk Regulations (SI No. 122 of 2010), the DEHLG/OPW publication *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* (2009) (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same) and relevant outputs of the Catchment and Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS).
	Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) Local authorities and others shall ensure that new development is adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems as appropriate.
Air and Climatic	Infrastructure for Walking, Cycling and Water-based activities Local Authorities and others shall work with Fáilte Ireland, the National Trails Office, Coillte, the

Factors	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking, cycling and water-based activities along the Wild Atlantic Way.
Material Assets	**Construction Waste** Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that all waste arising during construction phase will be managed and disposed of in a way that ensures the provisions of the Waste Management Acts and regulations and Regional Waste Management Plans. Construction Waste Management Plans will be implemented by local authorities and others to minimise waste and ensure correct handling and disposal of construction waste streams in accordance with the Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment, July 2006.
	Waste Creation Local authorities and others shall support the minimisation of waste creation and promote a practice of reduce, reuse and recycle where possible.
	Waste Disposal Local authorities and others shall safeguard the environment by seeking to ensure that residual waste is disposed of appropriately.
	Irish Water Local authorities and others shall co-operate with and support, as relevant and appropriate, Irish Water in its new role as the lead authority for water services.
Cultural Heritage	**Archaeological Heritage** Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and sympathetic enhancement of archaeological heritage, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act, 1930 (as amended).
	Protection of Archaeological Sites Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of archaeological sites and monuments and their settings, archaeological objects and underwater archaeological sites that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, in the ownership/guardianship of the State, or that are subject of Preservation Orders or have been registered in the Register of Historic Monuments. Contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of archaeological sites, which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.
	Consultation Local authorities and others shall consult with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to proposed developments adjoining archaeological sites.
	Underwater Archaeological Sites Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of underwater archaeological sites in riverine, intertidal and sub-tidal locations.
	Architectural Heritage Local authorities and others shall help to ensure the appropriate protection of architectural heritage by complying, as appropriate, with the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to architectural heritage and the policy guidance contained in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 (and any updated/superseding document).
Landscape	**Landscape Designations** Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of county and local level landscape designations from incompatible developments. Proposals for development that have the potential to significantly adversely impact upon these designations shall be accompanied by an assessment of the potential landscape character and visual impacts of the proposed development - demonstrating that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation. Such assessments should be prepared having regard to the relevant aspects of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013 Landscape Institute).
	Coastal Areas and Seascapes Local authorities and others shall protect the character and visual potential of the coast and conserve the character and quality of seascapes.

Tourism Related Environmental Damage – Failte Ireland (FI) Resolution Procedure

Step 1 Potential Environmental Damage Identified

Source of Impact Identification will include but not limited to the following:

- FI Environmental Monitoring Programme
- SEA Monitoring for FI Strategies, Plans & Programmes –
- Strategic Partners: Coillte, NPWS, Waterways Ireland & OPW
- FI Teams e.g. regional, product development, communications, consumer insights etc.
- FI Corporate Communications Team , FI Customer Support Desk
- Local Authorities
- EU Life 'Projects
- Environmental, Community & Tourism Groups
- Environmental government and NGO parties e.g. Clean Coast, Birdwatch Ireland, EPA
- All Other relevant source of feedback & communication

Identified By

- FI Environment Officer
- FI Planning & Environment Team
- Relevant FI employee e.g. regional teams, activities, attractions etc.
- FI Communications Team, FI Public Help Desk
- 3rd party data gatherers e.g. site managers, local authorities, State bodies, NGOs, general public

Output

Clear source of potential/ existing environmental damage has been identified

Move to Step 2 of Procedure

Step 2 Environmental Damage Qualify & Sourced

Qualify & Source Environmental Damage;

- Review Photographic Evidence,
- Complete Site Visit where relevant,
- Complete Scientific Survey (where necessary)
- Meet concerned & relevant stakeholders e.g. site operators, local authority, NPWS, IFI etc.
- Determine if the damage is potential or existing
- Determine if the damage relates to tourism activity, wholly, partially or not at all e.g. may relate to local amenity use, agriculture or other.
- Determine if partner & other stakeholder need to be involved
- Determine if further action is required on the part of FI

Identified By

- FI Environment Officer
- FI Planning & Environment Team
- Relevant FI employee e.g. regional teams, activities, attractions etc.
- 3rd party data gatherers e.g. , site managers, local authorities, general public, State bodies, NGOs, general public

Output

- Identify if damage is potential or existing
- Determine if damage is partially, wholly or not related to tourism activities
- Determine if FI have further part to play in resolving potential/ existing damage

If yes move to Step 3 of Procedure

Step 3 Environmental Damage Profiled

Profile Environmental Damage

- **Type**
- Damage to qualifying interest of Natura 2000 Site
- Damage to habitats/species outside of Natura 2000 Site
- Water Quality
- Traffic congestion/issues
- Damage to protected structures & their context

- **Duration**
- Enduring
- Long Term
- Short Term
- Recuring
- Escalating
- One off

- **Source/Cause**
- Visitor Behaviour
- Lack of Management
- Carrying Capacity
- Pressure on Infrastructural Capacity
- Over Promotion

Identified By

- FI Environment Officer
- FI Planning & Environment Team
- Relevant FI employee e.g. regional teams, activities, attractions etc.
- 3rd party data gatherers e.g. site managers, local authorities, general public, State bodies, NGOs, general public

Output

- Determine Type & Severity of Environmental Damage
- Use this information to develop Resolution Response

Move to Step 4 of Procedure

Step 4 Resolution Plan

Recommend/Outcome

The steps below will not apply to every situation this will depend on classification of environmental damage, cause etc.

-Continued close monitoring (through source of original identification – reinforced with additional monitoring as required)

-Make recommendation to site operators as to how to remedy through practical site management practices

-Escalate issue with site operators, relevant stakeholder to develop plan of action – immediate and long term

-Review funding structure for specific site where relevant, suspending where required until damage & cause are rectified

-Review where relevant promotional material for site in question & alter, or suspend such promotion where required. e.g. media adverts, social media.

-Consider alternative more sustainable visitor attraction in the region which may offer more robust environmental scenario while affording an equally satisfying visitor experience

Produced by combination of ;

- FI Environment Officer
- FI Planning & Environment Team
- Relevant FI employee e.g. regional teams, activities, attractions etc.
- Relevant FI employee responsible for strategy management & investment analysis, external communications & marketing
- 3rd party data gatherers e.g. site managers, local authorities

Output

Clear Resolution Plan produced with assigned responsibilities, timelines & monitoring to address environmental damage & cause of same.

Move to Step 5 of Procedure

Step 5 Follow Up

Follow up will vary depending on type of resolution plan required but will typically include the following elements:

- Continue to monitor situation
- Ensure relevant management plan/practices in place – require photos and site visit etc.
- Review resolution plan & tweek as required
- Review funding & promotional structure where relevant based on progress of improvement
- -Consult as relevant with stakeholders e.g. NPWS, IFI etc.
- Create a "*Lessons Learnt*" – circulate as case study etc.

Responsible

- FI Environment Officer
- FI Planning & Environment Manager
- Relevant FI employee e.g. regional teams, activities, attractions etc.

Overall Output

A clear step by step procedure that;

- **Identifies environmental damage caused as a result of tourism at a site,**
- **Qualifies, sources & profiles such damage,**
- **Intervenes & resolves,**
- **ensures success of approach**
- **Identifies who is responsible for each element of the procedure.**

![Fáilte Ireland — National Tourism Development Authority]

![Greenway]

Greenway
Visitor Experience & Interpretation Toolkit

>> *Greenways enhance local communities, the environment, the economy and the quality of life of the surrounding area* <<

Why develop a Greenway in your local area?

Greenway development in Ireland over the past number of years has resulted in very positive outcomes for the areas in which they are located. Accessed by locals, day-trippers, overnight tourists from Ireland and overseas, Greenways offer a range of benefits to individuals, local communities and local businesses.

Ultimately Greenways facilitate the creation of enjoyable and memorable experiences for the people who use them for exercise or recreation and increasingly we see people using Greenways for short daily commutes as they travel to work, school or college.

Greenways are for everyone. Although the needs of cyclists - in terms of gradient and surface - might be a key consideration at the design stage, the finished Greenway will also be enjoyed by pedestrians, everyday journeys to work and school, wheelchair users, children in buggies and several different types of bicycles (e.g. tandems, tag-alongs, toddler trailers, e-bikes etc.).

Greenways provide an excellent amenity for local populations. They also contribute to the rural economy by attracting visitors away from busy tourist hotspots and creating job opportunities in tourism and hospitality businesses.

Classifications of Greenways

The Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways; (hereafter called the Greenways Strategy) defines a Greenway as:

❞ *a recreational or pedestrian corridor for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area.* **❞**

The Greenways Strategy focuses primarily on Greenways that can be of strategic significance on a regional or national level as these can facilitate complementary local developments.

>> National Greenways are at least 100km in length. At this length, visitors will usually stay overnight thus increasing the tourism and economic impacts.

>> Regional Greenways will ideally be 40km long, or if shorter, they will have the potential to be extended to connect to a longer strategic route.

>> Local trails or transport corridors that link residential areas with workplaces/schools etc. are not considered under the Greenways Strategy, unless they link to an existing Greenway.
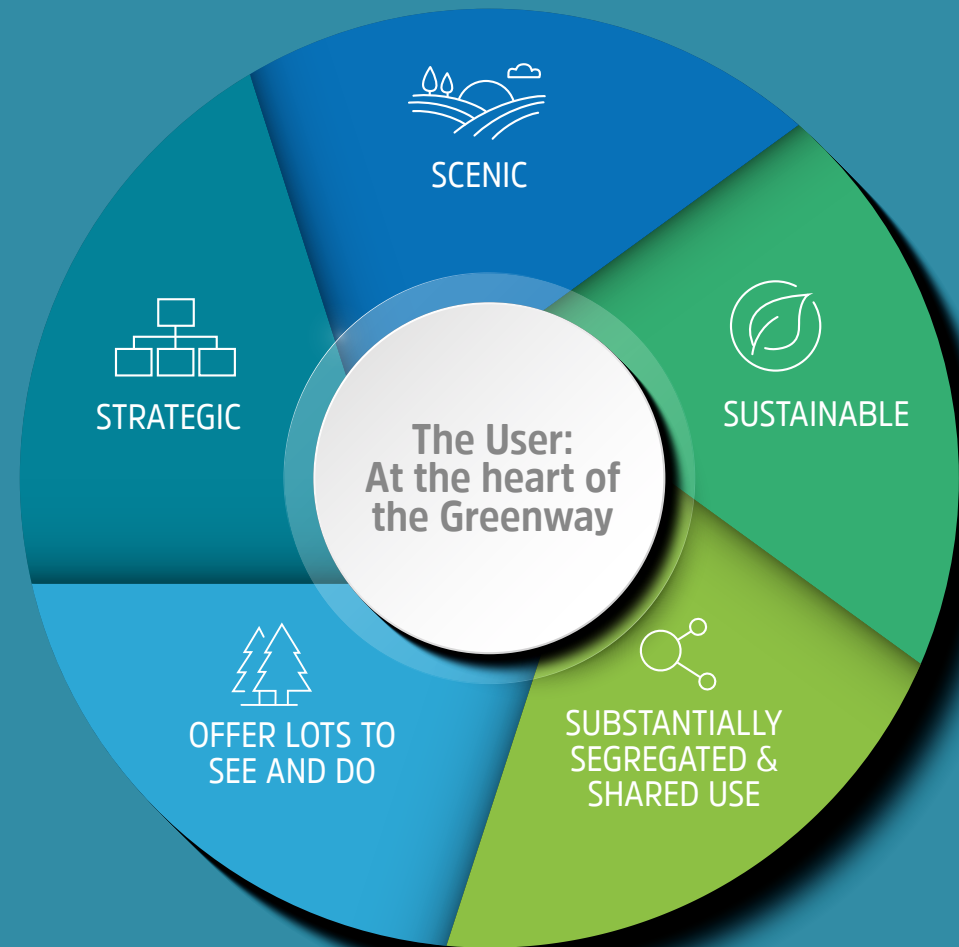
The 5 S's of Greenway Development

The User: At the heart of the Greenway

The Greenways Strategy recommends that the user/visitor should be at the heart of all Greenways.

As such, all Greenway development should be underpinned by the 5 S's:

>> *Greenways provide an excellent amenity for local populations. They also contribute to the rural economy by attracting visitors away from busy tourist hotspots and creating job opportunities in tourism and hospitality businesses* <<

SCENIC

SUSTAINABLE

STRATEGIC

The User: At the heart of the Greenway

OFFER LOTS TO SEE AND DO

SUBSTANTIALLY SEGREGATED & SHARED USE

For further information see
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways

2 Funding & Public Spending Code Requirements

In recent years, funding for Greenway development has come through a variety of sources including;

Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
>> Greenways Strategy Funding

Department of Rural and Community Development
>> Rural Regeneration Funding

>> Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

>> Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Department of Transport

The Carbon Tax Fund 2020 has provided support in the order of €4.5 million to 26 Greenway Projects around the country for feasibility, planning and design. For details of projects that have been funded see Carbon Tax Fund 2020

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

Some Greenways were approved under the first call of the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, which development, as set out in Project Ireland 2040, through the regeneration and rejuvenation of Ireland's five cities and other large towns.

EU
Interreg Europe - OUR WAY

Local Authorities
Internal budget allocations by respective local authorities.

Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

LEADER funding, administered by Local Action Groups / Local Development Companies

The next EU Regional Development and Cohesion Policy will run from 2021-2027.

Local Communities
Fundraising by local community organisations and voluntary groups

The Funding Process
This list is not exhaustive and developers are advised to keep abreast of funding calls under existing and new programmes as they come on stream.

Calls for applications can have relatively short turnaround times and in almost all cases to date, successful applicants had shovel-ready applications with planning permission already in place.

It is important to also note that capital development funding programmes now require applicants to include plans for ongoing maintenance, marketing and promotion as well as the initial capital expenditure.

Public Spending Code Requirements
Projects must comply with the Public Spending Code (PSC) which was updated in 2019.

In addition, the Department of Transport has developed PSC guidelines for Projects under €20 million with an additional note for projects over €20 million. Please contact the Department of Transport for further information and documentation.

Plan Ahead

>> *Aim to have issues such as land acquisition (where necessary), Greenway design and planning permissions in place. Then the project is 'shovel-ready' when funding calls are announced.*

Future funding calls may not necessarily be grant aided up to 100%, so developers should earmark sources of match funding within annual budgets.

Applicants are required to satisfy themselves that all statutory planning, environmental and other legislative requirements have been met (relevant to the Project Phase that is being applied for) to allow them to carry out the proposed development. Applicants are advised that consultation with relevant statutory agencies (e.g. NPWS etc.) should be undertaken as appropriate.

A declaration in relation to compliance with statutory planning, environmental and other legislative requirements must be prepared PRIOR to seeking any funding. Projects that do not confirm that they have met the requirements will not be funded <<

3 The Importance of a Multi-Disciplinary Team in Greenway Development

As noted elsewhere in this toolkit, Greenways are not simply a means of getting from A to B, they are an experience in and of themselves. They offer local communities social, health, and economic benefits and the existing Greenways in Ireland have proven to be significant tourism attractors to a wide geographic area.

Creating a multi-disciplinary team to oversee the planning, design, development, maintenance and marketing of your Greenway is crucial to ensuring its long-term success.

The team should include:

>> **Support** from the chief executive and senior management team whose direction will influence a range of internal and external stakeholders.

>> **Community engagement** colleagues to include marketing and communications, Greenway animation via outdoor activities, tourism, heritage, and history. Communicating with local stakeholders should commence long before construction on the Greenway itself commences and ongoing communication has been noted by other Greenway developers as a cornerstone of successful Greenways.

>> **A liaison officer** on the ground who has good interpersonal and communication skills is key to maintaining relationships with local landowners and general community interests. A dedicated central point of contact can also direct specific enquiries and concerns to other local authority colleagues, who may be best suited to addressing them in a timely and comprehensive manner.

>> **Expertise** regarding knowledge and information of funding sources and procedures is important for the ongoing maintenance and new developments as well as the initial construction.

>> A number of Greenway **developers** have also noted that local authority engagement with Smarter Travel policies was helpful in the early stages of Greenway development and learnings from Smarter Travel can be successfully applied to Greenway design.

>> **Engineers and technicians** are key for the infrastructural design, delivery, and maintenance of Greenways. Naturally it is essential that the infrastructure is technically sound, but the Greenway also needs to respond appropriately to users preferences and needs. Consumers will vote with their feet (literally in this case!) and if the Greenway is not appealing, they will simply choose to go elsewhere thus reducing the potential economic impact of the resource for the local area.

>> **Specialists** in the areas of recreation and tourism will have excellent insights regarding what locals and tourists want from Greenways. They will also be able to advise on how aspects of Greenway route design or ancillary infrastructure can impact levels of engagement and can contribute to repeat and referral usage.

Local Councillors perform a role in determining the policy of the Council subject to, and in accordance with, the Local Government Act 2001 as well as representing the needs of the electorate of the county.
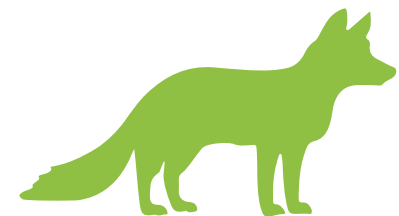
"Here in Waterford City and County Council we have learned that having a strong multi-disciplinary team in place has been crucial to the success of the Waterford Greenway project. Early and meaningful engagement by this team with the various key stakeholders has also been vitally important. The development of Waterford Greenway has been and continues to be an evolving story.

Waterford City and Council recognises the need to continue to engage with landowners, businesses and local communities in order to plan for the ever changing landscape that we find ourselves in and ensure the continued success of Waterford Greenway into the future."

Michael Walsh, Chief Executive, Waterford City and County Council.

A flexible approach to multi-disciplinary planning and delivery is always important. It is certain that issues as well as opportunities will emerge from a variety of sources as plans for your Greenway evolve. Keeping a focus on the end users and an open mind as to how those issues and opportunities could impact on their experience of the Greenway should be a priority for all members of the team.

Having to retro-fit elements of the Greenway can be an expensive and time-consuming response to user feedback over time, so the multi-disciplinary approach to early planning and design is recommended.

4 Design Approach & Construction

Where to start when developing your Greenway

An overview of the key considerations when planning a Greenway is outlined below. The content is not prescriptive, and Fáilte Ireland recommends that developers consult the sources referenced throughout this toolkit for more detailed information.
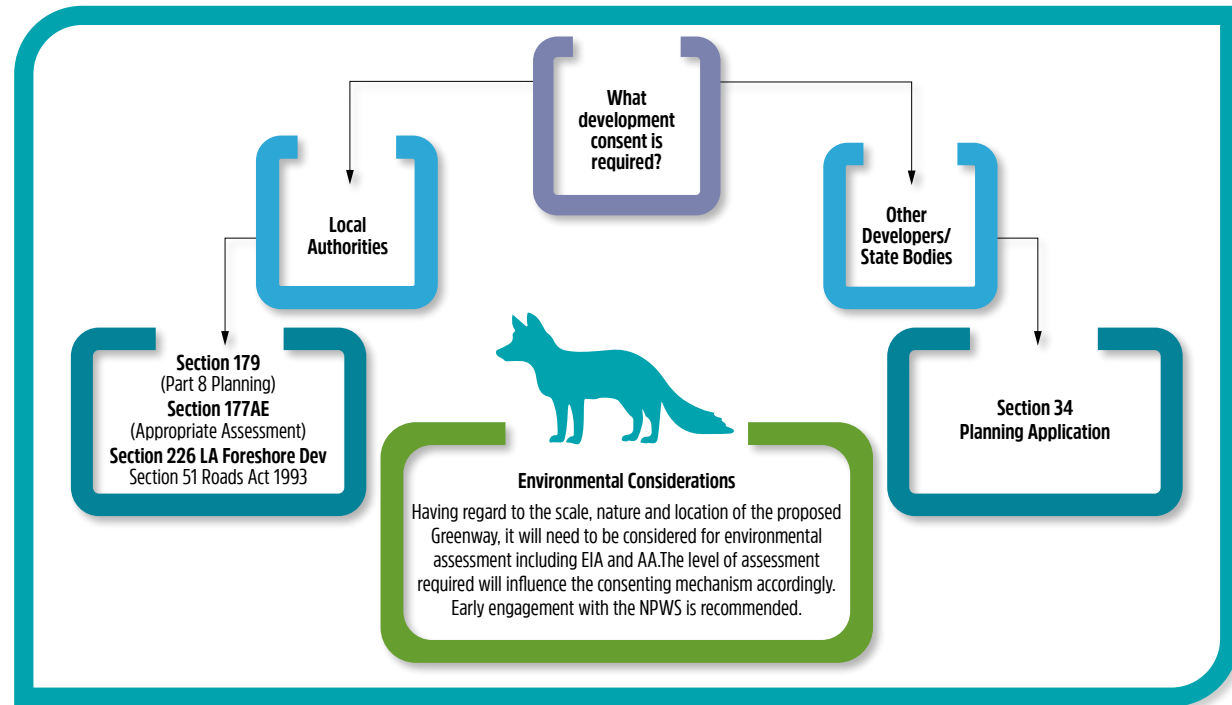
What are the standards?

When developing a Greenway, the standards that apply are set out in
Transport Infrastructure Ireland Rural Cycleway Design

When developing links on urban roads, the standards that apply are set out in;

The National Transport Authority's (NTA)National Cycle Manual

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets

Note: Standards may be subject to change at different times and TII should be consulted at the outset of the design process for each Greenway project.

Stages in the planning process

The process for planning new Greenways should include the following tasks at a minimum. This list is not exhaustive, and the tasks are not necessarily sequential. Developers are advised to clarify additional requirements with relevant sources.

What development consent is required?

Local Authorities

Other Developers/ State Bodies

Section 179
(Part 8 Planning)
Section 177AE
(Appropriate Assessment)
Section 226 LA Foreshore Dev
Section 51 Roads Act 1993

Section 34 Planning Application

Environmental Considerations
Having regard to the scale, nature and location of the proposed Greenway, it will need to be considered for environmental assessment including EIA and AA.The level of assessment required will influence the consenting mechanism accordingly. Early engagement with the NPWS is recommended.

Note: The above list is not exhaustive, and it is advised to consult with the relevant Planning Authority / An Bord Pleanála for advice and guidance

Think about the user when designing the Greenway

Greenways are used by many people whether they are walking, cycling, in a wheelchair or pushing a buggy.

Segregation from vehicular traffic	Linkages	The Environment	Width
Gradient / Slope	Surface	Signage for nearby attractions/ amenities	Ancillary infrastructure

>> *Think carefully about rest areas, points of interest or viewing points to ensure they do not cause a blockage on the Greenway i.e. make sure there is room for other users to pass by an area where one or more groups of users have stopped to rest, take a photo or simply enjoy the view* <<

Segregation from vehicular traffic: it is best practice when Greenways are fully segregated from vehicular traffic. Where a particular local situation does not allow for this, traffic calming measures should be put in place to make the route suitable for inexperienced cyclists

Linkages: routes should link to towns and village centres with larger cycling/walking networks and/or other activities/locations.

Where possible, provide safe cycling corridors from local train/bus stations. Greenways have the potential to provide a car free experience from start to finish combining public transport with cycling.

The environment: it is essential Greenways comply with the requirements of Irish and European law including, but not limited to, EU Directive 2014/52/EU

Width: the path should be a minimum 3m wide to accommodate two-way traffic comfortably, noting that many users may not be competent cyclists (e.g. parents cycling with toddler trailers or tag-along bikes might be doing so for the first time). The optimum width is 5m where possible, especially around urban centres and/or busy trail heads. It is understood that the optimum width is not always possible and developers are advised to make a judgement call on progressing with narrower trails for limited sections of their Greenway, if the narrower section adds value to the overall experience of the Greenway.

Gradient/slope: TII's standard recommends that any slopes should have a maximum gradient of 3% Where this is not possible on limited sections, developers are advised to make a judgement call on the achievable gradient, assuming the end result adds value to the overall Greenway experience for the user.

Surface: the surface should ideally give a sense of the Greenway's local environment.

Signage: signage along the Greenway should recommend visitor attractions and experiences in the local area.

Parking facilities: it is important to identify existing car and bicycle parking facilities available on or near the route and determine if there is a requirement for additional car parking spaces and where they should be located. If the trailhead is isolated from an existing town or village then vehicular parking may be required.

Ancillary infrastructure: facilities that enhance the Greenway experience for users: e.g. trailheads, rest and shelter facilities, mapping/route orientation, furniture and aesthetic or sculptural additions. The range of facilities should be appropriate to the anticipated volume of users and type of likely demand.

For more information see
Greenways and Cycle Routes
Ancillary Infrastructure Guidelines
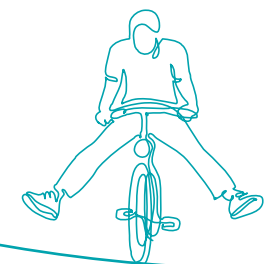
Points to Remember

1 **Feedback from Greenway users regularly points to the need for providing access to water and toilet facilities.**

Poor or no toilet provision will impact negatively on the Greenway's reputation and it is generally recommended that toilet facilities are ideally available approximately every 10 km. On the Great Western Greenway, Mayo County Council has undertaken the responsibility to provide toilets, whilst in Waterford the local authority has come to an agreement with hospitality businesses along the Greenway that they will provide toilet facilities to all Greenway users. At the early planning stage, local authorities need to explore how best to provide those services on their respective Greenways.

2 **In order to ensure your Greenway meets the needs of the end user, the design process should observe the 5 S's**
i.e. Scenic – Sustainable – Substantially Segregated & Shared Use – Strategic – Offers lots to See and Do. Developers are also advised to remember at all times that the Greenway will attract a wide variety of end users including pedestrians, cyclists, locals, tourists etc.

To ensure the wide-ranging needs of the respective users are addressed from the outset, some Greenway developers involve landscape architects at the design stage. This helps to identify aspects such as best use of the route, how to create engaging interpretation where there are no naturally occurring points of interest, how to make the most of the local habitat and so on. Remember, trying to retro fit a better user experience on your Greenway is usually expensive and time-consuming, so it's advisable to take your time at the beginning, ensure you have an holistic team onboard and put yourself in the end user's shoes!

3 **See the Appendices for a sample tender brief for the development of an interpretation strategy.**

4 **Sport Ireland maintains a National Trails Register**
Inclusion on the Register is based on meeting agreed criteria and standards. Greenways that are funded under the National Greenways Strategy will be required to go through this registration system.

5 Code of Best Practice for Engaging with Landowners

The importance of Communicating with Landowners

The Greenways Strategy stresses that great care must be taken with Greenway routes to ensure they do not affect the ability of adjacent landowners to continue to operate their farm or enterprise. To that end, during the planning and development stages it is important to take account of the type of nearby farming activity. Early engagement, ideally at or before the first route options stage, with landowners, who may be directly or indirectly affected, is essential.

The Greenways Strategy goes on to advise that during the Planning Process, project promoters should carry out a professional assessment of land use when assessing any impact on agriculture.

The strategy advises that assessments be carried out by agronomists and agricultural advisors and at no cost to the landowner.

Code of Best Practice

To provide clear guidance on the use of private land in Greenway development, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is developing a Code of Best Practise for Greenways.

A working group comprising the Department of Transport, the Department of Rural and Community Development, Fáilte Ireland, Rural Recreation Officers, local authorities and representatives of the landowner groups has been established to work with TII on developing the code.

At time of publication, the code had not yet been finalised, but when complete, Greenway developers are advised to consult and abide by it before before commencing any advance Greenway planning.
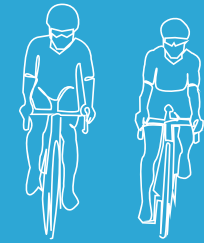
The Code of Best Practice

...deals with issues such as:

>> agreeing the consultation process

>> the factors to be considered when choosing a route

>> ways of minimising severance

>> range of possible mitigation works

>> appropriate types of accommodation works e.g. fencing

>> appropriate levels of payment for land

>> suitable types of access both for landowners and the public

>> mechanisms to minimise disruption and to ensure the smooth and timely delivery of Greenway projects

A Code of Best Practice & Guide to Process for National Greenway Projects is currently being developed by a range of stakeholders. A link to the published document will be added here when completed.
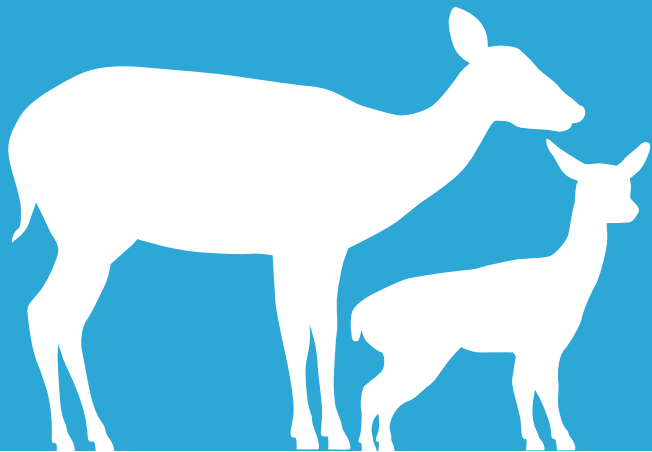
6 Public Consultation, Community & Business Engagement

Involving members of the local community throughout the entire process is a critical success factor in Greenway development. Nurturing a genuine two-way relationship with local stakeholders, who are interested in collaborating with the developer on the creation and delivery of a joint vision is key to the long-term sustainability of the Greenway.

Best practice is that the public consultation process should be personable in every aspect e.g. the language and imagery used across all forms of communication, the accessibility of development agency staff working on the project, the empathetic understanding of issues raised and so on. Whether public consultation is managed directly by the developer or whether it is outsourced to a third party, the project management team and the process itself ought to be centred around the local community. This means taking the time to properly understand and appropriately respond to their fears, expectations, hopes and aspirations for current and future generations.

The importance of communicating with locals

Support and buy-in from the local community and local businesses are essential. Early engagement with the local community is as important as early engagement with landowners.

In Mayo and Waterford, the local authorities cite the importance of establishing a multi-skilled team, within the local authority, to oversee and implement the important task of community and business engagement.

Ensuring there is an appropriate mix of skills, knowledge and experience between the developer staff and various audiences such as farmers, businesses, community leaders and so on will ensure effective communication.

It is essential to acknowledge that some people may have genuine concerns before a Greenway is developed. An effective and efficient system should be put in place to listen to those concerns and to find a common ground with solutions that work for all. It is critical to answer queries and respond to concerns in a timely manner.

A project liaison officer should be appointed at an early stage to engage with all stakeholders and to act as the official point of contact between the project promoters, landowners and members of the public.

If there is a Rural Recreation Officer in the area they may be the initial point of contact for landowners and community.

A public consultation process should inform the public about the Greenway proposal, the manner in which the eventual route will be selected and the considerations that will inform this choice, i.e. social, practical, environmental, engineering, financial and tourism.
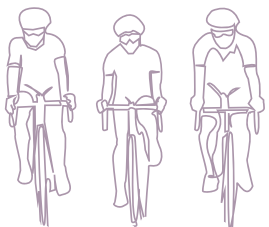
This process also provides an opportunity for landowners and the wider local community to highlight aspects of concern, which typically centre around:

>> Anti-social behaviour

>> Littering (evidence from the Great Western and Waterford Greenways is that this has not been an issue to date)

>> Facilitating unauthorised access to farms and farmers' yards

>> Dogs roaming loose on farmland

>> Insurance claims

>> Inadequate stock proofing measures

>> *Think about your public consultation invitation as a sales pitch! Ensure it generates excitement and interest amongst the local community and reassures them that by engaging in the process, a joint vision that works for everybody is achievable.* <<

Uncovering new opportunities

Engagement with local business owners can help to identify opportunities to enhance existing visitor services in the area. This could range from simply extending opening hours in the local shop, to adding a service that complements the current business offering or to the development of completely new businesses that will encourage visitors to stay longer in the area.

Consultation with the local community also presents an opportunity to uncover the local stories that are uniquely associated with the Greenway route.

No two Greenways are the same and part of what distinguishes one from another is the built, natural, historical and social heritage of the area. Sourcing and presenting this heritage will not only add to the character, individuality, and emotional value of the Greenway, it can also help to underpin local community identity and ownership.

Sustainability and Biodiversity

VICE Model

The VICE Model is adopted by Fáilte Ireland in all of our activities and outputs, both internally as an organisation and externally in our duties as the National Tourism Development Authority.

VISITOR

ENVIRONMENT

INDUSTRY

COMMUNITY

Sustainability

Sustainability is one of the key components of a Greenway. The benefits of Greenways are multifaceted. They facilitate active travel and influence how people travel through sustainable modes and encourage regular physical exercise.

The increase in economic activity that a Greenway brings creates opportunities for new employment and provides existing businesses the opportunity to diversify their offering including cycle hire services, accommodation, food and beverage and construction sectors, resulting in sustainable employment which is sustained throughout the year.

Greenways also have an important role in the protection and promotion of natural assets. The enhancement of habitats not only has a direct environmental benefit, but it also allows communities to value and protect its natural heritage. Greenways can play a central role in meeting the challenge of climate change through a range of direct and in combination measures.

Greenways can contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals such as:
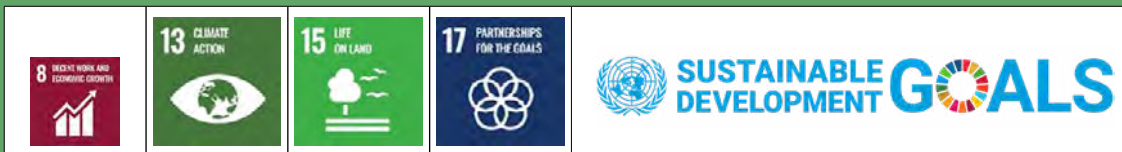
Potential sustainable measures to consider for your Greenway;

>> Are there opportunities for regeneration and reuse of underutilised assets along the Greenway and within the towns and villages surrounding it, to improve the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the area? (Consider using the VICE model for sustainable development)

>> Can you promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through the Leave No Trace Principles?

>> Help combat waste by installing refill stations along the route

>> Use of public transport to get to the Greenway
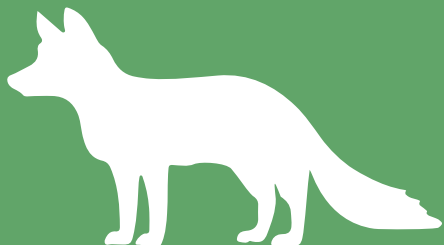
Biodiversity

Greenways should promote and enhance biodiversity, conservation, and habitat and be good for nature. Wildlife will readily colonise new areas and creating the right mixture of habitats to attract the greatest diversity of wildlife along the Greenway corridor, is entirely achievable with appropriate management. Connectivity is as crucial for wildlife as it is for Greenway users. Forming 'wildlife corridors' that allow both to move and adapt can be achieved by creating green corridors. The Greenway can also support the All Ireland Pollinator Plan by addressing pollinator decline and protecting pollination services and becoming a pollinator highway.

What makes a Greenway attractive? High maintenance, overly manicured green spaces are becoming a thing of the past. Balancing the needs of wildlife, people and the environment requires a different approach. Therefore, it is important that all stakeholders and partners involved in the management and maintenance of the Greenway ensure that biodiversity is considered and incorporated from the outset.

How can your Greenway support Biodiversity?

>> Ensure your Greenway Management Plan prioritises improving environmental quality and promoting local biodiversity (native plants and animals), protecting, and showcasing local features.

>> By delivering tree, hedgerow and wildflower planting the range of habitats and species can be diversified. Together with other planting improvements these can help create a wildlife corridor that links to other green infrastructure.

>> Improve wildlife knowledge by engaging the local community and schools to volunteer to undertake dedicated survey work. Many of these corridors will become community green spaces and fostering a sense of ownership through involvement is essential.

Further Resources...

including more detailed case studies, templates and examples can be found at:

Greenways Management Handbook
Sustrans UK

The National Biodiversity Data Centre
The National Biodiversity Data Centre is an initiative of The Heritage Council

Pollinator-friendly Management of Transport Corridors
The National Biodiversity Data Centre

Leave no Trace Ireland

8   Interpretation

Bringing your Greenway stories to life

Greenways are not simply a means of getting from A to B, they are an experience in and of themselves. They also allow users to experience the communities linked to the Greenway and should tell the stories of the people and places through which they pass.

Interpretation enables that storytelling. It is a communication process that helps us to share our stories with others. Information presents facts; Interpretation unveils the local stories that are unique to your Greenway.

In planning your Greenway, think about the kind of interpretation that suits your local area. Thinking about the stories you need to interpret, the local geography and climate, ask yourself 'What makes our Greenway different? What is the best way for us to tell our stories?

Interpretation tools that bring stories to life could include:

>> Guided interpretation (with personal local guides or via self-guided trails)

>> Printed/graphic material (leaflets, panels, plaques, displays)

>> Digital tools (websites, audio posts, apps and podcasts)

>> Onsite installations using natural materials indigenous to the area (seating, picnic benches, stiles, boardwalks, sculptures or other artistic installations

While budget will help you identify which of these tools you can afford, an interpretation plan will ensure your money is wisely spent.

Your **interpretation plan** should address issues such as:

Target markets

>> Who is the Greenway for?

>> How will the needs and interests of your target markets differ between locals, domestic tourists, international tourists?

PORT NA FEADOIGE

What stories do you want to tell?

>> What features, qualities and stories make your Greenway special and memorable?

>> Are there specific elements that will be of more interest to international visitors than to locals or domestic visitors? If so, what is the best way to highlight them?

>> Who are the characters associated with the local area and how can you bring them to life?

Creating a sense of place

>> How can you create a sense of place around your Greenway to achieve memorable stand-out?

>> Does your Greenway feature built and/or natural heritage assets that could become iconic photo opportunities?

>> How can you use your Greenway to signpost other local attractions and activities that will add value to the overall experience for users?

" *Think like a wise man, but communicate in the language of the people.* "

W.B. Yeats

Animating your Greenway

>> Can you schedule events at different times of year to animate the Greenway for locals as well as for visitors? These could be run exclusively by the developer, by third parties or a combination of both

>> Do seasonal variations of changing landscapes or changing wildlife offer opportunities that can be maximised with pop-up or temporary interpretation.

Rule of thumb for all forms of interpretation....

>> Keep the language simple, informal, short and sweet

>> Use more images and less text

For inspiration on animation and identifying and telling your story through interpretation see:

>> Bored of Boards. The Heritage Council

>> Ireland's Ancient East Storytelling Toolkit. Fáilte Ireland

>> Interpretation Toolkit. Woodland Trust (UK)

>> Development Guidelines for Tourism Destination Towns. Fáilte Ireland

9 Creating Greenway Experiences

Experiential Tourism

Experiential tourism is travel that is motivated by the desire to connect with a place, its culture and people. Research shows that today's visitor is less concerned with simply seeing or doing things; what they really want is to immerse themselves in the locale, interact with people, engage the senses, and learn the history and stories that are unique to a place.

Developing experiences is all about combining natural landscape assets, tourism products, customer service, and engaging stories to create compelling consumer offerings or 'experiences' for the visitor. When the senses are engaged this triggers emotions and creates lasting memories.
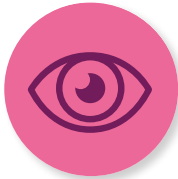
| Vision | Hearing | Smell | Taste | Touch |

>> *A memorable tourism experience is what a visitor gains from the combination of the place, its attractions, activities, the people they meet along the way and the stories they share. Experiences help visitors remember the visit as being special and ensure that they talk about it afterwards* <<

What are Greenway Experiences?

To create experiences, the Greenway needs to be bundled with a range of associated services such as transport to/from the Greenway, accommodation, food, bike hire, guiding, culture, heritage etc. so that potential visitors can imagine themselves creating memories with family and friends when they visit the Greenway.

Experiences are successful when a business immerses the visitor in an interesting and engaging story, so creativity and building in the unexpected are important when developing Greenway experiences.

The Gourmet Greenway is one such example

The Gourmet Greenway, a food trail along the Great Western Greenway was created by Mulranny Park Hotel. It consists of eighteen local food producers who have collaborated to showcase the area's delicious artisan foods.

The Greenway becomes more enticing for visitors when it is part of a cluster of attractions and activities that help the visitor to uncover other experiences in the area. By working together, businesses can leverage the Greenway as the doorway to a range of experiences and the resulting economic benefits are shared by individual businesses involved as well as the wider community.

" Education is not the filling of the pail, but the lighting of the fire "
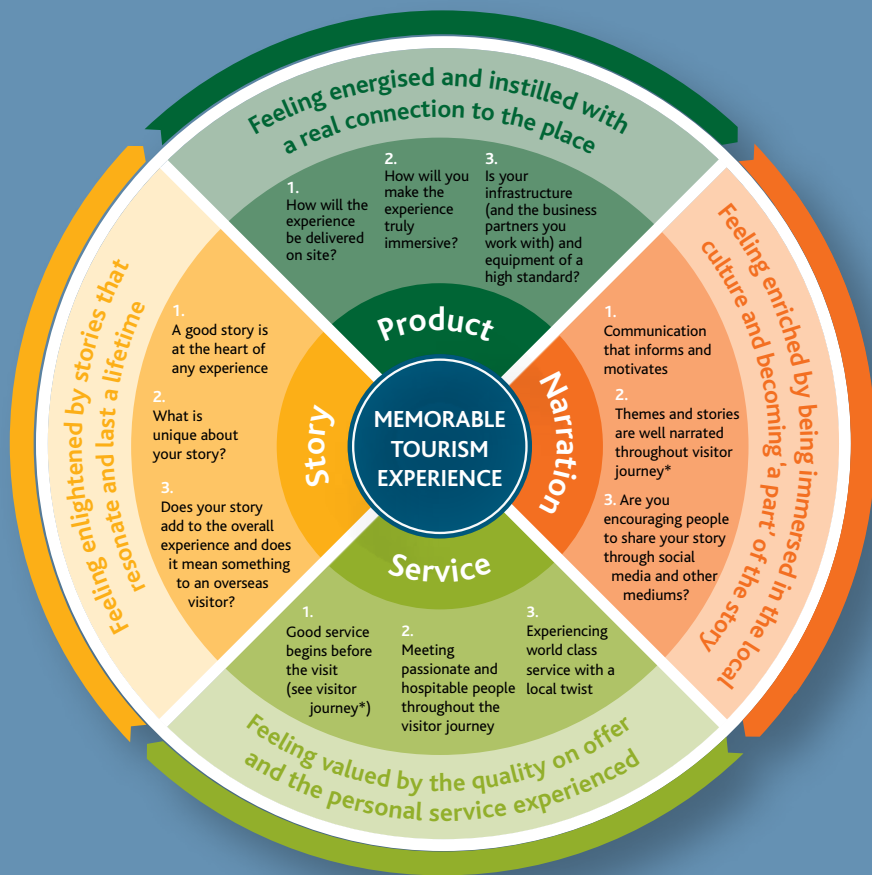
W.B. Yeats

The Experience Wheel

The Experience Wheel was developed by Fáilte Ireland to capture the components that, when combined, deliver a memorable tourism experience.

The centre layer contains the four components of a memorable tourism experience:

1. **Product:** 'the hardware' at the core of the experience i.e. your Greenway

2. **Service:** 'the software' i.e. looking after visitor needs with ancillary infrastructure

3. **Story:** the stories unique to your Greenway, its heritage, history, characters

4. **Narration:** how you tell your local stories, pre, during and post the Greenway visit (see section 7 Interpretation and section 10 Marketing & Promotion for more details)

The next layer in the wheel details how you can deliver on expectations for each component. For example:

1. **Product:** the Greenway experience is truly immersive, most if not all senses are engaged

2. **Service:** meeting passionate and hospitable people along the Greenway

3. **Story:** drawing on interpretation tools to bring local stories and characters to life

4. **Narration:** communication that both informs and motivates visitors

The outermost layer summarises the type of emotions that arise when the experience is positive. So, the aim is to have your visitor feeling energised, enriched, valued or enlightened.

Positive emotions lead to good memories which can lead to recommendations and plans for returns trips, thus putting your Greenway firmly on the map.

The Experience Wheel captures the components that contribute to deliver a memorable Tourism Experience

Fáilte Ireland research has found that people feel six key emotions when walking or cycling. The best routes deliver, to some degree, on all six emotions.

1. **Feeling closer:** People feel closer to friends, family and travel partners, closer to nature and wildlife and closer to the places they are experiencing.

2. **Feeling like an explorer:** Discover new places and things, go off the beaten track, see more of a place, explore different scenery and landscapes.

3. **Feeling free:** Enjoy a sense of freedom and an escape from routine and everyday life, enjoyed at their own pace and on their terms. There is also a childhood joy to cycling.

4. **Feeling entertained:** A sense of adventure and fun by offering things to see and do along the route, stories and memories to make, social interactions and overall good times.

5. **Feeling healthy:** Boost people's mental and physical wellbeing; walking and cycling makes people feel fitter, feel better about themselves and feel like they have achieved something small.

6. **Feeling relaxed:** Cycling and walking are great ways to chill out, 'clear the mind' and just relax. By getting out into nature, people are getting away from busy city living and stresses and into to a slower pace of life.

Creating Greenway experiences that evoke these emotions should be a priority.

Fáilte Ireland Supports

Fáilte Ireland, in partnership with local authorities, delivers training programmes for businesses located on or near Greenways. The objective is to help them identify how they can leverage their local Greenway and create experiences around existing or new tourism products.

Fáilte Ireland also provides supports (e.g. training, seminars, information exchange) that address the needs of local authorities engaged in Greenway development throughout the country.

A guide to understanding and developing memorable tourism experiences can be found at: Fáilte Ireland Experiences Explained

" *Offering experiences has given me a much greater profile and greater opportunity to increase my overseas sales. Offering a German Tour Operator bike hire for €15 may not be impressive, but combining bike hire with a visit to a mussel farm, a trip on a real working fishing charter, meeting the local skipper, dining on your own catch and cycling on a 42km traffic free path with fabulous views...now that gets their attention...that's the difference between selling product and selling experiences* "

Travis Zeray, Clew Bay Outdoorsy

Branding & Naming

Greenways Branding

Sport Ireland Outdoors has developed branding guidelines for Greenways. The guidelines, which can only be used on routes that meet the definition of a Greenway, must be used by all Greenways funded by the Department of Transport.

Greenway developers should ensure that the Greenway logo complies with design and brand guidelines and should advise suppliers for signage (e.g. on-road directional, trail head welcome signs, Greenway map boards) and communications (e.g. website, social media, printed collateral, interpretation) to consult the rulebook for the Greenway brand at: Greenway Design and Brand Guidelines

Consistency in the use of the Greenway brand will maximise visibility and make it easier for potential users to find your Greenway. This applies to online channels (before they visit your area) and in-destination (after they arrive). See section 11. Marketing & Promotion. It will also help to raise awareness internationally of the entire greenway offering in Ireland and support the achievement of objectives set out in the Greenways Strategy.

The Greenway logo has been designed to work alongside the Blueway logo reflecting their similarities while also emphasising their differences. Counties that offer both Greenways and Blueways can enjoy the benefits of both.

Blueways are approved and branded multi-activity recreational trails and sites, based on, and closely linked with the water, together with providers facilitating access to activities and experiences.

EuroVelo Branding

EuroVelo is a European cycle route network that encompasses 17 routes across Europe. Some sections of Greenways in Ireland form part of the EuroVelo routes 1 and 2. EuroVelo provides a ready-made brand to market cycling in Ireland to experienced cyclists. Greenways which are part of a EuroVelo route should include a EuroVelo route information panel in their signage system; this can be either as a logo on the main sign or attached to this sign (see below). The use of the EuroVelo branding enables coordinated promotion of these routes on a National and European wide basis.

> **"** *Dry word and dry facts will not fire hearts* **"**
>
> **John Muirs**
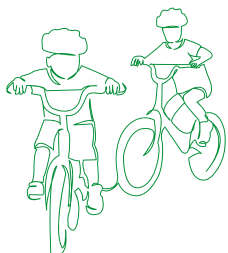
Naming your Greenway

Naming your Greenway in the context of national Greenway branding is also important so that you can create your own identity within the wider Greenways network. Fáilte Ireland is preparing a separate toolkit to help Greenway developers name their Greenway appropriately. That toolkit recommends a five step **GREEN** process:

G

GIVE THE ROUTE

Tell people where the route is / where it starts and finishes.

R

REVEAL YOUR THEME

Tell people about your distinctive brand assets and codes. Scenery, Nature, Heritage, History, Culture etc.

E

EVOKE BIG EMOTIONS

Tell people how they'll feel on the route.

E

EXPLAIN KEY DETAILS

Tell people the vital info about the route (distance, difficulty, tourism brand link, things to see/do).

N

NAME IT CLEARLY

Summarise everything into the name of the route.

11 Marketing & Promotion

Creating awareness about your Greenway

Designing and constructing a Greenway is only one step in the process towards monetising the infrastructure for the wider community. Even before construction is complete, a marketing strategy and action plan for the promotion of the Greenway needs to be developed and implemented.

There are two stages in the promotional campaign of a new Greenway that need to be considered:

1. **The pre-launch, launch and first six months promotional campaign**

2. **Annual marketing and promotional campaign**

The first stage aims to create awareness about the new Greenway to local, regional and national audiences. This requires considerable input that is front-loaded in the months leading into the Greenway launch and ideally throughout the first six months following the official launch. It can be extremely beneficial to outsource the promotion and marketing communications at the launch stage, whilst the annual marketing and promotional campaign can usually be more easily managed in-house through the tourism officer in partnership with local tourism providers.

The second stage aims to ensure awareness levels amongst domestic audiences are maintained and that your Greenway is also promoted to international visitors.

Counties that have had Greenways in operation for several years, stress the importance of budgeting for an annual marketing and promotional campaign. It should also be noted that future funding applications will require developers to include 10-year budgets specifically for interpretation, marketing, and promotion.

As with the interpretation strategy, budget will guide the ongoing marketing strategy and action plan to a certain extent. Fortunately, many effective marketing and promotional activities are low cost or free of charge. It is essential however that somebody within the development agency (e.g. Tourism Officer or a member of the Community & Enterprise Team) is given responsibility for implementing the marketing plan.

A range of marketing and promotion activities should be included in your marketing plan, some of which can be implemented directly by the development agency and some that will be implemented by local tourism providers.

(See the Appendices for a sample tender brief you can use to source marketing services for the launch stage.)

>> *Ensure all your marketing & promotional activity incorporates Greenway branding* <<

While a comprehensive marketing campaign is essential to stimulate demand and grow visitor numbers on a new Greenway, this should not be regarded as a once-off activity. Greenway developers must ensure a marketing and promotion budget is in place every year.

Remember too that future funding applications will require developers to include 10-year budgets specifically for interpretation, marketing and promotion. As the number of domestic and international visitors to a Greenway increases, so too will the need for a year-round campaign than can nurture repeat and referral visits from loyal users throughout the peak, shoulder, and off-seasons.

Working in collaboration with local tourism providers and other ancillary services to create new visitor experiences and to pool funding resources can be extremely effective in achieving stand-out for the Greenway destination. As more Greenways are developed in the coming years, marketing investment will become ever more critical for individual Greenway destinations

The full range of promotional activities can be categorised under five main headings;

1

PROMOTING THE GREENWAY

i.e. promotional activities carried out by the developer and/or the local tourism marketing body

2

FÁILTE IRELAND PLATFORMS

i.e. activities that can be undertaken in partnership with Fáilte Ireland

3

TOURISM IRELAND PLATFORMS

i.e. activities that can be undertaken in partnership with Tourism Ireland (the body responsible for promoting the island of Ireland overseas)

4

TRAVEL TRADE

i.e. Working with tour operators, online sales agents etc.

5

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS AND CROSS SELLING

selling i.e. collaboration between local businesses to encourage longer stays in the local area

PROMOTING THE GREENWAY

ONLINE PLATFORMS INCLUDE:

>> **Website - The Greenway's 'shop window'. It should:**

- Be responsive on different devices (desktop, mobile, tablet)

- Be easy to navigate with contact details clearly visible

- Feature great imagery and video of your Greenway and the wider area

- Link to your relevant destination brand (Dublin / Ireland's Ancient East / Ireland's Hidden Heartlands / Wild Atlantic Way)

- Signpost visitors to bookable experiences with tourism providers on your Greenway

- Ensure search engine optimisation (SEOS) is in place

- Use Google analytics to track visitors

>> **Social media channels:**

Facebook and Instagram are generally the most popular consumer channels, while Twitter is good for trade communication. Create links from your website to your social media channels, update content regularly and use relevant hashtags'#'

>> **Email marketing:**

Previous Greenway users who have had a great experience can be your best sales people! Where possible, ensure tourism providers along the Greenway stay in touch with them through targeted email marketing campaigns (observing GDPR guidelines) to promote repeat and referral visits. This could be particularly helpful to promote shoulder and off-season business

>> **Online review sites:**

TripAdvisor, Google Reviews and Facebook reviews are all referenced by visitors when planning their holiday. Register your Greenway on these review sites to manage your online reputation

>> **Online advertising:**

Social media channels offer very cost-effective opportunities for online paid advertising that can be targeted and easy to measure

OFFLINE PLATFORMS INCLUDE:

>> **Brochures / fliers/ maps:**

Printed material that visitors can get from the local tourist information office, hotel receptions, local shops

>> **Advertising in local, regional and national tourism collateral:**

Local tourist guides are consulted by visitors while they are in-destination and advertising in local /regional newspapers or radio stations that are within a couple of hours radius of the Greenway can encourage domestic tourism

>> **Public relations (PR):**

National, regional, and local media (particularly the lifestyle and travel sections / programmes) are always on the lookout for great imagery and quirky stories about new holiday experiences. Make it easy for them to find out about your Greenway by regularly staying in contact with them

Don't forget:
register the domain name for your Greenway website as well as your Greenway social media handles as soon as the name is agreed internally and before it is announced to an external audience.

2 — FÁILTE IRELAND PLATFORMS

www.discoverireland.ie is the domestic consumer website managed by Fáilte Ireland. Listing your Greenway on this website has the potential to reach over 55,000 visitors per week as well as almost 350,000 overseas visitors per week through the international consumer website www.ireland.com

Get a free listing for your Greenway on both by completing the short form on www.failteireland.ie/get-listed

If you are planning a small festival or event on the Greenway, you can register the details about your event for free on www.failteirelandevents.ie/#/

3 — TOURISM IRELAND PLATFORMS

Tourism Ireland promotes the Island of Ireland in 29 international markets and attracts over 19 million people to market websites each year. To avail of low cost or no cost marketing opportunities in the international marketplace you need to:

>> **Register with**

www.tourismirelandindustryopportunities.com to:

- Submit press releases and images/video about your Greenway to 'Have you a story to tell', which Tourism Ireland can share with their global network of travel trade, media contacts and consumers

- Target international customers directly for free by uploading Greenway experiences on www.ireland.com

- Register with the Community Forum community.ireland.com where you can join in the conversation and share your knowledge to help international visitors plan their holiday to your Greenway

- Contact your local Fáilte Ireland representative to explore opportunities with Tourism Ireland to feature your Greenway on future international buyer and media familiarisation trips

4 — TRAVEL TRADE

As business on your Greenway expands, you can explore opportunities to target international markets through tour operators.

>> The Incoming Tour Operator Association (ITOA) hosts annual workshops in Dublin and Limerick. Presenting your Greenway at the workshops offers a sales opportunity to promote to ITOA members who contract on behalf of 4,000 international tour operators and travel agents see itoa-ireland.com

>> Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland also offer a range of trade sales opportunities in Ireland and in international markets. Contact your local Fáilte Ireland representative to explore appropriate opportunities.

5 — LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS AND CROSS SELLING

Collaboration amongst local tourism providers is one of the most significant influencers in terms of encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more in the local area. When choosing a destination, customers need to know that there is lots to do and see. It is essential that tourism providers along the Greenway are familiar with local experiences and, when dealing with customer enquiries, everybody cross sells on behalf of the Greenway destination.

Making the most of your Greenway.

If you need imagery for your local area to use on your website, social media or printed material, you can download quality photographs and videos for free from Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland's digital library at www.irelandscontentpool.com

Overseeing the long-term sustainability of your Greenway

Management

Evidence from existing Greenways - both in Ireland and overseas - points to the need for ongoing management of Greenways by the developer. This need continues long after construction is complete.

A broad team is required for the design, planning, construction and long-term management of the Greenway and the team should include:

>> Support from the chief executive and senior management team to oversee difficult decision making and liaise with elected representatives

>> Community engagement team to include marketing and communications, Greenway animation via outdoor activities, tourism, heritage, and history

>> A liaison officer on the ground who has good interpersonal and communication skills

>> Engineers and technicians for the design, delivery and maintenance

>> Expertise regarding knowledge and information of funding sources and procedures
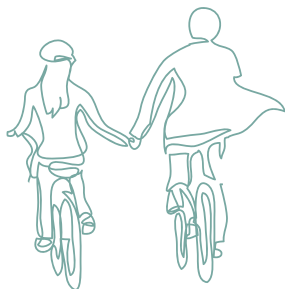
Maintenance

Maintaining a high standard of Greenway is essential, and appropriate maintenance provisions form part of the terms and conditions of funding under the Greenways Strategy. An ongoing maintenance plan should be incorporated into the developer's annual budget to facilitate this. The need to have a management and maintenance plan in place is also a requirement for registration by Sport Ireland.

Developers can maintain the Greenway themselves or through a payment scheme similar to the Walks Scheme implemented by the Department of Rural and Community Development, whereby modest payments are made to landowners or adjacent landowners on an annual basis to maintain a certain portion of Greenway. This can create a greater sense of ownership amongst the community.

Greenway users should be made aware that they share the trail with others and that respecting the needs of other trail users is vital. To encourage optimal trail sharing, developers should promote the Leave no Trace principles to users and present a Code of Conduct for users at access points to the trail.

There may also be an opportunity to create a volunteer programme for Greenway management and maintenance; local people can be the eyes and ears for changes on the ground that the developer cannot monitor daily. Engaging the local community in this way can help to instil a sense of community direction, control and ownership.
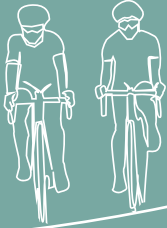
Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluating the numbers using the Greenway is key to identifying its impact and future potential. Two types of Greenways monitoring are utilised, and both are recommended;

1. **Quantitative monitoring: automatic counters**

2. **Qualitative monitoring: interviews and questionnaires**

Quantitative Monitoring

Quantitative data is primarily gathered by automatic people counters which provide information on how many people use the Greenway, usage levels at different times of the day, seasonal variations etc. Carefully consider the location of counters and, ideally, sites should be tested initially to determine which are the most appropriate. It will also be important to be able to distinguish between pedestrian users and cyclists.

Qualitative Monitoring

Qualitative monitoring will provide information on why and how people choose to use the Greenway. This information can be gathered using tools such as visitor surveys, focused interviews, focus groups and social media polls.

Combining quantitative data with qualitative feedback from users will provide the development agency, local businesses, and the local community with a rich resource to help everybody optimise the potential of the Greenway.

In addition to providing tourism data, qualitative monitoring can also provide insights into the broader economic, health, environmental and social impacts of the Greenway.

A monitoring and evaluation template is being developed by Fáilte Ireland and the Department of Transport. This will ensure consistency in the approach at a national level. The Fáilte Ireland Activities Team can provide you with a copy of this template when it is complete.

Top Tips from existing Greenways

1. The experience in Waterford, Westmeath and Mayo has been extremely positive, with transformative effects on many small businesses and small towns along and adjacent to the Greenway.

2. When Greenways are being developed, some people have genuine concerns, and it is vital that developers listen. The multi-disciplinary team approach will ensure effective consultation and communication. It is important to acknowledge that different interpersonal skills may be required to engage with different segments of the community and the developer should aim to have a range of team members who are best suited to engage with the respective segments (landowners, businesses, tidy towns, politicians, local people).

3. Learnings can be drawn from Smarter Travel principles and applied to Greenway development.

4. Identify champions amongst stakeholders and work in collaboration with them.

5. Nurture relationships with local bike hire companies; a good leader is needed, especially in early days, thereafter, others will join in but a good start is important.

6. In collaborating with local businesses who might like to create temporary or pop-up experiences, developers should make it easy for providers to secure relevant permissions or licences.

7. Distances: For families, around 10km between services is good, and playgrounds and restaurants located beside each other works well. Adult groups are happy to cycle longer distances between services, but they too will stop along the way (11km – 18km is usually the average distance travelled between stops).

8. Planting schemes (orchards, wild-flowers, insect hotels etc) add value to the user experience and local communities like to engage with their development also.

9. Promote the social, health, economic and fun benefits to the local community as well as the potential tourism impact.

13 Case Studies

Great Western Greenway

The Great Western Greenway runs along the route of the Midland Great Western Railway. Mayo County Council identified the potential to develop a nationally important walking and cycling path that would link established tourism destinations (Westport and Achill) by linking attractions and creating a more significant tourism offering in the wider area.

Early work took account of Government policies and strategies e.g. Smarter Travel 2009, Strategy for Development of Irish Cycle Tourism 2007, National Trails Strategy, National Countryside Recreational Strategy. Consideration was given to likely demand from different markets and international best practice was benchmarked.

A number of critical decisions had to be addressed such as: How do we get access to land? Where will we get funding? Who should be on the team? Mayo County Council reflects on the importance of knowing the facts, analytical thinking, problem solving and not jumping to conclusions.

With an initial investment of €6.7million, works on the Great Western Greenway commenced in April 2009 with permissive access from 162 landowners. Funding Partners included the Departments of Transport, Tourism & Sport and Rural & Community Development, Fáilte Ireland, Mayo County Council, Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

The planning and design team included inhouse design from Mayo County Council's Road Design Section, Regional Design Office, Architects Department and Community Department the Municipal District Engineering and Staff, Machinery Yard and Mini Contracts were brought on board for the construction phase.

In 2010 the Great Western Greenway opened and welcomed 45,000 visitors in its first year. Since that time, the Great Western Greenway has become a signature experience on the Wild Atlantic Way. It offers visitors an authentic experience and an opportunity to explore hidden gems and create lasting memories through local engagement. It has extended dwell time in the towns and villages on the Greenway thanks to the development of immersive experiences that are pro-actively cross sold by local tourism providers.

In recent years, the average annual level of users in the order of 250,000, the development of the Greenway has been an enabling platform for innovation, regeneration and enterprise with the creation of many new businesses including; bike hire, cycling and walking guided tours, hospitality services – food and drink, local shops, accommodation providers, taxi services etc. An economic impact study undertaken in 2016 estimated that the 265,000 visitors the Greenway attracted in that year resulted in 200 direct jobs.

The Great Western Greenway has provided the county with an enormous platform for collaborative marketing, consistent marketing exposure and access to overseas visitors. It has won 12 national and international awards.

The Waterford Greenway

The Waterford Greenway runs along the route of the old Waterford, Dungarvan & Lismore Railway (WD.&LR 1878 – 1982). Identifying an opportunity to connect Waterford from the city to Dungarvan and spreading tourism into the wider area, the local authority commenced work on the project in 2006.

The Waterford Walking Strategy was prepared in that year and a licence agreement was secured from CIE. Although the process encountered challenges with some landowners initially, the local authority reached an agreement with them and Part 8 was approved in 2014.

Waterford City & County Council underline that engagement with landowners and the wider community is noted as key to sustainability and recommends that other local authorities consider establishing a landowner group and a Greenway forum that facilitates early engagement with clubs, tidy towns groups, local sports groups etc.

The local authority also notes that engaging with business and enterprise is key to tourism promotion of the wider region as is collaboration with agencies such as Fáilte Ireland, Local Development Companies, The Chamber of Commerce, The Local Enterprise Office etc.

Telling the story of the Greenway requires input from local history groups, local interest groups, historians etc. and it is vital to plan interpretation around different parts of the Greenway to tell the local stories.

According to Waterford City & County Council, the marketing and promotion of the Greenway can't start early enough in the process. This is as important to leverage support from the local community as it is to create awareness of the Greenway to domestic and overseas visitors.

Having opened in March 2017, total estimated number of pedestrian and cyclist visitor trips on the Waterford Greenway in 2019 is over 284,000.

Danube Cycle Path

The Danube Cycle Path is part of EuroVelo 6 and the section from Passau to Vienna is possibly the most famous cycle route in Europe. Starting at the German Border town of Passau the trail follows the Danube River into Vienna over 287KMs. Highlights include: the city of Linz, baroque abbeys, castles and the famous "Wachau" region with its villages, vineyards and romantic fruit orchards, Duernstein, where King Richard the Lionheart was captured on his way back from the crusades, and the 1000-year-old town of Krems.

The Passau to Vienna section of the Danube Cycle Path welcomes up to 600,000 cyclists a year and is usually completed in six days with an average daily distance of about 65kms.

Cycling experiences

Numerous tour operators offer holiday packages along the route. These include:

>> Self-guided cycling holidays: with prearranged accommodation, luggage transfer, bike rental and maps.

>> Guided cycling holidays: for those who prefer being part of like-minded cyclists or feel more comfortable having access to a knowledgeable guide.

>> Bike-and-barge tours: offer a mix of self-guided cycling and river cruising. Visitors spend the night on a barge followed by a cycle tour. Packages include maps, bikes and half-board meal plan. Guides are usually at an additional cost.

Accommodation and bike rental

>> At most trailheads, a choice of accommodation is available (hotels, campsites, B&Bs). Lunches and dinners are available from restaurants, cafés or take-away picnics from family farms.

>> Many accommodation providers hold the German Cyclists' Federation seal of quality as Bed+Bike accommodation www.bettundbike.de/ Facilities include secure bike parking spaces, drying rooms, e-charging stations and access to bike repair.

>> 350 bike rental businesses along the route with many also offer bike servicing.

E-bike charging-stations & bike rental services

>> In partnership with Austrian energy companies about 100 e-bike charging stations have been established and many bike friendly businesses along the route also offer free E-charging stations for E-bikers.

Vennbahn

One of the longest rail bike paths in Europe at 125km, the Vennbahn cycle path runs from Aachen in Germany to Troisviergesin in Luxembourg.

Its history dates back to 1940 when Hitler reannexed the surrounding territory and the Vennbahn became a German line. The train, however, gradually lost its importance in the decades to come and was converted into a tourist attraction in the 1990s. This proved financially unviable and the track was paved over to create a 125km long bicycling path that crosses through rivers, ravines and picturesque towns containing a unique history.

The Vennbahn Cycle Route is an inter-regional project formally coordinated by the German speaking Community of Belgium (DG). It comprises 12 partners: local authorities and regional partners in Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg plus the EU-Feder Interreg. The partners are a mix of roads departments and economic development agencies. The total investment for the project currently stands at about €14.5m.

Vennbahn is a unique cultural and historical experience that offers diverse landscapes, border country atmosphere, history, culture and stories of local people. The Vennbahn has made storytelling a core element of the visitor experience. The history of each section is portrayed through the use of customised comic illustrations, which provide user-friendly background on the heritage role of the Vennbahn railway since the Prussian era, and local history including the region's strategic role in two world wars.

Route Highlights

SEE & DO

>> Pottery museum
>> Rursee, one of Germany's largest dams
>> St. Vith history museum
>> Reulandcastle
>> A bat adventure path
>> A diverse range of culinary experiences

SCENERY

>> The Vennbahn connects abandoned railway stations, idyllic landscapes and picturesque historic small towns.
>> It leads through the extraordinary landscapes of the Eiffel, Ardennes and High Fens through Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg.
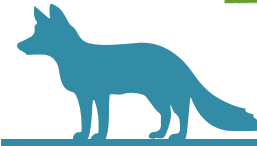
SAFETY

>> High quality infrastructure and roads mean it is a popular choice with both experienced and less experienced cyclists.

SECLUSION

>> The cycle path runs through the beautifully secluded landscapes of Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg and is surrounded by the breath-taking landscapes of the Eiffel, Ardennes and High Fens.
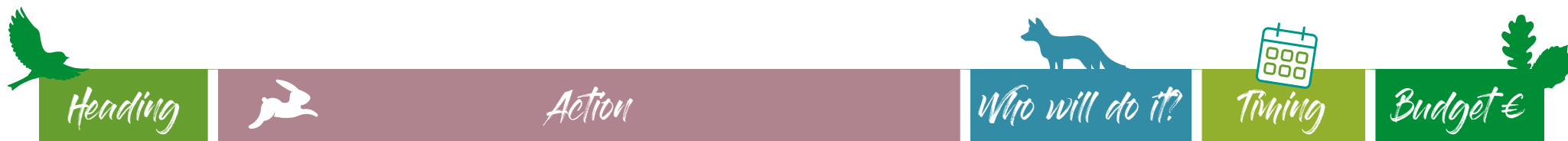
14 Greenways Development Checklist

Heading	Action	Who will do it?	Timing	Budget €
GREENWAYS STRATEGY	We are clear about how our proposed Greenway satisfies the national or regional definition			
	For regional Greenways, we have identified how it can connect to a longer strategic route			
FUNDING	We have designed and implemented a process to ensure we are aware of impending funding sources and deadlines for funding calls			
	We have earmarked match funding within our organisation annual budgets to ensure we are ready to respond with an application to funding calls when they are announced			
	We are aware that our funding application must include budget for ongoing maintenance, marketing, and interpretation as well as the initial capital outlay			
DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION	We have reviewed the TII Rural Cycleway Design (Offline) Standard to ensure all plans are compliant			
	We have reviewed the Greenways and Cycle Routes Ancillary Infrastructure Guidelines and the other documents cited therein			
	We ensure the 5Ss of Greenway development are at the core of our design and construction process			
	Our planning and design take account of the Sport Ireland Outdoors registration system			
	We have identified the skills we have within or organisation and will outsource elements of the design if needed and as appropriate			
	Our designs are future proofed to anticipate growing numbers of Greenway users annually			
	Designers should keep in mind visitors behaviours when using the Greenway i.e. at scenic viewing areas of landscape and/or built infrastructure, visitors will need a wider section of the path or an area where they can safely pull in to appreciate the sight without impeding the experience of other visitors as they pass. Designers should also incorporate ways of facilitating visitors views at certain scenic points whether above or below i.e. the arches and heights of viaducts may not be seen by visitors as they travel along them.			
	Registration inspection by Sport Ireland Outdoors when Greenway is completed			

Heading	Action	Who will do it?	Timing	Budget €
ENGAGING WITH LANDOWNERS	We liaise with local landowners who may be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed Greenway route early in the process and maintain contact with them even after construction has been completed			
	We adhere to the Code of Best Practice that has been developed			
PUBLIC CONSULTATION	We have created an internal team within our organisation and have identified appropriate spokespeople as the relevant liaison person with different segments of the community			
	We have nominated a project liaison officer who refers specific enquiries to the relevant spokesperson on the wider local authority team			
	We have an open-door policy for community enquiries about the proposed Greenway and answer all queries in a timely manner			
	We ensure the needs of the local community are properly understood and addressed, whether the consultation process is managed internally or whether it is outsourced to a third party			
	We are in regular contact with local businesses and together aim to identify opportunities for new businesses / services that will add value to our Greenway and enhance its economic impact			
INTERPRETATION	We have developed an interpretation plan in partnership with public, private and community stakeholders			
	Drawing on the interpretation plan, we have identified our local stories and the best interpretive tools to tell those stories			
CREATING GREENWAY EXPERIENCES	We work closely with local businesses (tourism and non-tourism) to create Greenway experiences that help to bring to life the stories of our Greenway in an immersive way for visitors			
	We ensure our Greenway experiences are aligned with our destination brand (Dublin, Ireland's Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartland, Wild Atlantic Way)			
	We liaise closely with local businesses to identify ways in which the development agency can facilitate and expedite experience development			
	We collaborate with Fáilte Ireland on the delivery of experience development workshops and training for business owners on our Greenway			
	We take part in Fáilte Ireland supports for greenway developers e.g. training, seminars, information exchange etc.			

Heading	Action	Who will do it?	Timing	Budget €
BRANDING & NAMING	We adhere to all national Greenway branding guidelines both online and in-destination signage. Where applicable, we also include EuroVelo branding on our signage etc.			
	We follow the Fáilte Ireland toolkit guidelines when naming our Greenway			
	We will register the domain name for our website and all social media handles before the Greenway name is communicated externally			
MARKETING & PROMOTION	We will outsource the launch stage (pre-launch and first six months after official launch) of the Greenway promotional campaign if we know that we do not have the resources internally to manage it effectively			
	We have an annual marketing and promotional plan with an associated budget for the ongoing promotional campaign			
	Responsibility for the implementation of the annual marketing and promotional plan is assigned to the Greenway Developer official. That person liaises closely with local tourism providers to optimise the joint marketing and promotional effort of the wider community			
ONGOING: MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE, MONITORING	In partnership with the local community, we implement an annual plan to ensure the optimal management and maintenance of our Greenway.			
	We undertake annual quantitative and qualitative research to better understand the needs and expectations of the people who use our Greenway (locals, domestic and overseas tourists) and we base future Greenway plans on the research findings			

Appendices

I

Request for Tender Samples

Introduction

As it is likely Greenway Developers will need to outsource certain elements of their Greenway development plan, this toolkit presents sample specification briefs when contracting external expertise for:

>> **Feasibility Study**

>> **Interpretation Strategy**

>> **Launch Marketing Campaign**

These sample Requests for Tender (RFTs) will provide you with guidance and an overview of the content you should consider when preparing tender documents; however, you will need to tailor the sample content to the specific needs of your County / Greenway and you should liaise with your procurement section on same.

1. Sample RFT for Feasibility Study

Requirements and Specifications

Tenderers must address each of the issues and requirements in this part of the RFT and submit a detailed description in each case which demonstrates how these issues and requirements will be dealt with/met and their approach to the proposed delivery of the services. A mere affirmative statement by the tenderer that it can/will do so, or a reiteration of the tender requirements is NOT sufficient in this regard.

Introduction / Scope of Requirements

[Developer name] invites tenders from companies and consortia, with relevant experience to examine the feasibility of a Greenway which commences in [insert starting point] and extends to an end point at [insert end point].

The main elements required under this tender are:

1. **Technical study scope**
2. **Economic appraisal**
3. **Environmental appraisal**

A study area map is included in [insert Appendix name].

The Greenway is being developed in line with the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways Strategy.

Background to this Project

The Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways; (hereafter called the Greenways Strategy) defines a Greenway as:

' a recreational or pedestrian corridor for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area'.

Greenways are for everyone. They are not simply a means of getting from A to B, they are an experience in and of themselves. They also allow users to experience the communities linked to the Greenway and should tell the stories of the people and places through which they pass.

They provide an excellent amenity for local populations and offer domestic and overseas visitors immersive and memorable tourism experiences.

Vision Aim

The overall vision for [Greenway name] is [outline vision]

Strategic Objectives of [Greenway name]

The strategic objectives guiding the development of the [Greenway name] are:

[the list below is indicative only and some are likely to apply, but you will need to include those that are additional and specific to your Greenway]

>> Provide strategic, sustainable and safe connectivity between towns, villages, communities, community facilities, tourist attractions/services for the benefit of local communities, businesses and visitors.

>> To provide healthy living walking and cycling tracks as an amenity for the local population.

>> To drive an increase in visitor numbers, dwell time, spend within [County name] and the wider geographic region.

>> To provide the catalyst for an increase in collaboration between destinations, industry providers and groups in the area.

>> To interpret the history and heritage of the area bringing local stories to life in an immersive and engaging manner.

>> To use different interpretation media to tell the themes and stories of the [Greenway name].

Proposed Route Location

Developer to:

>> Insert details of the proposed route together with outline maps.

>> Indicate where / if the proposed route connects with other trails, walkways, Greenways in the region.

>> Indicate local historical, heritage or landscape highlights on or adjacent to the proposed route that the developer believes should be accessible on or from the Greenway route.

Project Elements

The development of the feasibility study encompasses three elements.

1. **Technical study scope**
2. **Economic appraisal**
3. **Environmental**

1. TECHNICAL STUDY

The successful tenderer must submit a methodology for the development of the technical study which should include but not be limited to the following steps:

>> Adherence to Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways and Greenways Cycle Routes Ancillary Infrastructure Guidelines

>> Review of planning policy and other policy considerations relating to the proposed route.

>> Stakeholder consultation with all relevant statutory and non-statutory bodies including, but not limited to: Department of Transport, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Department of Community and Rural Development, [other possible to note depending on route could include: NPWS, OPW, Waterways Ireland, IFI, Coillte, utility providers etc.)

>> Consult with landowners, property owners and communities regarding access and technical issues.

>> Consult with neighbouring local authorities in respect of potential connectivity of the proposed Greenway.

>> Identify the optimum route; alternative routes should also be noted in the event the optimum is unachievable.

>> Identify the physical, environmental and engineering and community constraints.

>> Prepare drawings and maps of the proposed route, aiming to achieve 100% off road.

>> Propose locations of necessary services at trail heads and other sections along the route.

>> Recommend route surface, appropriate to the natural landscape and taking account of the local climate.

The proposed design should respect the standards that are set out in Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Rural Cycleway Design (Offline) Standard.

2. ECONOMIC APPRAISAL

The successful tenderer must submit a methodology for the development of the economic appraisal which should include but not be limited to the following steps:

>> Identify engineering / professional fees associated with the provision and delivery of the route.

>> Prepare a costing for the agreed route to include planning, design, construction and development.

>> Determine projected user numbers.

>> Present socio-economic business case to support the route. This should outline anticipated direct, indirect and induced economic impacts as well as the social and health benefits to the local community.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

The successful tenderer must:

>> Carry out screening for Appropriate Assessment accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development Act 2000-2015, and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011)

>> Undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment.

>> Conduct a biodiversity and ecological survey of the route options.

Project Management

The project will require a collaborative approach with [Developer name] and all relevant stakeholders. The successful tenderer will demonstrate effective organisation and project management of the process in close collaboration with all stakeholders.

A site visit is a necessary requirement for all applicants prior to tendering. A project briefing will be held at [insert place] on [insert date] for those who wish to discover more about the Greenway prior to submitting a tender.

Intellectual Property Rights

The selected tenderer will be required to provide copyright to [Developer name] for unrestricted and free use of all contract documentation, drawings and maps, all designs produced under this contract, all text, image or multimedia content developed under this contract, any specifications produced and any other project information provided during the course of the project to [Developer name] and / or the company's agents.

Tender Requirements

>> An outline of the proposed methodology intended to be used in delivering this project.

>> A project programme of works for completion of each stage and section of the project.

>> Proposed team to deliver the requirements of the tender

>> Costings/Budget for each element of the project.

2. Sample RFT for Interpretation Strategy

Requirements and Specifications

Tenderers must address each of the issues and requirements in this part of the RFT and submit a detailed description in each case which demonstrates how these issues and requirements will be dealt with/met and their approach to the proposed delivery of the services. A mere affirmative statement by the Tenderer that it can/will do so or a reiteration of the tender requirements is NOT sufficient in this regard.

Introduction / Scope of Requirements

[Developer name] invites tenders from companies and consortia, with relevant experience for the development of an interpretation scheme along the [Greenway name].

This tender covers research, narrative planning, development of all interpretive content and graphic design for interpretation media required by the interpretation scheme.

The objective of the interpretation scheme is to enhance the visitor's experience of the Greenway by helping the visitor discover and enjoy the heritage and culture of the landscapes and communities they pass through while on the [Greenway name].

The main elements required under this tender are:

1. **Identification of themes that tell the story of [Greenway name], the local area and the local communities.**
2. **Design of interpretation media as part of this scheme of interpretation.**
3. **Design of and development of all content for interpretation media along the Greenway route**
4. **Assist [Developer name] in procuring the manufacture, printing, delivery and installation of all of the interpretation media including snagging lists, through to completion and handover**

Background to this project

The Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways; (hereafter called the Greenways Strategy) defines a Greenway as:

'a recreational or pedestrian corridor for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area'.

Greenways are for everyone. They are not simply a means of getting from A to B, they are an experience in and of themselves. They also allow users to experience the communities linked to the Greenway and should tell the stories of the people and places through which they pass.

They provide an excellent amenity for local populations and offer domestic and overseas visitors immersive and memorable tourism experiences.

The [Greenway name] is being developed against this backdrop.

Vision Aim

The overall vision for [Greenway name] is [outline vision]

Strategic objectives of [Greenway name]

The strategic objectives guiding the development of the [Greenway name] are:

[the list below is indicative only and some are likely to apply, but you will need to include those that are additional and specific to your Greenway]

>> Provide strategic, sustainable and safe connectivity between towns, villages, communities, community facilities, tourist attractions/services for the benefit of local communities, businesses and visitors.

>> To provide healthy living walking and cycling tracks as an amenity for the local population

>> To drive an increase in visitor numbers, dwell time, spend within [County name] and the wider geographic region;

>> To provide the catalyst for an increase in collaboration between destinations, industry providers and groups in the area;

>> To interpret the history and heritage of the area bringing local stories to life in an immersive and engaging manner;

>> To use different interpretation media to tell the themes and stories of the [Greenway name].

Project stages

The development of interpretation and orientation media to enhance the visitor experience of the [Greenway name] will take place in two stages.

1. **Development of an Interpretation Strategy i.e. detailed interpretation plan including theme identification and design development that is aligned with the [Greenway name] brand, the National Greenways Strategy and [insert relevant destination brand i.e. Ireland's Ancient East / Ireland's Hidden Heartlands / Dublin / Wild Atlantic Way]**

2. **Implementation and Delivery of Interpretation Strategy i.e. to design and oversee the construction of the interpretation media for the project. The construction and installation of the interpretation media will be the subject of a separate tender.**

1. Development of an Interpretation Strategy

The successful tenderer must submit a methodology for the development of the interpretation strategy which should include but not be limited to the following steps:

1.1 REVIEW OF EXISTING DOCUMENTATION, FOR EXAMPLE:

>> County Development Plan [insert link]

>> County Tourism Plan [insert link]

>> Feedback from public consultations during the design stage of the Greenway development [insert link / include as additional documentation]

>> Research undertaken as part of the brand development if available

>> Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways

>> Fáilte Ireland – Sharing our Stories

>> Fáilte Ireland – Experiences Explained

>> IAE Storytelling Toolkit

1.2 IDENTIFICATION OF GREENWAY THEMES

Tenderers should outline their methodology for researching and gathering stories associated with the [Greenway name] and translating those stories into compelling themes and sub-themes that will underpin the [Greenway name] experience.

A hierarchy of themes that are unique to this Greenway should be developed. This will include the identification an overarching theme and sub-themes that may be highlighted at specific viewing points along the route.

The themes should interpret local stories, the character and distinctiveness of [Greenway name] for the visitor and create linkages to towns, villages, attractions etc. that are adjacent to the route.

The Interpretation strategy should be clear, concise and easy to follow and indicate the different types of media and technology that will be used at different sections of the route.

1.3   DESIGN OF INTERPRETATION MEDIA

The successful tenderer will demonstrate in detail the different types of media and technology that will be used in different sections of the route. This could include:

>> Printed or graphic material e.g. leaflets, panels, plaques, displays

>> On-site installations e.g. seating, picnic benches, stiles, boardwalks, way-marking and sculptures

>> Digital e.g. audio trails, apps and downloads

All elements are to be designed and specified materials must be capable of withstanding the impact of the adverse weather conditions. Guidance on maintenance of materials should be provided.

The interpretation media should be in-keeping with the natural landscape and give consideration to environmental legislation. Interpretation media at viewing points should create unique photo opportunities for visitors.

Trailheads should include a map of the Greenway indicating the locations of practical services such as toilets, refreshments, picnic areas, rest areas, viewing points etc.

1.4   DEVELOPMENT OF INTERPRETIVE CONTENT

Following sign-off on selection and prioritisation of sub-themes and stories, provide all copywriting for interpretation media along the route. Tenderers must demonstrate expertise in interpretive copywriting and should also outline the process that will be used for fact-checking / verification.

Graphic content and graphic design for interpretation media also need to be developed, taking account of brand guidelines.

All text-based and graphic content gathered and developed for the interpretation media must be provided in digital format to [Developer name] for reuse in digital, mobile and print media and to be shared with tourism industry partners as appropriate.

1.5   LANGUAGES (IF RELEVANT)

All signage will need to comply with the Official Languages Act 2003. The interpretation strategy must be costed out for the delivery and implementation phase.

2. Implementation and Delivery

On behalf of [Developer name], the successful tenderer will be expected to design and oversee the implementation and handover of the interpretation scheme to completion.

The interpretation consultant will be required to produce all of the tender documents for fit out contractor and other sub-contractors as required.

Project Management

The project will require a collaborative approach with [Developer name] and all relevant stakeholders. The successful tenderer will demonstrate effective organisation and project management of the interpretive process in close collaboration with all stakeholders.

As part of the [Greenway name] project but separate to this tender, [Developer name] will be undertaking a brand development strategy for the Greenway. It is a requirement of this tender to engage with the company appointed to the brand development to ensure the interpretation strategy aligns with the Greenway brand.

A site visit is a necessary requirement for all applicants prior to tendering. A project briefing will be held at [insert place] on [insert date] for those who wish to discover more about the Greenway prior to submitting a tender.

Project Timeline

[Developer name] envisages that this project will be delivered in the order outlined above and in line the milestones outlined below. Any recommended changes to this order and timeline can be agreed after appointment.
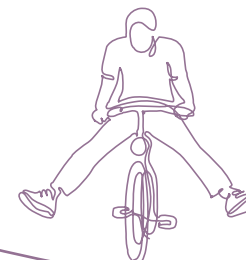
Milestones	
Insert date	Issue Tender
Insert date	Appointment
Insert date	Propose interpretation themes and sub-themes
Insert date	Secure sign off on interpretation media
Insert date	Oversee procurement of fabrication and installation of interpretation media
Insert date	Installation of all interpretation media

Intellectual Property Rights

The selected tenderer will be required to provide copyright to [Developer name] for unrestricted and free use of all contract documentation, all designs produced under this contract, all text, image or multimedia content developed under this contract, any specifications produced and any other project information provided during the course of the project to [Developer name] and / or the company's agents.

Tender Requirements

>> An outline of the proposed methodology intended to be used in delivering this project.

>> A project programme of works for completion of each stage and section of the project.

>> Proposed team to deliver the requirements of the tender

>> Costings/Budget for each element of the project.

3. Sample RFT for Launch Marketing Campaign

Requirements and Specifications

Tenderers must address each of the issues and requirements in this part of the RFT and submit a detailed description in each case which demonstrates how these issues and requirements will be dealt with/met and their approach to the proposed delivery of the services. A mere affirmative statement by the Tenderer that it can/will do so or a reiteration of the tender requirements is NOT sufficient in this regard.

Introduction / Scope of Requirements

[Developer name] invites tenders from companies and consortia, with relevant experience for the development of the launch marketing campaign for the [Greenway name].

This tender covers marketing and promotional activity for the pre-launch stage, a launch event and the post launch period for a term of six months. Thereafter, the marketing and promotion of the Greenway will be undertaken by [Developer name].

The objective of the launch marketing campaign scheme is to create awareness of and engagement with the [Greenway name] by locals and domestic tourists.

The main elements required under this tender are:

1. **Develop a brand mark unique to [Greenway brand] that aligns with the national Greenway brand mark.**

2. **Develop a digital media strategy including the creation of a website and social media channels (the www.greenwayname.ie and social media handles are already in place)**

3. **Undertake a local marketing communications campaign to create awareness of the Greenway in the lead up to the launch**

4. **Deliver a launch event with invited guests and manage the marketing communications to support the launch event**

5. **Create and deliver a 6-month marketing communications campaign for the post-launch period to target local and domestic Greenway users**

Background to this Project

The Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways; (hereafter called the Greenways Strategy) defines a Greenway as:

' a recreational or pedestrian corridor for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area'.

Greenways are for everyone. They are not simply a means of getting from A to B, they are an experience in and of themselves. They also allow users to experience the communities linked to the Greenway and should tell the stories of the people and places through which they pass.

They provide an excellent amenity for local populations and offer domestic and overseas visitors immersive and memorable tourism experiences.

The [Greenway name] is being developed against this backdrop.

Vision Aim

The overall vision for [Greenway name] is [outline vision]

Strategic Objectives of [Greenway name]

The strategic objectives guiding the development of the [Greenway name] are:

[the list below is indicative only and some are likely to apply, but you will need to include those that are additional and specific to your Greenway]

>> Provide strategic, sustainable and safe connectivity between towns, villages, communities, community facilities, tourist attractions/services for the benefit of local communities, businesses and visitors.

>> To provide healthy living walking and cycling tracks as an amenity for the local population

>> To drive an increase in visitor numbers, dwell time, spend within [County name] and the wider geographic region.

>> To provide the catalyst for an increase in collaboration between destinations, industry providers and groups in the area.

>> To interpret the history and heritage of the area bringing local stories to life in an immersive and engaging manner.

>> To use different interpretation media to tell the themes and stories of the [Greenway name]. This could include a number of tools appropriate to the route and the local area e.g. interpretive panels, maps, displays downloadable audio guides, onsite installations using natural materials indigenous to the area (seating, picnic benches, stiles, boardwalks, sculptures or other artistic installations).

THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THIS RFT ARE TO:

1. **Create awareness of and engagement with the Greenway by the local community before the official launch of the Greenway; the aim is to encourage locals to use the Greenway as a local amenity**

2. **Create awareness of and engagement with the Greenway by domestic visitors immediately after the official launch event; the aim is to position the [Greenway name] as a hook to stimulate domestic tourism in the wider area**

Project Stages

There are five elements associated with the launch marketing campaign for the [Greenway name].

1. **Develop a brand mark.**

2. **Develop a digital media strategy.**

3. **Implement local marketing communications.**

4. **Deliver a launch event.**

5. **Implement a 6-month marketing communications campaign to target local and domestic Greenway users.**

1. Development of a Brand Mark

The successful tenderer must submit a methodology for the development of the launch marketing communications strategy which should include but not be limited to the following steps:

1.1 REVIEW OF EXISTING DOCUMENTATION E.G.

>> County Development Plan [insert link]

>> County Tourism Plan [insert link]

>> Feedback from public consultations during the design stage of the Greenway development [insert link / include as additional documentation]

>> [Research undertaken as part of the Interpretation Strategy if available]

>> Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways

>> Greenway Design and brand guidelines, a visual rulebook for the Greenway brand

1.2 DEVELOP THE BRAND MARK

Create a visual identity for [Greenway name] that:

>> Creates and maintains awareness and appeal with the local community as well as domestic and overseas visitors

>> Is aligned with the themes and stories identified in the interpretation plan (engagement with interpretation consultants working on this project will be required)

>> Is aligned with [insert relevant destination brand Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, Ireland's Ancient East, Dublin, Wild Atlantic Way] and that brand's proposition and objectives

>> Is fully formed for use across all platforms and marketing collateral as well as interpretation media

1.3 CREATE BRAND GUIDELINES

>> Present the rationale behind the brand mark and associated imagery

>> Provide guidance on the brand application across a range of marketing communications platforms, interpretation media and, way-finding signage

>> Present visual brand creative, brand story narrative, concepts and artworks

2. Develop a Digital Media Strategy

2.1 WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

The www.greenwayname.ie domain name has been registered. The tenderer is required to create a responsive website for the Greenway that reflects the themes, stories and experience unique to this Greenway.

The website should reflect international best practice in terms of:

>> Design, Layout and Navigation

>> Content, imagery and video

>> Usability

>> Call to action

>> Search Engine Optimisation and analytics

The website should reflect the brand identity and be aligned with [insert relevant tourism destination brand].

2.2 SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

The social media handles for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube [insert other as relevant] have been registered.

The tenderer will be required to produce and distribute creative digital content and proactively engage across all social media channels for the period [insert timeline – approximately two months pre-launch through to 6 months post-launch]

2.3 IMAGERY AND VIDEO BANK

The tenderer will be required to create a small number of copyright free photographs and up to three short videos that can be used at this launch stage across marketing communications platforms. The image and video bank will be extended and enhanced post-launch stage.

3. Implement Local Marketing Communications

Create and implement a local marketing communications campaign targeting local and regional broadcast, print and social to include:

>> Press releases and Photo calls

>> Traditional and digital advertising (including creative, production and media costs)

>> Familiarisation media visits with local / regional journalists

>> Social media activity – content, competitions

4. Deliver a Launch Event

In partnership with [Developer name] the tenderer will be required to organise a launch event to mark the official opening of the [Greenway name].

The tenderer will also be required to manage the media engagement around the launch at a local, regional and national level.

5. Implement a 6-Month Marketing Communications Campaign

Building on the local pre-launch and launch event marketing communications campaign, the tenderer will be required to extend the local and regional activities noted under points 2, 3 and 4 above to a national level in order to target domestic holidaymakers.

The national campaign should also include targeting of influencer marketing i.e.organise familiarisation trips with high profile influencers and bloggers and use social media platforms specifically for geo-targeting and demographic/interest targeting.

The successful tenderer, in partnership with [Developer name] will also ensure the Greenway is listed on www.discoverireland.ie and domestic marketing activities with Fáilte Ireland are optimised.

Note:
   While the responses must provide for the five elements outlined above [Developer name], also welcomes alternative / additional innovative recommendations on how best to achieve the communications objectives in the most cost-effective manner.

Project Management

The project will require a collaborative approach with [Developer name] and all relevant stakeholders. The successful tenderer will demonstrate effective organisation and project management of the interpretive process in close collaboration with all stakeholders.

As part of the [Greenway name] project but separate to this tender, [Developer name] will be undertaking a brand development strategy for the Greenway. It is a requirement of this tender to engage with the company appointed to the brand development to ensure the interpretation strategy aligns with the Greenway brand.

A site visit is a necessary requirement for all applicants prior to tendering. A project briefing will be held at [insert place] on [insert date] for those who wish to discover more about the Greenway prior to submitting a tender.

Project Timeline

[Developer name] envisages that this project will be delivered in the order outlined above and in line the milestones outlined below. Any recommended changes to this order and timeline can be agreed after appointment.
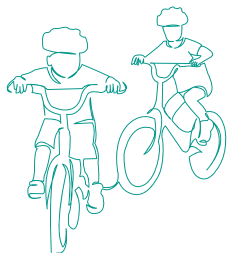
Milestones	
Insert date	Issue Tender
Insert date	Appointment
Insert date	Secure sign off on brand development
Insert date	Design and implement digital media strategy
Insert date	Commence pre-launch marketing communications locally
Insert date	Launch event
Insert date	6 month post-launch national campaign
Insert date	Handover of all marketing communications to [Developer name]

Intellectual Property Rights

The selected tenderer will be required to provide copyright to [Developer name] for unrestricted and free use of all contract documentation, all designs produced under this contract, all text, image or multimedia content developed under this contract, any specifications produced and any other project information provided during the course of the project to [Developer name] and / or the company's agents.

Tender Requirements

>> An outline of the proposed methodology intended to be used in delivering this project.

>> A project programme of works for completion of each stage and section of the project.

>> Proposed team to deliver the requirements of the tender

>> Costings/Budget for each element of the project

II References

Reference sources and additional information;

>> [Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways July 2018, Department of Tourism Transport & Sport](#)

>> [Greenway Design and Brand Guidelines](#)

>> [Greenways and Cycle Routes Ancillary Infrastructure Guidelines, Department of Tourism Transport & Sport](#)
Appendix 1 of this document provides a list of other references/publications, which are relevant to the development of trails, including Greenways in Ireland.

>> [Greenways Management Handbook Sustrans UK](#)

>> [Sustainable Development Goals The United Nations](#)

>> [The National Biodiversity Data Centre](#)

>> [Pollinator-friendly Management of Transport Corridors, National Biodiversity Data Centre](#)

>> [Leave no Trace Ireland](#)

>> [Bored of Boards, The Heritage Council](#)

>> [Ireland's Ancient East Storytelling Toolkit,Fáilte Ireland](#)

>> [Experience Explained, Fáilte Ireland](#)

>> [Interpretation Toolkit, Woodland Trust (UK)](#)

Environmentally Responsible Tourism Promotion – Failte Ireland Approach

Failte Ireland is the Irish Tourism Development Authority and a substantial remit in fulfilling its functions is the development of tourism marketing campaigns and promotional material for regions, counties, experiences (activities, festivals, attractions) and specific sites in some instances.

To this end we have a dedicated Marketing Directorate made up of a number of teams including the following; marketing communications, digital marketing, visitor engagement, corporate communications & public affairs and consumer planning & insights.

Failte Ireland recognises the importance in valuing, promoting, protecting and enhancing our natural heritage. Our environment and landscape are after all the cornerstone of Irish Tourism. So as with all other Failte Ireland functions our Marketing Directorate is dedicated to integrating environmental considerations and opportunities into all of its operations and actions. This includes environmentally responsible campaigning and promotion.

We already work to achieve this in Failte Ireland through our environmental assessments of plans, programmes and strategies and through our support, sponsorship and partnership with stakeholders including Leave No Trace, Clean Coast, EU Life Projects and NPWS.

We are constantly aiming to progress and ensure fundamental integration of environmental and wider sustainable responsibility into our Marketing Directorate role.

As a result of this our Marketing Directorate in working partnership with our Planning & Environment Team is about to embark on developing a documented process that will ensure full integration of environmental considerations into all campaign and promotional drives for Failte Ireland.

This process will be developed over the coming months and will further inform and influence our Regional Tourism Strategies during their lifetime.

IRISH BLUEWAY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Phase 3: Blueway Management and Development Guide

August 2018

Prepared by Outdoor Recreation NI

on behalf of Sport Ireland, Waterways Ireland & Fáilte Ireland

Contents

1. Acknowledgements

The development of this document has required the review and update of existing standards for Canoe and Water Trails. Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland would like to acknowledge the previous work to develop the following documents which have acted as a strong reference during the development of this document:

- A guide to planning and developing Small Vessel Water Trails in Ireland (2013). Developed by Waterways Ireland and the Irish Sports Council / National Trails Office in conjunction with Irish Leisure Consultants (ILC)
- Blueway Soft Infrastructure Guidelines Discussion Document. Developed by ILC for the Irish Sports Council / National Trails Office
- Blueway / Water Trail Development Standards Ireland (2015). Developed by the Irish Sports Council / National Trails Office, Canoeing Ireland and Irish Underwater Council
- A Guide to Planning and Developing Recreational Trails in Ireland (2012). Developed by the Irish Sports Council / National Trails Office
- Principles and Standards for Trail Development in Northern Ireland (2013). Prepared by Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland
- Toolkit for the development of Community Trail Networks (2014). Prepared by Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland

2. Introduction

The rivers, loughs and coastline on the Island of Ireland provide a vast array of opportunities for exploration and enjoyment by visitors and locals alike. The relatively recent development of Blueways in Ireland has sought to maximise this opportunity.

This Blueway Development and Management Guide has therefore been designed as a resource to assist developers to develop, manage and promote Blueways more effectively.

Furthermore, the Blueway Ireland Steering Group (See Appendix 1) has taken the strategic decision to establish an accreditation system to ensure that any Blueways developed are sustainable, visitor focused and of a consistent high quality. This guide therefore outlines the accreditation criteria, process and support mechanisms.

It is recognised that many excellent guidance documents were already in place for the various components of a Blueway, however, this guide seeks to update and consolidate these through cognisance of:

- extensive benchmarking of international best practice (See Appendix 2)
- primary customer research
- one-to-one consultation with key stakeholders
- learnings from existing Blueway developments
- a constantly evolving tourism industry
- the broadening concept of a Blueway

3. Aim

The guide has been designed with the aim of providing detailed information and advice in order to answer the following queries:

- **Definition** – What is a Blueway?
- **Target Market** – Who will be attracted to a Blueway?
- **Benefits** – Why become accredited?
- **Criteria** – What are the fundamental components of a successful Blueway?
- **Achieving Success** – How to achieve Blueway Accreditation
- **Planning** – How to plan the development and management of a successful and sustainable Blueway

4. What is a Blueway?

The Blueway definition, brand proposition and key characteristics have been developed with visitor focus to the fore. This rationale is further outlined in Section 5.

4.1. Definition

A Blueway is defined as:

'A network of approved and branded multi-activity recreational trails and sites, based on and closely linked with the water, together with providers facilitating access to activities and experiences.'

4.2. Blueway Brand Proposition

The Blueways Ireland brand represents:

- Being active in nature
- Exploration of waterscapes
- Service providers enabling easy access for all
- Multi-activity trail options
- Set within the context of places to stay, eat and go
- Enriched by local culture, heritage, arts and visitor attractions
- Responsible recreation within the environment

4.3. Key Characteristics

The definition and brand proposition are further explained through the following key Blueway characteristics:

- The core of the offering is a series of accredited and branded trails, on and alongside water.
- Central to the concept is the availability of a water trail or site (hence the term 'BLUEway').
- Land based trails (i.e. walking and cycling) with strong connectivity to water must also complement the water trails.
- The proposition is an activity tourism and outdoor recreation initiative therefore facilitating healthier lifestyles, social interactions and economic development.
- With a strapline 'Blueway, do it your way!' the ethos of the Blueways Ireland brand is to encourage active participation in outdoor recreation by offering a range of activity options and making it as easy as possible for all ages and abilities to engage in visitor experiences in a suitable environment. Blueways should therefore focus on 'soft adventure' i.e. the offering should appeal to those with limited skills or prior experience.
- The rationale for the brand is to package saleable product (½ day, full day or short-break packages) and make the booking process easy, to encourage exploration of the waterways, and increase visitor dwell time.
- The Blueways experience is enriched by promoting it within the context of the local culture, heritage, arts and artisan food offerings.
- It is a partnership between public and private sectors, with service providers and tourism businesses combining soft adventure/slow tourism experiences, (guided canoe trips, SUP, bicycle hire) together with visitor services (accommodation, food, attractions, toilets).

- Blueways should be planned, developed and managed to ensure their sustainability. As a minimum a Blueway should avoid any negative impact on the environment and ideally add to or improve the environment e.g. through education and access

4.4.   Blueway Descriptions

By definition, a Blueway is a network of recreational trails or sites, concentrated within a reasonable travel time within one area / destination. It is therefore important the Blueway is appropriately named to ensure resonance with the visitor, the naming of individual trails can focus on specific areas. As further explained in Section 5, the visitor will often have selected the destination first and will wish to use the Blueway as a conduit through which to explore its unique selling points.

A **Blueway Trail** does not have to encompass the entire area/destination; however, each component trail should offer an attractive proposition in their own right. For example, the 'Lough Derg Blueway' is comprised of several component Blueway trails e.g. 'Portumna Forest Walking Trails' and 'Mountshannon to Holy Island Paddling Trail.' For more information see http://www.bluewaysireland.org/head-into-the-blue/the-lough-derg-blueway

A **Blueway Site** will typically relate to a coastal environment e.g. beach, marina or harbour from which a range of multi-activity trails can radiate. The extent of each trail must be defined e.g. a snorkel trail or kayak trail must be defined by mapping and information. For example, the Achill Island Blueway is comprised of Doogart Kayak Trail and Keem Beach Snorkel Trail. For more information see https://failtecdn.azureedge.net/tcs/media/5d9fb7c2-1314-46ed-b97b-6c2b1fba256c_91605.pdf

Blueways will typically include a combination of:

- Walking Trails
- Cycling Trails – off road / segregated trails
- Paddling Trails / Sites – Canoeing / kayaking / Stand Up Paddleboarding
- Snorkelling Trails / Sites
- Sailing and Windsurfing Sites may also be included, however, given the needs of the 'Dabbler' this will be included as either Royal Yachting Association Recognised Training Centres or Irish Sailing Training Centres

5. The Blueways Visitor

Whether a Blueway user is a member of the community enjoying their local waterway or a visitor exploring a new destination, it is essential the Blueway delivers a memorable experience.

To do this successfully, it is crucial to understand the customers and their needs before initiating any development:

5.1.   Introducing the Dabbler

Research[1] has provided clear evidence that the 'Dabbler' or 'Novice' will be the best prospect visitor for Blueways in Ireland i.e. those that have **little to no skills or prior experience in undertaking adventure activities.**

The **'Dabbler'** is seeking the following from a Blueway:

Features

- A mixture of land and water activities
- A rich opportunity to experience Ireland's culture, history and scenery
- A safe experience

Locations

- Attractive locations - not simply just anywhere with water, but scenery unique to Ireland which visitors do not find closer to home
- Coastal locations – especially important to attract overseas visitors
- Sheltered waters - i.e. not the brunt of the ocean

Water-based activity offering - should be:

- Delivered by guides
- Focus on the easier entry level
- Follow high safety standards

It is clear that potential Blueway users are attracted by the proximity to water, however it is evident the preference remains to be alongside water rather than in or on the water. Hence the importance of multi-activity options.

---

[1] Research was undertaken by Strategic Marketing on behalf of Fáilte Ireland and Waterways Ireland in 2016. The research was conducted to gain an understanding of consumers' preferences for the development of Blueway experiences in key markets (Ireland, Britain, France, Germany) and the likely appeal of such a product. Methodology included online panel surveys, in-depth interviews and focus groups.

When asked 'If you were to use a Blueway while on holiday, what would be the top three available activities in order of importance to you?', the following responses were obtained:

	Domestic	% respondents ranking the attribute in top 5	Overseas	% respondents ranking the attribute in top 5
Walking routes near water	1	64%	1	66%
Cycle paths near water	2	48%	2	48%
Swimming	3	43%	3	46%
Canoeing / Kayaking	4	29%	4	27%
Sailing / Boating (non-motorised)	5	22%	5	23%

5.2.   Best Prospect Tourist

Further understanding of the best prospect Blueway visitor can be gained through making reference to domestic and oversea visitor segmentation developed by both Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland.

In terms of overseas visitors, it is important to recognise that the physical activities (whether water or land based) will not be enough on their own to differentiate Ireland from many other destinations. Overseas visitors will require a full package of unique cultural and historical attractions and experiences to be enticed to visit. Care is required to ensure these experiences remain authentic and are not over developed.

Domestic visitors will be an excellent foundation for a Blueway, often providing welcome cash flow to businesses outside peak season.

	Tourism Northern Ireland	Fáilte Ireland
Overseas Visitors	Great Escapers – Primary Culturally Curious – Secondary	
Domestic Visitors	Open to Ideas Active Maximisers	Connected Families

Further details on the aforementioned visitor segments is available within Appendix 3: Visitor Segmentation

5.3.   Local Community

The attachment of the Blueway brand to a local waterway should act as a catalyst for local participation initiatives for example through school, youth organisations, clubs and sports partnerships.

An example of such an initiative was the Blueway 10K. Developed in 2016 by Waterways Ireland, Coca Cola, Canoeing Ireland and the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland developed this active fitness-based approach to canoeing and paddlesports in Ireland applied the couch to 5k model to the water. For more detailed information see

http://www.bluewaysireland.org/News%20%20Events%20Assets/Blueway%2010K%20Activity%20Provider%20Pack.pdf

As further explored in Section 7, the local community will not only be participants but also have the potential to be key ambassadors for their local Blueway.

5.4.   What about the enthusiasts?

Activity enthusiasts will typically undertake trips self-guided and with their own equipment. They will engage with Blueways but to a lesser degree than the aforementioned best prospect segments and should not be the key focus for development.

The development of a visitor focused Blueway may not be possible in certain areas due to a range of issues such as topography, lack of sheltered conditions, lack of support services etc. However, offerings such as waymarked ways, canoe trails and cycle touring trails may be more appropriate and therefore appealing to the enthusiast market.

6. Blueway Accreditation

6.1. Rationale

An extensive review of international best practice (see Appendix 2) identified several excellent systems have been developed to externally inspect and accredit water trail and land trail networks. Under these systems, trails developed by a range of developers in different locations are inspected and accredited by an external body or bodies.

Accreditation has been identified by the Blueway Ireland Steering Group as fundamental to ensure a consistent high standard of Blueway development in Ireland.

6.2. Roles & Responsibilities

The Blueway Ireland Steering Group has set the criteria required for Blueway accreditation and will also act as the awarding body.

The Steering Group is supported by a Blueways Accreditation Advisor who will support and facilitate the accreditation of Blueways in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The Steering Group and Blueways Accreditation Advisor is supported by a Blueways Technical Advisory Panel which provides direct guidance to Blueway Developers on technical and safety aspects of Blueway development / accreditation as required.

For example, a Blueway which:

- includes a significant volume of Snorkelling Trails will require specialist advice from the Irish Underwater Council
- has specific challenges around developing access infrastructure for canoeists will require specialist input from Canoeing Ireland or the Canoe Association of Ireland
- has specific challenges around providing access to open water in a public space may require specialist input from Irish Water Safety

Blueway Developers should contact these organisations directly. See

Appendix 4: Technical Advisory Panel - Key Contacts for contact details:

Remit	Northern Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Paddlesports	Canoe Association Northern Ireland	Canoeing Ireland
Snorkelling	Irish Underwater Council British Sub Aqua Club – Ireland Region	
Sailing & Windsurfing	Royal Yachting Association Northern Ireland	Irish Sailing
Water Safety	RNLI	
Water Safety		Irish Water Safety

Sport Ireland Trails will also be able to provide guidance relating to shared use, walking and cycling trails.

It is important to note that the awarding of Blueway Accreditation does not pass liability onto the Blueways Ireland Steering Group, Blueway or Blueways Accreditation Advisor. It will remain the responsibility of the Developer to ensure the Blueway is managed in accordance to operating procedures and standards as inspected.

The table below provides an overview of responsibilities:

Blueways Ireland Steering Group	Blueways Accreditation Advisor
• Oversight and accreditation of Blueways • Recruitment and management of a Blueways Accreditation Advisor • Custodians of the Blueway brand and brand guidelines • Raise awareness of Blueway accreditation to funding bodies • Establish a Blueway Technical Advisor Panel • Stakeholder communications relating to Blueways	• Promote the Blueways Development & Management Guideline as developed by the Blueway Steering Group. • Convene and support a Blueways Developers Forum and a Blueway Technical Advisory Panel • Develop and implement a Blueways accreditation process in conjunctions with the Blueways Steering Group and Blueways Technical Advisory Panel partners. • Review applications from new Blueways and make recommendations to the Blueways Steering Group for accreditation • Undertake Blueway Registration Inspections on new and existing Blueways and make recommendations to the Blueways Steering Group for accreditation • Manage and update information and advice for Blueways online • Ensure that the Blueway Brand Guideline is applied consistently to all Blueway projects.

Blueways Technical Advisory Panel	Blueways Developer
• Attend Blueway Steering Group meetings • Make recommendations for modification and updates of the Blueway Development and Management Guide and accreditation system to the Blueway Steering Group as necessary.	
• Assist & support Blueway Developers with technical and safety related aspects of Blueway Development	• Blueway Development • Ongoing Management – Upholding Procedures • Marketing

The criteria and process for Blueway accreditation is explored in further detail within Section 7.

The award of accreditation by the Blueways Ireland Steering Group will bring the following benefits:

Brand

Brand Guidelines - An accredited Blueway will be afforded the opportunity to avail of the official Blueway brand which can be utilised within visitor information and signage.

For further information on brand guidelines – Blueway Design & Brand Guidelines <mark>– include link to revised guidelines</mark>

Brand Recognition – Further to the pragmatics of brand guidelines, external accreditation will also provide enhanced consumer recognition of the proposition. Blueways remain a relatively new concept on the island of Ireland, therefore a critical mass of accredited Blueways which follow the same high standard will help raise awareness. This is turn will generate a cross sell effect, particularly within the domestic market i.e. visitors who have a positive experience on one accredited Blueway will be attracted to visit another.

Quality Standard – External accreditation will help reassure key stakeholders that a best practice approach is being implemented. This may include:

- Key decision makers within your organisation
- Key funders
- Local community and business

In addition, an approved brand is more marketable.

Private Landowner Insurance (Republic of Ireland only) - Sport Ireland maintains a public liability insurance policy with Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance Ltd which indemnifies private landowners who give permission for trails to be developed on their property. Accreditation will also reassure landowners of the quality of the Blueway development.

Support – Those engaging in the accreditation process will be able to avail of the support of the Blueways Accreditation Advisor, Blueways Technical Advisory Panel and also best practice knowledge sharing from other Blueway developers / managers through an annual Blueway Forum meeting.

Promotion – Whilst it will ultimately remain the responsibility of the Blueway Manager to effectively promote their Blueway, accreditation will provide additional promotional benefits.

BluewaysIreland.org http://www.bluewaysireland.org/ will provide a web portal for all Blueways in Ireland. This portal will provide an overview listing with a link to each Blueway's own website. Blueways will also receive a listing on IrishTrails.ie http://www.irishtrails.ie/Home/ (Republic of Ireland only).

In addition, the National Tourist Boards will provide prominence to accredited Blueways within relevant campaigns, website listings, FAM trips etc.

Funding – The Blueways Ireland Steering group will continue to engage with the relevant funding bodies to ensure the recognition of the importance of accreditation within funding measures.

7. Accreditation Criteria

Extensive international benchmarking (see Appendix 2) has identified the external assessment of high quality recreation trails utilise a holistic criterion encompassing all aspects of the visitor experience.

As such, the Accreditation Criteria for Blueways in Ireland combines a visitor focused approach with fundamental safety, technical, access and environmental components. All of these are underpinned by sustainable management techniques and processes.

In summary:

Experience – Are the visitors' expectations met?

Safety – Is risk being appropriately managed?

Technical – Does trail infrastructure and signage follow best practice?

Conservation / Environment – As a minimum does the Blueway avoid any negative impact on the environment or ideally how does it add to or improve the environment e.g. through education and access?

Access – Will the Blueway be open for public use for at least ten years following accreditation?

Sustainability – Are they management structures / partnerships, plans and processes in place to ensure the Blueway can continue to meet the required standard?

In order to achieve accreditation, a Blueway must demonstrate how it meets the following criteria.

Experience	
Engaging Landscape / Culture and Heritage	Offers an opportunity to appreciate and explore an attractive landscape and engage with the unique heritage and culture of the area
Multi-activity	Offers a combination of water and land based trail (with connectivity to water) options
Capacity Building	A programme is in place to develop 'Eat / Stay / Go' and 'Activity / Experience' opportunities
Eat / Stay / Go	Bars, Cafés, restaurants and attractions are easily accessible from trail heads and / or trails
Activity / Experience Providers	Guided activity experiences appropriate for 'dabblers' are available and can be booked in advance
Length of time	Offers an experience duration of between half a day to one day
Visitor Information	The visitor can access information to allow them plan and enjoy their Blueway experience
Technical	
Walking Trails	Walking Trails are compliant with the Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails
Cycling Trails	Cycle Trails are compliant with the Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails
Shared Use Trails	Shared Use Trails are compliant with the Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails
Snorkel Trails	Snorkel Trails follow the guidelines of the Irish Underwater Council
Paddling Trails	Paddling Trails follow the Blueway Paddling Trail Guidelines
Sailing & Windsurfing Sites	Sailing & Windsurfing Activities will be compliant with Irish Sailing and/or RYANI Accreditation standards.
Signage	All signage follows with Blueway Signage Guidelines
Trailhead Facilities	Trail heads are clearly identified and offer adequate parking. Toilet and changing facilities are available within close proximity of water based trail heads.

Managing user conflict	Consideration and identification of steps to mitigate against potential conflict with waterway / trail users has been undertaken
Accessibility / Inclusivity	Reasonable steps have been undertaken to provide disabled access
Access	
Landowner / Authority Agreement	Access is permitted by all landowners and relevant authorities – public and private for a minimum period of 10 years.
Insurance	Public liability insurance is in place providing indemnity for all infrastructure, land-based trails and water trails' access and egress points.
Safety	
Suitability	The experience is suitable for the 'dabbler / novice' with little to no skills or prior experience in undertaking adventure activities
Responsibility	Visitors are not exposed to hidden dangers. Visitors should be aware of the risks they will face and that safety is a shared responsibility between the visitor and the Blueway Manager.
Activity Providers / Experiences	A programme is in place for activity providers to demonstrate their safety credentials
Conservation and the Environment	
Statutory Approval	Evidence of consultation and approval with appropriate statutory bodies can be demonstrated
Biosecurity & Invasive Species	Proactive measures are in place to stop the spread of invasive species and harmful pathogens
Environmental Education	The Leave No Trace Ireland Principles have been incorporated
Litter	The Blueway is free from litter and fly-tipped waste
Sustainability	
Management Group	A Blueway Management Group is in place – led by a Local Authority or State Agency
Management Plan	A Blueway Management Plan is in place
Monitoring	A formal process is in place to monitor the impact of the Blueway

8. Achieving the Criteria

This section provides further details on the requirements for each criterion coupled with guidance as to how this can be achieved:

8.1.   Experience
Engaging landscape, culture and heritage

Offers the visitor an opportunity to appreciate and explore an attractive landscape and engage with the unique heritage and culture of the area

The importance of the setting was highlighted in recent research[2] undertaken by Waterways Ireland which demonstrated that 'tranquillity of location' and 'scenic beauty /pristine environment' were the two most important factors in choosing a waterway to undertake recreational activity.

It should be remembered the Blueway is a way of exploring the areas' culture and heritage and often viewing it from a different perspective. It is essential the Blueway proactively showcases and provides adequate interpretation of the area's assets, points of interest and attractions.

Multi-activity

Offers a combination of water and land-based trail (with connectivity to water) options

In order to meet the expectations of the visitor, a Blueway should offer a combination of water-based and land-based trail options. Land-based trails e.g. walking or cycling must have connectivity to the water i.e. were possible they should be adjacent to the waterway. At a minimum, the trail head should be adjacent to the waterway with a significant section of the trail either adjacent to, or providing views of, the waterway.

The land-based trails do not have to run parallel to water-based trails, for example walking trails may be available at various separate locations along the waterway.

Capacity Building

A programme is in place to develop 'Eat / Stay / Go' and 'Activity / Experience' opportunities

The product development will provide a skeleton on which to build the Blueway experience. It is essential that a capacity building programme with activity providers and tourism service providers is delivered both prior to and following the launch of the Blueway. This will be key to:

- Ensuring key stakeholders are aware of the Blueway proposition
- Ensuring key stakeholders are empowered to promote and champion the Blueway
- Developing a range of engaging visitor experiences
- Developing a range of themes and itineraries

The optimum scenario is for Blueways to have a holistic visitor experience in place in advance of launch. However, it is realised that such capacity building can take time and often capital development is a necessary foundation on which to build trade engagement. Therefore, accredited Blueways must

---

[2] Waterways Ireland Users Survey 2017

demonstrate a robust capacity building programme is in place to develop the sub criteria below within a reasonable period following launch.

Bars, Cafés, restaurants and attractions are easily accessible from trail heads and / or trails

Visitors should be able to access eateries and attractions preferably at trail heads and along the Blueway. As a minimum they should be available within short walking distance. These should be clearly identified within visitor information.

It may be appropriate for trail heads located in a more rural setting to offer mobile catering options. Although these should be sensitive to their setting.

The service provider engagement knowledge programme further discussed below should provide best practice advice as to how to tailor their offering to Blueway visitors e.g. bike racks, Blueway friendly picnics, non-fabric chairs etc.

Guided activity experiences appropriate for 'dabblers' are available and can be booked in advance

Activity experiences which are appropriate to 'Dabblers' are essential. Walking and cycling (with bike hire) can be self-led although guided tours will always enhance the experience. Trail cards, themed guides and interpretation should ensure the visitor can explore and engage with the culture and heritage.

Watersports must be guided by reputable activity providers (further guidance is provided in the Section 8.4). Whilst the participants will be required to learn the basics to enjoy the experience in a responsible manner, it is important activity providers offer more than a 'splash and dash' watersports session. Guides should not only be technically competent but also able to confidently provide insights into the culture and heritage of the area.

It is important all activities are bookable in advance and not restricted to bookings by large groups.

Length of time

Offers an experience duration of between half a day to one day

The visitors' optimum time commitment to a Blueway will be between half a day to one day, therefore the activity experiences delivered should cater to this. The entire Blueway proposition may offer several half day to one day options but these should be easily identified through visitor information such as itineraries. Remember a 'Dabbler' will cover less ground in half a day than an enthusiast, so less is more.

As an approximate guide:

Mode	Average Travel Speed	Half Day Experience
Canoeing	3 kilometres per hour	3 – 6 kilometres
Walking	5 kilometres per hour	5 – 10 kilometres
Cycling	10-15 kilometres per hour	10 – 25 kilometres
Sailing & Windsurfing	Introductory sessions typically last 2-3 hours.	

Average Travel Speeds - are dependent on fitness levels, competence, wind strength etc.

Half Day Experience - It is important to remember participants are not seeking a lung busting challenge. A sense of achievement and exploration are important, but time should be left for relaxation, picnics, experiencing local culture and capturing the perfect Instagram shot.

Visitor information

The visitor can access information to allow them plan and enjoy their Blueway experience

Pre–Trip - It is important to remember the visitor experience begins at the decision making and booking stage therefore online information should be available to allow those planning to engage with a Blueway to:

- Understand the Blueway Concept
- Appreciate the unique selling points of the Blueway and component trails
- Assess which trail(s) are suitable for their ability and interests
- Gain information on activity / experience providers
- Gain contact details for further information
- Download appropriate trail cards & guides
- Update trail closures / diversions

Visitor Collateral – As a minimum the Blueway should be accompanied by a hard copy trail card. Depending on the scale of the Blueway this may be separated into a number of print pieces in order to provide an appropriate scale.

Shared Use Trails

Shared Use Trails are compliant with Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails

Shared Use Trails should be compliant with Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails.

http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Management_Standards_Access.pdf

Further guidance is provided within Sport Ireland - Classification and Grading of Recreational Trails

http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Trail_Development/Classification_Grading_of_Recreational_Trails.pdf

Walking Trails

Walking Trails are compliant with Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails

Walking Trails should be compliant with Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails.

http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Management_Standards_Access.pdf

Trails will be inspected and assessed in accordance with **Sport Ireland Checklist for Walking Trails**

http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Trail_Development/Sport%20Ireland%20Trails_Checklist_for_Trail_Registration_Walking_Trails_-_Octobert_2015.docx

Trails should be appropriate to the needs of the Blueway Visitor and therefore the majority of walking trails should be Class 1 or Class 2 Walking Trails as per **Sport Ireland - Classification and Grading of Recreational Trails**. However, Class 3 trails may also be incorporated.

http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Trail_Development/Classification_Grading_of_Recreational_Trails.pdf

Cycling Trails

Cycling Trails are compliant with Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails

Cycling Trails should be compliant with Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails.

http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Management_Standards_Access.pdf

Trails will be inspected and assessed in accordance with **Sport Ireland - Checklist for Cycling Trails**

http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Trail_Development/Sport_Ireland_Checklist_for_Trail_Registration_-_Cycling_Trails_-_Ver_5_October_2015.doc

---

[3] All walking, cycling and shared use trails will be assessed using Sport Ireland – Classification and Grading of Recreational Trails. The key rationale for this is to ensure a consistent approach across the island of Ireland i.e. all trails are assessed using the same criteria. At the time of writing, the standards and procedures followed by Sport Ireland are at a more advanced stage than any such scheme in Northern Ireland.

Trails should be appropriate to the needs of the Blueway Visitor. Off-road cycling trails should be Class 1 or Class 2. Road Based Cycling Trails should be 'Easy' i.e. on dedicated or segregated cycle tracks as per **Sport Ireland -Classification and Grading of Recreational Trails**

http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Trail_Development/Classification_Grading_of_Recreational_Trails.pdf

Snorkel Trails

Snorkel Trails follow the guidelines of the Irish Underwater Council

Snorkel Trails should follow best practice guidelines as developed by the Irish Underwater Council. See Appendix 5: Snorkel Trail Guidelines

A Blueway which incorporates a snorkel trail(s) should be able to demonstrate how they have consulted and taken guidance from the Irish Underwater Council. Trails should be appropriate to the needs of the Blueway Visitor and therefore should be 'Grade 1'.

Paddling Trails

Paddling Trails Follow the Blueway Paddling Trail Guidelines

Paddling Trails should follow the Blueway Paddling Trail Guidelines. See

Appendix 6: Blueway Paddling Trail Guidelines

A Blueway which incorporates a paddling trail should be able to demonstrate how they have consulted and taken guidance from Canoeing Ireland / Canoe Association for Northern Ireland. Trails should be appropriate to the needs of the Blueway Visitor (see Section 8.4).

Sailing & Windsurfing Sites

Sailing & Windsurfing activities will take place in centres that have either Irish Sailing or RYANI accreditation.

Signage

All signage is compliant with the Blueway Signage Guidelines

The Blueway should be compliant with Blueway Signage Guidelines and the relevant elements of the aforementioned trail standards / guidelines. See Appendix 7.

Once potential Blueways have successfully passed the Preliminary Application Stage (see section 10.4), they will be in a position to utilise the brand in order to enable the design of signage and collateral. Final approval will be required on all artwork to ensure compliance to brand guidelines.

Trailhead Facilities

Trail heads are clearly identified and offer adequate parking

Toilet and changing facilities are available within close proximity to water-based trail heads

Each of the aforementioned trail standards and guidelines provide requirements relating to trail heads.

Consideration and identification of steps to mitigate against potential conflict with waterway / trail users has been undertaken

The aim of Blueway development is to enhance recreational opportunities therefore it is important that consideration is given to the impact development may have on existing formal or informal recreation. For example:

- A local gun club may have shooting rights within a forest being considered trail development
- A local motorsports club may hold events within a forest being considered trail development
- A section of waterway proposed for the paddling trail development may be a popular angling beat

Through proactive engagement, the majority of issues can be addressed to provide an amicable outcome.

Accessibility / Inclusivity

Reasonable steps have been undertaken to provide disabled access

Blueway developers should avail of the opportunity provided by developing a new outdoor recreation experience to undertake reasonable steps to provide disabled access through policies and practice.

Design

The Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) base their guidelines[4] on the principle of 'Universal Design' i.e.

'...designing products, buildings, services, facilities and exterior spaces to allow the maximum number of people to use them without the need for adaptation or specialised design. Physical, sensory, cognitive and language needs are taken into account during the initial design phase. Universal Design eliminates the necessity for specific disabled access provision, while at the same time reducing barriers and promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities.'

A copy of the new 'Access Outdoors' publication provides guidance to developers on this subject and can be obtained from https://www.iwa.ie/information/publications

The Fieldfare Trust[5] provides further pragmatic advice i.e. 'In most countryside networks all the paths and trails cannot and should not be made fully accessible. The two questions that arises are:

- what level of accessibility can be reasonably expected by all users?

and

---

[4] Best Practice Access Guidelines – Designing Accessible Environments – Irish Wheelchair Association (July 2014)

[5] A Good Practice Guide to Countryside Access for Disabled People – Fieldfare Trust

- what level of accessibility can be reasonably provided by access managers?

The task of the countryside service provider is to balance these two questions and come up with a practical answer.

The Fieldfare Trust defines an accessible network as one which:

- gives all disabled people choices in the experiences they can enjoy in the wider countryside, the countryside immediately around settlements and urban green spaces
- gives disabled people the same range and quality of choices as everyone else
- includes fully accessible paths (i.e. to BT Countryside for All Standards)
- includes paths where the least restrictive access has been achieved;
- has all development and maintenance work leading to increased accessibility.

It is not a network which:

- has to have all its paths fully accessible;
- has just those routes which were easy to make accessible as the only ones available to disabled people;
- has generally good accessibility but not at the most popular or special sites

Blueway Developers are therefore encouraged to incorporate best practice during development. Useful references include:

- Sport Ireland – Classification and Grading of Trails
  http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/Publications/Management_Standards_Access.pdf
- Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland - Principles and Standards for Trail Development in Northern Ireland
  http://www.outdoorrecreationni.com/publication/outdoor-recreation-ni/best-practice/guidelines/principles-and-standards-for-trail-development-in-northern-ireland/
- Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland – Accessible Walks Scheme
  http://www.outdoorrecreationni.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Toolkit-to-Success-Accessible-Walks-Scheme-_ORNI-2012.pdf
- Irish Wheelchair Association - Best Practice Access Guidelines – Designing Accessible Environments
  https://www.iwa.ie/downloads/about/iwa-access-guidelines.pdf
- Irish Wheelchair Association - Access Outdoors https://www.iwa.ie/information/publications
- Fieldfare Trust - A Good Practice Guide to Countryside Access for Disabled People
  http://www.fieldfare.org.uk/countryside-for-all/countryside-for-all-good-practice-guide/?phpMyAdmin=a83c17410f95a34fc45353e75deec0d6
- Disability Sports Northern Ireland – Accessible Sport Facilities Design Guidelines
  http://dsni.co.uk/files/Guide_1_Accessible_Sports_Facilities_Design_Guidelines_2016.pdf

Activity Delivery

There are a number of key considerations that outdoor activity providers need to be aware of when planning and running outdoor recreation activities for people with disabilities. The following toolkit provides practical guidance to assist providers to offer a safe, meaningful and enjoyable experience.

- Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland – Making Outdoor Activities Accessible

http://www.outdoorrecreationni.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Toolkit-to-Success-Making-Outdoor-Activities-Accessible_ORNI-2012.pdf

Further guidance and support is available CARA the national organisation in the Republic of Ireland which promotes and supports sport and physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities. CARA offer specific training on Inclusive Adventure Activities. https://caracentre.ie/training/

8.3. Access
Landowner / Authority Agreement

Access is permitted by all landowners and relevant authorities – public and private for a minimum period of 10 years.

The Blueway developer must provide documented evidence of permitted access from all landowners and relevant authorities.

Water and Land Ownership Considerations

Knowledge of land ownership and the land owners' requirements is crucial to Blueway Development. The official agreement of all the relevant landowners, sporting rights and navigation authorities is required to develop and in turn publicise a Blueway.

Identification of Land Owners

Public land - GIS has become an invaluable tool for identifying public land ownership. Many public agencies have provided land ownership data via sources such as www.heritagemaps.ie and https://www.spatialni.gov.uk .

Private land – Private landownership can be identified via a combination of

- Land registry searches – although the lack of registration does not necessarily mean the land is not owned by anyone
- Local consultation – with well-informed residents or local authorities
- Registry of deeds search – this often has to be conducted by a solicitor and should be a last resort

Other Considerations

Sporting Rights – A landowner may have sold or lease shooting rights e.g. for Pheasant.

Riparian Rights – This is a system allocating water amongst those who own land along its path, typically either side of a river or water body.

Harbour and Navigation Authorities – They are responsible for navigation and landing rights. It should be noted that existing navigation channels have priority over any subsequent water based trail

Fishing Rights – These can be owned by private individuals, state agencies or groups such as angling clubs. Useful sources on information include:

- Inland Fisheries Ireland https://www.fisheriesireland.ie/State-Fisheries/state-fisheries.html
- NI Direct https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/angling/where-can-i-fish-northern-ireland
- National Governing Bodies and Local Angling Clubs

Identification and engagement with the fishing rights owner is key for three main reasons:

- Paddlers can become entangled in an angler's line
- Anglers should not be hindered in or prevented from exercising their fishing rights. Inappropriate actions by the water trail users such as splashing, loud noise or passing too close to the anglers or their lines can scare off fish and also undermine the angler's enjoyment of their activity
- Canoes often at low states of water can damage spawning beds

In many cases visitor information and activity provider education can reduce the potential for such conflict. In some cases, anglers and canoeists have amicably agreed to restrict their respective activities to set periods of the year.

Consultation and Agreement

Ideally consultation with landowners should take place before any trail route is communicated in detail to the general public. This occurrence has the potential to damage any future relationships with these stakeholders.

Whilst all landowners alongside the trail should be consulted out of courtesy (often this opportunity is provided through a public consultation or workshop), it is essential to consult and gain agreement with land owners and rights holders on which physical development will take place.

It is recommended that the agreement is documented and signed by the relevant parties. Public bodies will often have their own processes which will have to be followed. Agreements can often be established on a 'permissive' basis. This means the landowner gives permission for the trail to pass through their property. This permissive access means:

- the trail can be used by the public with the permission of the landowner in a way the landowner has specified and subject to any conditions he or she has agreed
- the landowner can withdraw this permission should they so wish, subject to reasonable notice
- the owner retains the right to divert or close the trail if they so wish, subject to reasonable notice

Insurance

Public liability insurance is in place providing indemnity for all infrastructure, land-based trails and water trails' access and egress points.

The Blueway developer must be able to provide evidence to demonstrate all infrastructure, land-based trails and water trail access points are indemnified under a public liability policy or policies.

In terms of a paddling trail the indemnity for private landowners is required for access and egress points and not for lands adjacent to the waterway.

In the Republic of Ireland, Blueway developers should liaise with Sport Ireland who in conjunction with Local Authorities retain a public liability insurance policy with Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance Ltd (IPB). This policy provides indemnity to private landowners and occupiers whose property/land is crossed or adjoins the trails listed on this policy.

Cover under this policy provides an indemnity to private landowners in respect of legal liability arising from claims involving personal injury or property damage sustained by persons whilst on landowners' land. The indemnity is valid whether the walker is on the trail or has strayed off it.

8.4. Safety
Suitability

The experience is suitable for the 'dabbler / novice' with little to no skills or prior experience in undertaking adventure activities

The Blueway should be suitable to the needs of the 'dabbler' i.e. those that have little to no skills or prior experience in undertaking adventure activities.   See Section 5.1.

Section 8.2 provides clear guidelines relating to the technical suitability of trails.

These are summarised in the table below:

Activity / Trail	Grade	Guideline
Paddling Trails	River • 'Grade 1 Flat Water' Inland Waterways • 'Very Sheltered Inland Waterways' • 'Sheltered Inland Water' Sea • 'Sheltered Tidal Areas'	Blueway Paddling Trail Guidelines – Appendix 6
Snorkelling Trails	Grade One	Snorkel Trail Guidelines – Appendix 5
Walking Trails	Class 1 or Class 2[6]	Sport Ireland - Classification and Grading of Recreational Trails
Cycle Trails	Off-road cycling trails • Class 1 or Class 2 Road Based Cycling Trails • 'Easy'	Sport Ireland - Classification and Grading of Recreational Trails

---

[6] Trails should be appropriate to the needs of the Blueway Visitor and therefore the majority of walking trails should be Class 1 or Class 2. However, Class 3 trails may also be incorporated.

Visitors are not exposed to hidden dangers.

Visitors should be aware of the risks they will face and that safety is a shared responsibility between the visitor and the Blueway Manager.

As outlined by the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group[7]

'Visitors should be aware of the risks they will face. They also need to understand that although they have the right to appropriate protection they also have a responsibility to behave sensibly and take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of others. Safety is a shared responsibility between the visitor and the land owner / manager.'

The signage guidelines in Appendix 7: Blueway Signage Guidelines provide further guidance regarding providing awareness of risk. Further guidance on Visitor Safety Management is included with Section 8.6.

To demonstrate the shared responsibility between the visitor and the Blueway Developer / Manager the Responsibility Statement within Appendix 10 provides a useful basis for adaptation by individual Blueways.

Activity Providers / Experience

A programme is in place for activity providers to demonstrate their safety credentials

Blueway developers should establish and administer an activity provider permit system. Only those with permits should be included in Blueway promotional activity.

Many of the National Governing Bodies already provide robust external accreditation systems for activity providers within their discipline (See Appendix 8) and therefore these should be utilised were relevant. For those activities that do not provide external accreditation, it is recommended as a minimum the provider should provide evidence of:

- Relevant Technical Qualifications
- First Aid Qualifications
- Public Liability Insurance
- Risk Assessment
- Emergency Response Plan

In addition, Blueway developers may wish activity provider to demonstrate:

- Attendance at capacity building workshops
- Knowledge of the culture and heritage of the area
- Customer Service Experience

---

[7] Managing Visitor Safety in the Countryside – Principle and Practice (2011), Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group

8.5.   Conservation and the Environment

Blueways provide a unique way to engage with natural and built heritage assets. It is therefore essential that as a minimum Blueway development and management avoids any negative impact on the environment. Fundamentally, the maintenance of a high level of water quality is vital to the success of a Blueway. In addition, the Blueway can add to or improve the environment e.g. through education and appropriate access.

It is essential to take a proactive approach to the potential impact of Blueway development on the environment for the outset of project planning. The following initial steps are recommended to guide project planning, design and mitigation:

- Ensure local ecological and heritage expertise is included within the Project Development Group - further discussed in Section 10.2
- Undertake an appraisal of 'constraints'. It is important to commission the relevant expertise, for example, an ecologist constraints study conducted by a reputable ecologist will ensure the project is in an informed position
- Engage in pre-planning consultation with the local authority
- Consult and comprehend actions and recommendations with District River Basin Management Plans (Northern Ireland) and Areas for Action for the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 – 2021 (Republic of Ireland)
- Engage with Local Authority Water and Communities Office (Republic of Ireland) and DAERA Catchment Officers (Northern Ireland)

Statutory Approval

Evidence of consultation and approval with appropriate statutory bodies can be demonstrated

The nature of Blueways means that it is likely that development proposals may impact on sensitive sites and species of nature conservation. It is therefore essential Blueway developers take cognisance of the ecological assessment, project authorisation (e.g. planning permission) and ongoing project management considerations at an early stage.

It is essential to consider the impact of the Blueway in its entirety rather than only focusing on sections in or close to natural and built heritage assets. It is important not only to consider the direct impact of physical developments such as access points but also the impact of an increased volume of visitors using the entire Blueway route. For example, whilst an access points may not be developed within a sensitive site, its placement may increase the volume of people passing a nearby sensitive site e.g. seal haul out.

Natural Heritage Designations

The impact on following natural heritage designations should be considered during planning, design and development:

International

- **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)** are designated under the EU Habitats Directive. These are the prime wildlife conservation areas in the country and are considered to be important on a European as well as an Irish level. Most SACs are in the countryside, although a few sites do reach into town or city landscapes e.g. rivers. SACs include – rivers woodlands, raised/blanket bogs, sand dunes, machairs, lakes, estuaries, sea inlets, etc.

- **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)** are designated under the EU Birds Directive. Because birds migrate long distances it is not sufficient to protect them over just one part of their range, and hence the EU Birds Directive provides for a network of sites across all the Member States which protects birds at their areas of breeding, feeding, roosting and wintering. It also identifies species which are rare, in danger of extinction or vulnerable to changes in habitat, and which thus need protection. Wetlands are particularly important habitats for these species.

- **RAMSAR** - The Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) is an intergovernmental treaty whose mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world". As of January 2016, 169 nations have joined the Convention as Contracting Parties, and more than 2,220 wetlands around the world, covering over 214 million hectares, have been designated for inclusion in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.

Republic of Ireland Specific

- **Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)** are designated under the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2010. NHAs are so designated because they are considered important for the habitats present, or they contain species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection. There is a wide range of NHAs – raised bogs, blanket bogs, roosting sites for bats, woodlands, lakes, etc. Some sites are afforded designation as proposed Natural Heritage Areas e.g. Royal and Grand Canals.
- **Nature Reserves** are areas of importance for wildlife which are protected under Ministerial Order, in accordance with the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2010. Most are owned by the State, however, some are owned by private landowners or organisations.
- **National Parks** are designated in accordance with the criteria set down by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The purpose of National Parks is to conserve plants, animals and scenic landscapes which are both extensive and of national importance, and under conditions compatible with that purpose, to enable the public to visit and appreciate them. There are six National Parks in the country, all of which are State owned and managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Northern Ireland Specific

- **Marine Conservation Zones** safeguard vulnerable or unique marine species and habitats of national importance in the Northern Ireland inshore region based on an ecosystem approach. These MCZs fulfil the obligations of The Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 (the "Act") to contribute to an ecologically coherent UK network of MPAs as well as wider biodiversity commitments at European and global level.

- **Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs)** are protected areas that represent the best of our wildlife and geological sites that make a considerable contribution to the conservation of our most valuable natural places. The law relating to ASSIs is contained in the Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002

Natural Heritage Designations can be identified by:

- National Park and Wildlife Service (Republic of Ireland)
  http://webgis.npws.ie/npwsviewer/
- NIEA Natural Environment Map Viewer (Northern Ireland)
  https://appsd.daera-ni.gov.uk/nedmapviewer

Other Protections

In addition, the aforementioned Natural Heritage designations there are a range of other habitats/ species of high conservation value which must be considered.

- NIEA Guidance (Northern Ireland)
  https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/plant-or-animal-species-protected-by-law
- NPWS Guidance
  https://www.npws.ie/development%20consultations

Biosecurity / Invasive Alien Species

The quality of the local water environment and the need to protect it is paramount. At an early stage Blueway developers should consult with River Basin Management Plans and engage with the following:

- DAERA District Catchment Officers
  https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/delivery-and-public-participation
- Water and Communities Office – Community Water Officers
  http://watersandcommunities.ie/community-water-officers

Due to the importance of this issue, further detail is outlined in a separate section below.

Consultation

The following organisations should be consulted and guidance of the appropriate is available below:

National Parks and Wildlife Service

https://www.npws.ie/development%20consultations

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/when-niea-consulted

Built Heritage

The impact on built heritage within the following designations should also be considered

Republic of Ireland

The impact on the following designation should be considered:

- Monuments protected in the following ways:
  o Recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places
  o Registered in the Register of Historic Monuments
  o National monument subject to a preservation order (or temporary preservation order).
  o National monument in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht or a Local Authority.
  o Guidance is provided at https://www.archaeology.ie/monument-protection

- Archaeological sites listed under Archaeological Survey of Ireland's Site and Monuments Database https://www.archaeology.ie/contact-us/archaeological-survey-ireland

- Protected Structures – these are listed in each Local authority area within the Register of Protected Structures http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/building_or_altering_a_home/protected_structures.html

Northern Ireland

The impact on the following designation should be considered:

- Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes
- Scheduled Sites or Monuments
- State Care Site or Monuments
- Scheduled Zones
- Listed Buildings

These and other relevant considerations can be viewed via the Historic Environment Map Viewer

https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6887ca0873b446e39d2f82c80c8a9337

Consultation

The following organisations should be consulted and guidance is available below:

Historic Environment Division (Northern Ireland)

https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/historic-environment-division-structure-and-contacts

National Monuments Service (Republic of Ireland)

https://www.archaeology.ie/contact-us

Other Permissions and Permits

Trail developments may require a number of other permissions from State Agencies, depending on the type and location of the development.

Inland Fisheries Ireland (Republic of Ireland) https://www.fisheriesireland.ie/

Where any trail development works are proposed alongside, or close to, a river, lake or watercourse, consultation should take place with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). A new slipway, quay or canoe step at a watercourse should also be discussed with IFI, who can advise on precautions to be taken to prevent any discharges of silt or soil.

Inland Fisheries Ireland has developed a Guidance Document to the IFI Environmental Assessment Process describing the process and procedures in place within IFI to facilitate development and conservation works within Irleand's inland and coastal waters.

https://www.fisheriesireland.ie/NSAD/environmental-assessment-process.html

Rivers Agency (Northern Ireland) https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/rivers-and-watercourses

Rivers Agency maintains and inspects watercourses in Northern Ireland to make sure these are free flowing. This helps prevent flooding and improves land drainage.

Discharging into a watercourse, or doing works that will affect the free flow of a watercourse, requires consent to be applied for from Rivers Agency.

Planning Permission

Car park and buildings planning permission is typically required for the construction of a new car park, or a building such as a toilet/shower block. However, slipways, canoe steps and quays are also likely to require planning permission. Early consultation with the planning section of the relevant local authority is recommended where any doubt exists about planning requirements.

Proactive measures are in place to stop the spread of invasive species and harmful pathogens

Invasive Species Ireland highlights that invasive non-native plant and animal species are the second greatest threat to biodiversity worldwide after habitat destruction. They can negatively impact on native species, can transform habitats and threaten whole ecosystems causing serious problems to the environment and the economy. Fundamentally, they can be highly detrimental to the key asset on which the Blueway is dependent i.e. water quality.

Unfortunately, waterways both Northern Ireland and the Republic Ireland have been significantly impacted by biosecurity issues (e.g. Crayfish Plague) and aliens invasive species (e.g. zebra mussel) in recent years.

It is essential Blueways undertake proactive measure to stop the spread of invasive species and harmful pathogens. A biosecurity plan is therefore an essential part of Blueway accreditation and should be incorporated within a Blueway Management Plan (see Section 8.6). It is worth noting that the Blueway development is unlikely to be the only factor impacting on the management of biosecurity and alien invasive species within the water catchment. For example, other recreation users such as anglers, marina operators, aquaculturists and horticulturists with also be part of the solution, therefore successful management with require an integrated approach.

It should be recognised that the typical Blueway visitor are mobile i.e. small kayaks, canoes, windsurfers, bikes etc are more likely to cross between catchments and various water bodies on a much more regular basis than general waterways users. It is also recognised that kayakers, canoeists, stand up paddle boarders have direct contact with the water and this can result in them inadvertently becoming a carrier of aquatic invasive alien species.

The overriding principle regarding biosecurity is that prevention is better than cure therefore awareness, education and training are key to successful biosecurity action planning within water catchments. This is an area that requires relevant expertise, an initial contact point for advice and guidance should be:

- DAERA District Catchment Officers
  https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/delivery-and-public-participation
- Waters and Communities Office – Community Water Officers
  http://watersandcommunities.ie/community-water-officers

Appendix 9 provides a further example guidance developed by Local Authority Waters and Communities Office of how preventative measures can be communicated the Blueway visitors.

Leave No Trace Ireland Principles have been incorporated

Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace is an outdoor ethics programme designed to promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships. The programme is delivered throughout the island of Ireland by Leave No Trace Ireland.

At the heart of Leave No Trace are 7 principles for reducing the damage caused by outdoor activities.

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare

2. Be Considerate of Others

3. Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife

4. Travel and Camp on Durable Ground

5. Leave What You Find

6. Dispose of Waste Properly

7. Minimise the Effects of Fire

As a minimum Blueway developers should incorporate the Leave No Trace Principles within information boards. However, it is recommended Leave No Trace Awareness Sessions should be offered to service provider. These can be tailored according to the waterway, for example Leave No Trace Ireland has recently developed a 'Coast' edition of the Leave No Trace Ireland Skills and Ethics series to complement the original mainstay edition.

The Coast edition explains how you can best enjoy the coast and its wildlife, without causing harm. The original Leave No Trace Ireland Skills and Ethics programme is applicable for many situations and contains additional information. The practices in the booklet are appropriate for all coastal locations in Ireland. By following the code, and showing it to other people, will ensure that this part of Irish heritage survives for all to appreciate in years to come.

For more information see http://www.leavenotraceireland.org

Other relevant well-resourced and robust schemes include:

The Green Blue – Making the environment second nature https://www.thegreenblue.org.uk/

The Green Blue is an innovative environmental programme developed by British Marine and the Royal Yachting Association. The programme provides practical advice and information to help recreational boaters, watersports participants and marine businesses to think and act in an environmentally conscious way. The overall aim of the programme is to work towards promoting a sustainable boating community which will help to save money, avoid red tape and safeguard the waters and habitats for the future.

WiSe Scheme

The WiSe (Wildlife Safe) is the United Kingdom Standard for commercial marine wildlife watching. It aims to promote responsible wildlife-watching, through training, accreditation and awareness-raising.

The core element to WiSe, is a modular training and accreditation course aimed primarily at operators of passenger pleasure craft, wildlife cruise operators, dive and service boats, and yacht skippers. These individuals are most likely to come into contact with marine wildlife, as they are out on the water on a regular basis.

WiSe training consists of instruction in how to responsibly watch wildlife, whilst at the same time minimising any potential disturbance. All WiSe accredited operators received instruction in how to handle their craft whilst in contact with any of these animals, how they may react to the presence of boats, and how to leave them room to carry on with their lives unimpeded.

All WiSe operators receive instruction into their local and national laws relating to wildlife. They will receive instruction on species identification, life history and behaviour of a range of species they may encounter in their local waters. All WiSe operators agree to abide by Codes of Conduct for all of the species covered by WiSe, as well as all relevant local or national laws and bylaws.

WiSe Instructors have been specially selected in all areas around the UK for their years of experience in the field, their knowledge of the species likely to be encountered in their locality, and local conservation issues relating to marine wildlife that are of particular relevance.

Litter

The Blueway is free from litter and fly-tipped waste

This aspect will be assessed under the technical standards relating to specific trails.

Management Group

A Blueway Management Group is in place – led by a Local Authority or State Agency

Partnership will be key to the successful development and ongoing management of a Blueway.

The establishment of a Blueway Management Group should formalise the partnership via a mechanism such as a Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

A Partnership Agreement or MOU will typically include the following:

- Aims and Objectives
- Spirit of the agreement i.e. collaboration
- Synopsis of overall activities
- Term, Termination and Review
- Specific Agreements – these may include:
    - Key Responsibilities of each party
    - Key Contacts / Representatives
    - Financial obligations / budgets
    - Branding
    - Intellectual Property

To ensure ongoing sustainability the group should be led by a local authority or state agency

Management Plan

A Blueway Management Plan is in place

Every Blueway project should include the development of a Management Plan. This is good practice for a range of reasons that include:

- Blueway management that ensures the safety of users is considered and that trail standards are maintained at a consistent level
- Blueway management that relates directly to the liability of the Blueway Provider. Proper evidence of an implemented Management Plan will reduce the likelihood of the Blueway Provider being found at fault should a claim resulting from injury on the Blueway arise
- Funding – many funders will require evidence of a Management Plan that clearly shows how the Blueway Management Group will ensure that the trail(s) project will be managed for a specified period of time, normally the duration for which their Letter of Offer is valid. This provides evidence that there is a procedure in place to ensure that the Blueway is maintained at the standard and for the purpose for which the project was funded
- Partner buy-in – a Blueway Management Plan ensures that all project partners are clear about the commitment required to managing the project, once completed. The Plan will also clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners.

The Blueway Management Plan should:

- Clearly relate to the requirements of the members of the Blueway Management Group
- Be developed by individuals who have an understanding of Blueway management, provision and development within the context of the area
- Clearly reflect the development process for that Blueway to date

The Trail Management Plan should include (but is not limited to):

- Visitor Safety Management Policy and Plan
- Biosecurity Plan
- Blueway Product Inventory
- Maintenance Plan
- Risk Assessment
- Marketing Plan

Visitor Safety Management Policy and Plan

The best practice in this area is outlined within Managing Visitor Safety in the Countryside – Principles and Practice. http://vscg.org/publications/ . The Blueway Steering Group encourages the adoption of these risk management techniques.

Developed by the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group[8] the guiding principles and risk management techniques have been developed and implemented by all of its members. They have provided their worth in practice and have been recognised by enforcing authorities and courts, as the basis for sensible risk management.

---

[8] The Ireland Branch was formed in 2013 and is focused on the issues facing the Irish members such as the visitor risk assessment process and a common approach to information and signage. A number of Irish organisations have been members of the VSCG since the 2013 launch and this continues to grow year on year.

Plan
- Policy and Strategy Development
- Planning and Organising

Do
- Implemenation and Operation

Check
- Performance Monitoring

Act
- Learn and Improve

Review
- Against Guiding Principles

Protocols and Procedures

The Visitor Safety Management Plan should clearly set out the protocols and procedures that will be followed to ensure that the Blueway Provider is meeting the Duty of Care. This will include:

The number and content of inspections:

- Inspections will include formal e.g. once a month, or informal e.g. after a storm, an event, or provided via feedback from a user.
- All inspections should be recorded including the date, time, who completed the inspection and the action to be taken following the inspection.

Who will complete the inspections:

- Consideration should be given as to who will complete the inspections. This may include a paid member of staff, volunteers or a company contracted to deliver the service. It is important to consider the skills and experience required to complete inspections and ensure that the person completing the inspection has the necessary skills.

Actions resulting from inspections:

- The reporting structure of any inspections must be clearly set out to ensure that action is taken where required. The action required can be prioritised in terms of urgency. For example –
  o Priority 1 - within a day
  o Priority 2 - within a week
  o Priority 3 - within a month
  o Priority 4 - within 3 months
  o Priority 5 - within 6 months

For example:

- Missing/ damaged waymarkers/ information or warning signs - Priority 1/ 2
- Fallen trees/ branches across trails - Priority 1

- Waymarkers/information or signs partially obscured by vegetation – Priority 2 /3
- Damage to trail tread – Priority 1 to 5, depending on level of damage

In some cases, for example if a tree has fallen across a section of trail (Priority 1), the section of trail will need to be closed and a suitable diversion put in place. This section of trail should remain closed and users informed of this until the tree has been safely removed. A suitable diversion route will need to be put in place and this will also need to be inspected as part of the normal inspection regime of the trail for the duration of the diversion.

Informing Users:

- The procedure for informing Trail Users of any diversions/ trail closures or other trail related issues must be clearly set out in the Management Policy. This should include clear and appropriate signage/ information at the trailhead, online, and at the start of the relevant section. This information should remain in place until the necessary works have been carried out to address the problem. The Management Plan should also identify who is responsible for ensuring the relevant trail information is put in place and removed again once the issue has been resolved. A clear record of the action taken should be kept.

Blueway Product Inventory

The purpose of this is to establish an inventory for all parts of the Blueway product once it is completed. This will form the baseline standard for inspections. The aim of the Blueway Provider should be to maintain and manage the product consistently at this baseline standard. The Trail Product Inventory should include the following key elements:

- Infrastructure Inventory
- Trail Inventory
- Waymarking Inventory
- Signage Inventory
- Information Inventory
- Product Literature Inventory
- Counter Inventory

Maintenance Plan

A crucial part of the Management Plan is the Maintenance Plan. Records of all maintenance must be kept including the date, time, detail of work completed and by whom. A pro forma should be established to record all maintenance.

The maintenance plan should include –

When maintenance takes place:

There will be regular maintenance required, for example – Clearing back encroaching vegetation on a regular basis especially throughout the growing season

There will also be ad hoc maintenance requirements e.g. repairing trail features. The ad hoc maintenance will be identified during the formal and informal inspections and a clear protocol and procedure for this should be established

The amount of maintenance required will be influenced by a range of factors including level of use, the weather, time of year and the type of trail features. For example, extra maintenance may be required after a busy bank holiday weekend, after an event or following a storm.

The standard to which the trails should be maintained

As previously discussed, it is recommended the standards are based on the Blueway Product Inventory baseline

Who will complete maintenance?

It is important the roles and responsibility for maintenance is clearly defined. Different aspects may be maintained by different partners. It is important that the person(s) completing maintenance have the necessary skills/ experience/ qualifications required to complete the works.

Risk Assessment

As per the Visitor Safety Management Policy and Plan, the best practice in this area is outlined within Managing Visitor Safety in the Countryside – Principles and Practice. http://vscg.org/publications/ . The Blueway Steering Group encourages the adoption of these risk management techniques.

The following five step approach is recommended:

1	•**Identify** the hazards
2	•**Consider** who might be harmed and how
3	•**Evaluate** the risks and decide whether the existing risk control measures are adequate or whether more should be done
4	•**Record** your findings and implement them
5	•**Review** your assessment and update if necessary
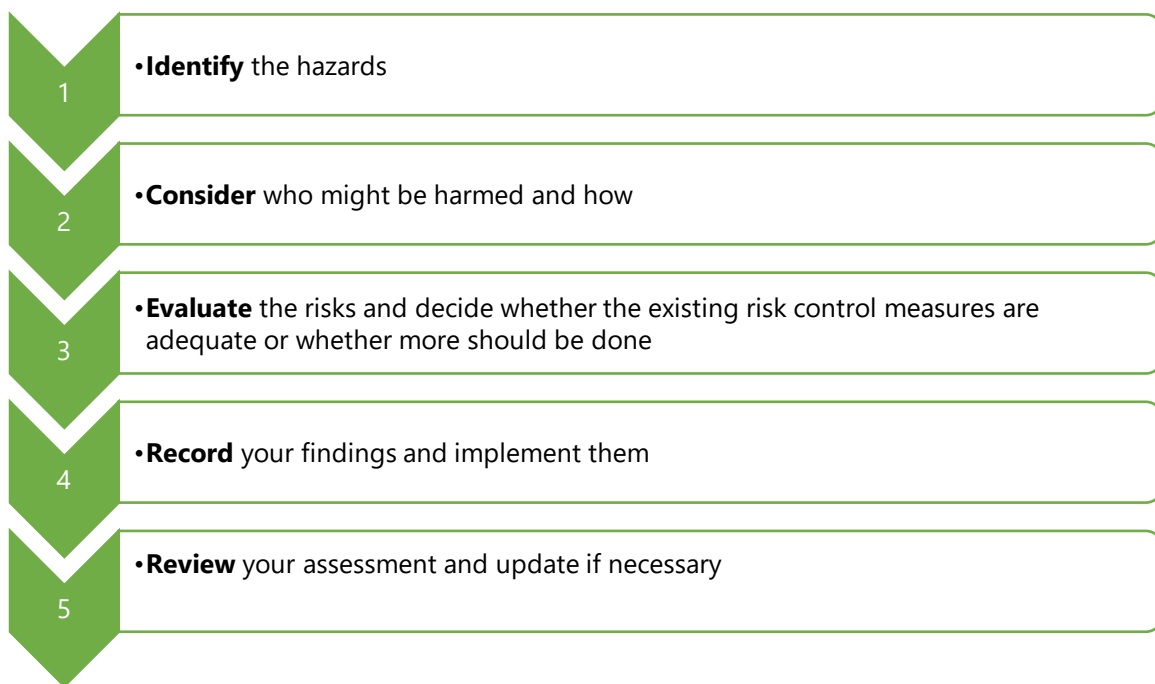
Hazard **-** is anything with the potential to cause harm

Risk - is the likelihood, high or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard, the severity of the harm and the number of people who might be hurt

Risk Control Measures - are precautions to make an incident less likely to occur and / or the results less severe

Marketing Plan

To ensure that the Blueway is effectively promoted, a marketing professional should create a targeted Marketing Plan. This should clearly identify the relevant target market(s) and how they will be attracted to the Blueway.

A range of factors including the objectives of the Blueway and the marketing budget available will influence the level of marketing activity. It should also be clearly identified who is responsible for implementing the Marketing Plan.

Monitoring

A formal process is in place to monitor the impact of the Blueway

It is essential to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Blueway in terms of both economics and participation levels.

In addition, it is essential to monitor visitor feedback in order to manage, maintain and improve the Blueway offering. Visitor feedback can relate to immediate issues such a damaged infrastructure but it is also important to monitor visitor experience feedback. Techniques may include:

- Electronic Visitor Counters
- Email / Telephone
- Social Media / Review Sites
- Questionnaires (e.g. Survey Monkey) via tourism operators

9. Accreditation Process

Process for the accreditation of Blueways:

1	•**Preliminary Application** •Application Screening & Recommendations	**Blueways Accreditation Advisor**
	•Ratification of recommendations	**Blueways Steering Group**
2	•Review of detailed submission •On the ground inspection •**Recommendation to Steering Group**	**Blueways Accreditation** **Advisor**
3	•**Ratification of inspection report** •**Award of accreditation**	**Blueways Steering Group**
4	•**Ongoing management and maintenance**	**Blueways Developer**

Preliminary Application

Preliminary applications will provide the opportunity for a review of the potential for a proposed Blueway to meet the requirements within the holistic accreditation criteria. The review of a concise preliminary application form at an early stage in the process will allow the Blueway Steering Group to provide direction to Blueway developers before further money, time and resource are invested. The feedback may provide an endorsement of the current proposal, advice on areas for improvement or determine if the proposal is viable in its current form.

Recommendation to Steering Group - Detailed Submission & External Inspection

Following the preliminary application and assessment, the developers will have the opportunity to take on board any feedback before preparing and submitting the final detailed application against the holistic criterion. A key element of this application process will involve an on the ground inspection of the proposed Blueway by the Blueway Officer.

Ratification of inspection report recommendations

The Blueway Accreditation Advisor will prepare a detailed inspection / assessment report which will recommend if a Blueway has achieved accreditation. This will be ratified by the Blueway Steering Group who will be recognised as the awarding body for Blueway accreditation.

In certain circumstances the Blueway Accreditation Advisor and Blueway Steering Group may require specialist advice from a Technical Advisory Panel.

Ongoing management and maintenance

Once the Blueway has received accreditation it will be the responsibility of the Blueway Management Group /developer to ensure it continues to meet the standards set out in the Blueway Accreditation Criteria.

Blueways wishing to retain accreditation will be re-inspected every three years. This will be conducted by the Blueways Accreditation Advisor and ratified by the Blueways Steering Group.

The costs for undertaking Blueway assessments and accreditations inspections are as follows – insert link

10. Blueway Planning Process

This section outlines the recommended process for successfully planning and developing Blueways in Ireland. The reality of outdoor recreation means the steps in this process may not be delivered in a linear fashion i.e. there will inevitably be overlap, however, it is important each step is delivered.

1 • **Scoping - Concept Generation**

2 • **Establish Development Group / Frame of Reference**

3 • **Feasibility Study & Development Action Plan**

4 • **Preliminary Application**

5 • **Refine Development Plan**

6 • **Secure Funding**

7 • **Plan and Complete Development Work**

8 • **Final Application & Inspection**

9 • **Launch & Promote**

10 • **Manage and Monitor**

10.1. Scoping – Concept Generation

A high-level scoping exercise is important to establish an overview concept for a potential Blueway. This concept document will be key to encouraging the necessary partners to engage with the remaining stages of the planning process.

It should be made clear the concept is a discussion document on which input is welcomed. This will ensure stakeholders feel they have a key role from the outset. The initial concept document can be quite brief; however, it is recommended it includes the following:

Aims & Objectives – see 10.2

Scope and Scale – see 10.2

Concept Map

A concept map is a useful tool to spatially present the opportunities and challenges. Although care should be taken to ensure its confidentiality so as not to upset any potential stakeholders (e.g. private landowners) that have not yet been made aware of the project.

The most effective method of Concept Map development is via GIS in order to:

Identify:
- Public / Private land boundaries
- Existing recreation infrastructure / trails
- Connectivity of towns and villages
- Statutory designations
- Council boundaries
- Relevant attractions

Annotate
- Proposed Trails / Trailhead
- Proposed water access / egress point

Calculate
- Length of trails

Analysis of strengths and weaknesses vs accreditation criteria

This should include a snapshot analysis of the proposed Blueway's potential to meet the accreditation criteria (See section 7). Engagement with relevant experts may be required. There will inevitably be 'unknowns' identified at this stage, however, it is important they are outlined along with indicative methods of address.

Initial guidance and feedback from the Blueways Accreditation Advisor will add value and direction at this stage. **Engagement with the Blueways Accreditation Advisor is essential prior to making any applications for funding.**

Key Stakeholder Identification

Successful Blueway development will require a partnership approach. It is therefore important to identify the relevant bodies, organisations and individuals that will add the required resource and expertise to bring the project to fruition. A key stakeholder workshop is a useful technique to begin engagement. This process should begin to identify those:

- Responsible for the delivery of the Blueway
- Responsible for the ongoing management of the Blueway
- Who will have a key role in the delivery

10.2. Establish Development Group / Frame of Reference

Project Development Group

The aforementioned key stakeholder engagement should identify the most relevant representatives to add value to a Project Development Group. It is important from the outset to state clearly the commitment expectations of group members. The group should be formally established with a designated chairperson from the lead organisation

Key stakeholders may include:

- Local Authority
- Local Development Company
- Tourism Organisations
- Local Sports Partnership
- National Governing Bodies of Sport
- Public Landowners / Managers
- Navigations authority
- Non-Governmental Environment Groups
- User groups – e.g. local canoe club

Frame of Reference

The development of a formal Frame of Reference will guide and inform the project throughout. It is also essential to secure partner buy-in and ensure that everyone is working to the same agenda.

The Frame of Reference should identify:
- Scope and Scale
- Aims and Objectives
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Concept Plan

Scope and Scale

Establishing the intended scope and scale means agreeing the significance and the size of the project. This is essential if the right outcomes are to be achieved.

Establishing the scope and scale of any trail development involves answering key questions such as:

- Who is the target market? e.g. is this for local community, day visitors or tourists?
- What is the significance of the trail project within the area in terms of existing or other planned provision? e.g. is this the only trail or is it one of many in the local area/ region?
- What is the desired economic and social impact of the trails? e.g. to create jobs, lead to increased visitor spend, provide a place for local people to get active outdoors, to increase participation in the sport, etc.
- Is the project of community, regional, national or international significance?
- How many people and communities is the development likely to affect/ impact upon?

Aims and Objectives

Clearly defined project aim(s) and objectives are important to ensure all partners are in agreement about what the Blueway will achieve.

Generally, there is one clear overall aim for the project; this is the main reason why the project is taking place. The objectives should then all relate to the achievement of this aim. These will be shaped by the project scope and scale, as previously identified. The project aim(s) and objectives can be extremely varied and can relate to the following:

- Creating a tourism facility of regional, national or international importance
- Creating a community recreation resource
- Managing the impact of current recreation on land use
- Managing the impact of recreation on a landscape or habitat
- Managing safety and liability
- Managing user conflict

In order to provide the necessary clarity, it is advised to employ either

- SMART Goal Setting – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, **T**ime-Bound

Or

- **O**utcome **B**ased **A**ccountability (OBA) – stating Outcomes, Indicators of Success and Measures of Success

Define Role and Responsibilities

It is essential to define roles (including project lead) and responsibilities for the development of the project. This will initially relate to the development of the project; however, it is also essential to identify the roles and responsibilities for ongoing project management.

10.3.   Feasibility Study and Development Action Plan

This detailed feasibility study will undertake a critical review of the proposed Blueway against the Blueway Accreditation Criteria outlined in detail within Section 7 i.e.

- Experience
- Technical
- Access
- Safety
- Conservation and Environment
- Sustainability

For each of the sub-criteria, the feasibility study should identify:

- Current position
- Potential to meet the criteria
- Recommended action(s) to move from current to required position

It may be necessary to commission external expertise to assess some of the criteria e.g. Technical Criteria. It is essential to be realistic at this stage, if the Blueway is unlikely to meet some the criteria then it is important to alter the proposal whilst remaining in line with the Frame of Reference or cease

the process. The recommended actions should be formed within a Development Plan with defined responsibilities against relevant stakeholders.

Indicatives costs and delivery timelines should also be identified at this point.

10.4. Preliminary Application

The aforementioned Feasibility Study and Action Plan will form the basis of the Preliminary Application submitted to the Blueways Accreditation Advisor. Preliminary application form / questionnaire to be developed by Blueways Accreditation Advisor.

The Preliminary Application will be assessed by the Blueways Accreditation Advisor. The feedback and recommendations from the assessment will be ratified by the Blueways Ireland Steering Group.

The Preliminary applications will provide the opportunity for a review of the potential for a proposed Blueway to meet the requirements of the accreditation criteria.   The review of a concise preliminary application form at an early stage in the process will allow the Blueway Steering Group to provide direction to Blueway developers before further money, time and resource is invested. The feedback may provide an endorsement of the current proposal, advice on areas for improvement or determine if the proposal is not viable in its current form.

10.5. Refine the development plan

Following feedback from the Blueways Ireland Steering Group it may be necessary to refine the development plan accordingly.

It will then be necessary to deliver on the actions required to place the project in a position for a funding application. For example, this may include:

- Securing Formal (written) Agreement with landowners
- Preparation of detailed design Detailed trail / infrastructure
- Preparation of signage concepts
- Preparation of detailed costs
- Securing of planning permission
- Securing statutory approvals – commission additional environmental studies required

10.6. Secure Funding

The aforementioned steps will place the project in a 'shovel – ready' position which is an attractive position for funders seeking a safe return on investment.

Applying for funding requires energy, time and commitment. Prior research and engagement in relation to your project's eligibility against funding criteria is increasingly encouraged by funders.

10.7.   Plan and Complete the Development Work

Once all the necessary funding is in place, the project can move to development phase.

Capital

Depending on the capacity and expertise of the project partners, this may involve securing the services of external contractors. In this scenario the appointment of an experienced Consultant Project Management (CPM) Team is recommended to oversee the tendering process. The CPM Team will be able to provide advice on the type and form of contract(s), prepare necessary documentation, assess tender submissions, appoint contractors and oversee works.

Capacity Building

With a timeline identified for capital works, it is important that the capacity building programme is delivered to:

- Ensure key stakeholders are aware of the Blueway proposition
- Ensure key stakeholders are empowered to promote and champion the Blueway
- Develop a range of engaging visitor experiences
- Develop a range of themes and itineraries

Marketing / Visitor Information

The development of visitor information such as website and supporting visitor collateral should also be developed at this stage.

10.8.   Final Application and Inspection

Blueway Developers will be required to prepare and submit a final detailed application against the Blueway Accreditation Criteria. Final application form / questionnaire to be developed by Blueways Accreditation Advisor.

A key element of this stage will be an on the ground inspection of the proposed Blueway by the Blueways Accreditation Advisor. A representative of the Blueway Development Group, who is familiar with the route must accompany the inspector during the on-the-ground inspection.

The Blueways Accreditation Advisor will prepare a detailed inspection / assessment report which will recommend if a Blueway has achieved accreditation. This will be ratified by the Blueways Ireland Steering Group who will be recognised as the awarding body for Blueway accreditation.

In certain circumstances the Blueways Accreditation Advisor and Blueways Ireland Steering Group may require specialist advice from a Technical Advisory Panel.

Where a Blueway does not apply with the accreditation criteria, a listing of any corrective actions will be provided. Once these actions are addressed and confirmed, the Blueways Accreditation Advisor, the trail will receive accreditation. Further inspection may be required.

10.9.   Launch and Promote

Following accreditation, the Blueway can be officially launched and promoted to the public.

10.10.   Manage and Monitor

Once the Blueway has received accreditation it will be the responsibility of the Blueway Management Group /developer to ensure it continues to meet the standards set out in the Blueway Accreditation Criteria. <mark>Working group to provide further guidance of measures.</mark>

Blueways wishing to retain accreditation will be re-inspected every three years. This will be conducted by the Blueways Accreditation Advisor and ratified by the Blueways Steering Group.

Appendix 1: Blueways Ireland Steering Group

The Blueways Ireland Steering comprises

Sport Ireland – Sport Ireland Trails http://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails

Sport Ireland Trails is the unit within Sport Ireland that coordinates the recreational trails programme.

Waterways Ireland https://www.waterwaysireland.org/

Waterways Ireland is one of the six North/South Implementation Bodies established under the British Irish Agreement in 1999. Waterways Ireland manages, maintains, develops and promotes over 1000km inland navigable waterways principally for recreational purposes. The waterways under the remit of the body are the Barrow Navigation, the Erne System, the Grand Canal, the Lower Bann, the Royal Canal, the Shannon-Erne Waterway and the Shannon Navigation.

Fáilte Ireland http://www.failteireland.ie/

Fáilte Ireland is the National Tourism Development Authority for the Republic of Ireland

Sport Northern Ireland http://www.sportni.net/

Sport Northern Ireland is the leading public body for the development of sport in Northern Ireland.

Tourism Northern Ireland https://tourismni.com/

Tourism Northern Ireland is responsible for the development of tourism and the marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination to domestic tourists, from within Northern Ireland, and to visitors from the Republic of Ireland.

Appendix 2: Review of International Best Practice

The preparation of this document requires a robust review of international best practice to:

- review standards used for water based trails in other countries
- review systems in place to verify that trails comply with standards
- review how water trails are monitored and managed
- document how activity providers are approved / accredited to provide visitor experiences on water trails in other countries

The following methodology was employed:
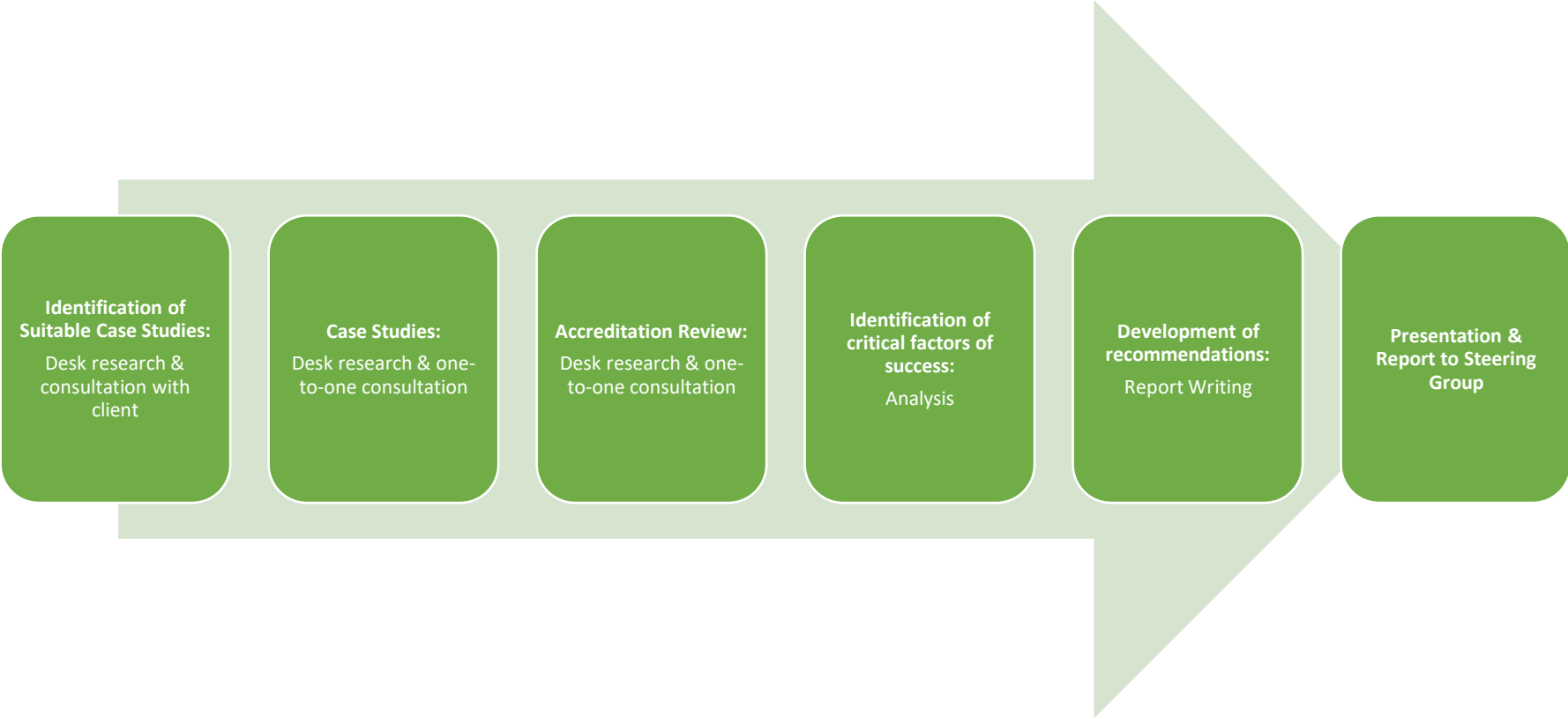
Water Trail Network Case Studies included:

- National Water Trails System – United States of America
  https://www.nps.gov/watertrails/
- Outdoors Finland
  http://www.outdoorsfinland.com/
- Scottish Canals
  https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/
- Great Glen Canoe Trail
  http://greatglencanoetrail.info/
- Scottish Wildlife Trust Snorkel Trails
  https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/things-to-do/snorkel-trails/

Walking Trail Network Case Studies included:

- European Ramblers Association – Leading Quality Trails
  http://www.era-ewv-ferp.com/programs/lqt/
- Green Flag Trails
  http://greenflagtrails.org/

The review also considered accreditation schemes for activity provider including:

- An overview of the current position of Statutory and Voluntary Accreditation Schemes in Northern Ireland / Ireland
- National Governing Body Schemes relevant to Northern Ireland / Ireland
- Tourism Board Schemes – Visit Wales / Visit Scotland and Tourism Northern Ireland

Detailed recommendations relating to the critical factors of success were identified. A summary is outlined below:
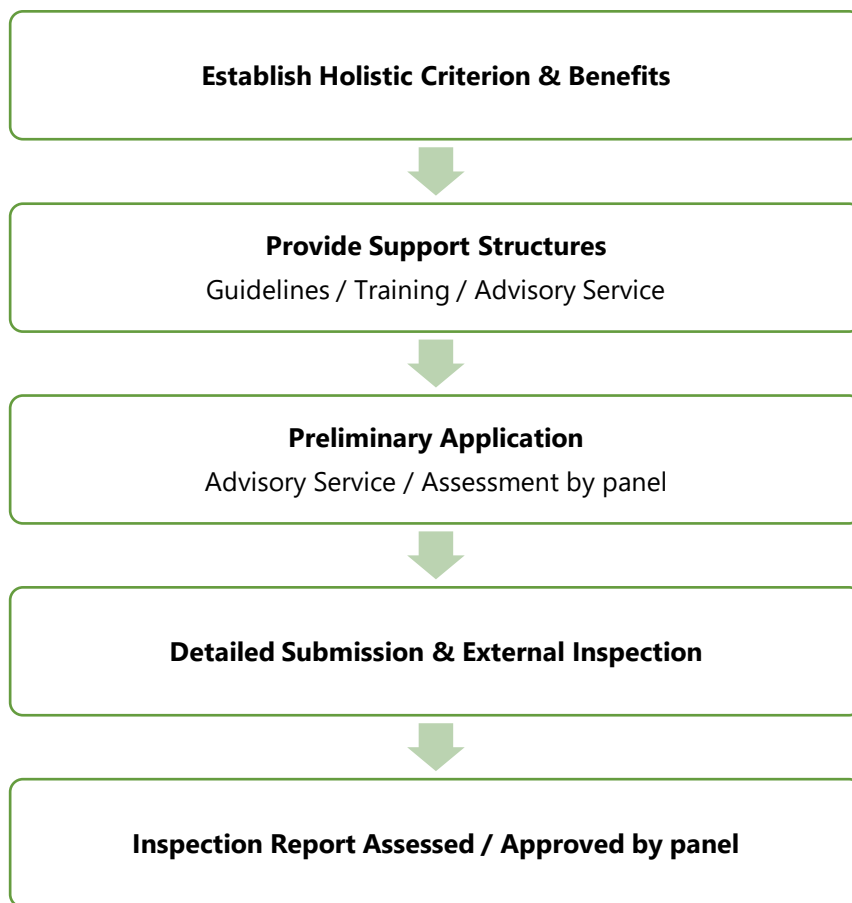
Recommendation 1:

Holistic criterion is developed to assess the quality of Blueways in Ireland.

The review of International Best Practice has identified holistic criteria should combine a visitor focused approach with fundamental safety, technical, access and environmental components. All components are underpinned by sustainable management techniques and processes.

Recommendation 2:

Refine and adopt the following system for ensuring trails comply with standards / criteria

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                             │
│      Establish Holistic Criterion & Benefits │
│                                             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                      ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│          Provide Support Structures          │
│     Guidelines / Training / Advisory Service │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                      ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│           Preliminary Application            │
│     Advisory Service / Assessment by panel   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                      ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                             │
│     Detailed Submission & External Inspection │
│                                             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                      ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                             │
│     Inspection Report Assessed / Approved by panel │
│                                             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Recommendation 3:

Adopt the following approach in terms of systems for activity provider accreditation:

Minimum:

- Establish Activity Provider Permit Guidelines for administration by Trail Developer / Promoter

Future:

- Recognise / Adopt a National Safety Accreditation Scheme
- Recognise / Adopt a Tourist Board Visitor Experience Assurance Scheme

Appendix 3: Visitor Segmentation

Overseas Visitors

Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland have identified the following overseas segments as best prospects for engagement with a Blueway in Ireland:

Primary – Great Escapers

They are often couples, approximately 30 years old, some with babies or quite young children. Most are in serious need of time out from busy lives and careers. They are specifically interested in rural holidays and travel very much as a couple or family. Great Escapers are on holiday for a break, to get physical with nature, and to reconnect with their partner. More likely to take part in slightly more strenuous, but not extreme, exploration. More interested than other segments in getting connected to nature especially the more remote and exciting places.

Further detailed information is available at http://www.failteireland.ie/International-sales/International-sales/Great-escapers.aspx

Secondary – Culturally Curious

They choose their holiday destinations carefully and are independent 'active sightseers' looking to visit new places, and expand their experience by exploring landscapes, history and culture. They are unlikely to return for some time once they have visited a new place, and often travel in a couple or as individuals and rarely in a family group. The age group for this demographic is 40 plus.

Further detailed information is available at http://www.failteireland.ie/International-sales/International-sales/Culturally-Curious.aspx

Domestic Visitors

The respective national tourism authorities have identified the following best prospect segments for their respective domestic markets.

Fáilte Ireland – Connected Families

Connected Families make up 23 percent of the domestic market, the single largest segment. They are made up of relatively young families. They are made up of parents in their thirties and early forties and children generally under the age of ten. For Connected Families, family holidays are the best weeks of the year and a special opportunity to spend quality time together, creating memories to last a lifetime.

Further detailed information is available at

http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/2_Develop_Your_Business/3_Marketing_Toolkit/9_International_Sales_Toolkit/Connected-families-brochure.pdf

Tourism Northern Ireland – Open to Ideas

- Conduct a lot of research online
- Consider reviews and influenced by media
- Open-minded and interested in the outdoors, sport, music and history
- Seeking organised 'active' but not adventurous activities; motivated by nature/outdoors
- Like to plan and have an itinerary

- Value for money important and influenced by deals
- Like 'easy to get to' destinations and scenic natural surroundings

Further detailed information is available at

https://tourismni.com/globalassets/events/misc/603102-roi-taskforce-brochure-st6-spreads.pdf

Tourism Northern Ireland - Active Maximisers

Like to squeeze in as much as possible on a short break

- Enjoy energetic activities (but not extreme sports) and have a strong sense of adventure
- Passion for outdoors and the natural environment
- Looking for unique and mind broadening experiences
- Digital a very significant influence
- Focused on getting a good deal
- Actively research online
- Need to be connected (Wi-Fi etc.)

Further detailed information is available at https://tourismni.com/globalassets/events/misc/603102-roi-taskforce-brochure-st6-spreads.pdf

Appendix 4: Technical Advisory Panel - Key Contacts

Organisation	Website	Email	Phone
British Sub Aqua Club – Ireland Region	https://www.bsac.com/this-is-bsac/bsac-team/regional-coaches/ireland-region/	irl.coach@bsac.com	
Canoe Association of Northern Ireland	http://cani.org.uk/	office@cani.org.uk	+44 (0)28 9543 8094
Canoeing Ireland	https://canoe.ie/	info@canoe.ie	+353 (0) 1625 1105
Irish Sailing	https://www.sailing.ie/	info@sailing.ie	+353 (0) 1280 0239
Irish Water Safety	http://www.iws.ie/	info@iws.ie	+353 (0) 9156 4400
Irish Underwater Council	http://diving.ie/	info@diving.ie	+353 (0) 1284 4601
Royal Yachting Association Northern Ireland	https://www.rya.org.uk/rya-regions/rya-ni/Pages/hub.aspx	ryani@rya.org.uk	+44 (0)28 9182 7154
Sport Ireland Trails	https://www.irishtrails.ie/Sport_Ireland_Trails/	cmacdonnell@sportireland.ie	+353 (0) 1860 8823

Appendix 5: Snorkel Trail Guidelines

The following are suggested criteria for a coastal snorkel trail, as provided by Comhairle Fo-Thuinn (CFT), also known as the Irish Underwater Council. These guidelines assist in the promotion of snorkelling trails amongst all participants, however the focus for Blueways should be Grade One Trails.

These guidelines assume that best use will be made of existing infrastructure, rather than incurring significant expense in new-build or costly investment.

Snorkelling Trail Grades

The following are guidelines regarding the potential grading of a snorkelling trail:

- Grade One – Less than 1km, >2m, no currents (Beginner)
- Grade Two - Less than 3km, >5m, some tidal movement (Intermediate)
- Grade Three – More than 3km, >10m, tidal currents (Advanced)

Access and Egress

- Entry and exit to and from the water should be possible at all stages of the tide, either via steps, a slip or across a beach.
- Entry and exit to and from the water should also be possible at all stages of water flow conditions for river or lake snorkels.
- Avoid using entry and exit points that pass over seaweed covered rocks.
- If a working pier is being used, entry and exit should be well away from the working area of the pier or harbour.

Design and Length

- Because snorkelling attracts mixed age groups, ensure that the trail is suitable for all levels of experience in the first instance, or if possible identify shorter routes for those less experienced.
- Ideally the trail should be circular – thus avoiding long walks in wetsuits. However linear 'out-and-back' trails, such as snorkelling along the coast to a point and back, or up to a marker buoy and back, are also feasible. The advertised trail length of these types of linear trails must include both the out and back elements.
- Because snorkels involve complete emersion, the time spent snorkelling will be very much dependent on temperature conditions. It is best to plan for snorkels that last no longer than 45 minutes.
- The typical trail should be no longer than 1km.
- Longer snorkelling opportunities can be identified for more experienced snorkelers, and advice on the appropriateness of these routes should be sought from CFT.
- Exit points along the trail should be clearly identified, both on promotional material, and through the use of appropriate trail signage.
- The trail should avoid crossing deep water areas (>2m), and areas prone to tidal movement.
- Ideally there should be a good range of marine life observable along the trail.
- Try to identify entry and exit points that have interesting features close by, this is to keep up interest while getting ready.
- Identify and describe the main plants and animals that are likely to be seen along the snorkel in supporting information materials.

General

- If the trail makes its way through and around islands and islets, consider preparing a simple sketch map to show the main topographical features along the route.
- Where the trail is being developed for a festival or a similar event, consider buoying-off the trail to mark the way.
- Each snorkel trail will require a risk assessment.

Legislation

- Ensure that all entry and exit points are on public land.
- Ensure that snorkel trails are not close to or over sites that are protected for archaeological reasons, or sites that require a license to explore.

Parking

- All trails should have ample parking on public space at the trailhead. Ideally this should be a public car park or a pier, with public toilet facilities.

Appendix 6: Blueway Paddling Trail Guidelines

Grading & Suitability

Blueway Paddling Trails should be appropriate for the 'dabbler' or 'novice' i.e. those that have **little to no skills or prior experience in undertaking adventure activities.**

Therefore, paddling trails should only be developed according to the following definitions within Canoeing Ireland guidance. For further information see https://canoe.ie/river-grading-and-area-definitions/

Waterway Type	Definition	Description
River[9]	Grade 1 – Flat Water	Water stationary or extremely slow moving and without any obstructions[10]
Inland Waterways[11]	Very Sheltered Inland Water	Rivers – Specific sites on slow moving rivers
		Canals – Canals with bank side access and egress which have a minimum of commercial traffic
		Lakes – Small lakes which do not have difficult landing areas and which are not large enough for problems to occur if there is a sudden change in conditions
	Sheltered Inland Water	Rivers – Flat slow moving rivers without weirs or rapids
		Lakes - Discretion and common sense must apply when considering the use of lakes. This definition includes lakes with a diameter of no more than 250 metres from shore to shore.[12]

---

[9] The grading system is meant as a general guide with regard to river grades. The river grading scheme is based upon Canoeing Ireland and British Canoeing interpretation. The final decision, however, as to the grading of a river's conditions is ultimately the responsibility of an Instructor who must make decisions based upon experience, knowledge, ability, and level of qualification.

[10] While grade 1 rivers can be prone to blockages after storms. Tree, branches and debris can cause rivers to become unnavigable. A robust monitoring and maintenance scheme is therefore required

[11] These definitions imply weather conditions, which are not in themselves likely to cause problems. Care must be exercised when water temperatures are low.

[12] Further guidance on the use of lakes / loughs is provided by the British Canoeing Terms of Reference for Coaches and Leaders. 'Suitable lagoons or sections of sheltered bays or larger lakes can sometimes be designated 'sheltered' or even 'very sheltered' water by careful and sensible selection.' The Blueway Technical Advisory Panel will be able to guide such decisions.

		To paddle in offshore breezes on large lakes requires the same degree of caution as for the sea
Sea[13]	Sheltered Tidal Areas	Enclosed harbours with a minimum of commercial traffic, enclosed on three sides. Where there is minimal possibility of being blown off shore. Small enclosed bays where there is minimal possibility of being blown offshore. Defined beaches (a short section of beach with easy landing throughout, no tidal races, or overfalls) – winds not above Force 3. Force 2 if offshore, when the greatest of caution should be exercised. The upper reaches of some suitable, slow moving, estuaries.

Route / Trail:

- A Blueway paddling trail must have a series of defined access / egress points
- Distance between access and egress points should be no more than 3km.
- All sections of the waterway must be unobstructed and passable
- Any significant hazards or obstructions must have a clear portage option with associated access and egress points

Access / Egress Points:

Trailheads

These will be the formal of entry and the main locations at which visitors are encouraged to access / egress the waterway

- On a linear river trail this will often be at the most logical upstream and downstream location – bookending the other access points.
- On coastal and inland lake trails – the majority of Blueway excursions will be circular. However, there may be a number of trailheads from which to begin and end a journey.

These trailheads will therefore have the highest volume of use and should adhere to the following minimum criteria (further guidance is provided in Appendix 6.1):

- Parking
  - o Off-road parking for a recommended minimum of 10 spaces (including space for trailers)[14]
  - o No Parking / Loading Bay in close proximity to water
- Information Panel – see Signage
- Toilets and Changing Facilities
- Fresh water tap
- Formal staging area i.e. a hard surface staging area (min 3m x 3m) out with the car park to allow gathering of equipment and preparation
- Unrestricted and easy access from parking to water access

---

[13] In all cases the wind and weather conditions must be favourable

[14] The Blueway Developer is tasked with determining the scale of the trailhead required

- Water access infrastructure should be fit for purpose, robust and safe at all points of water level
- Consideration of the requirements of activity operators

Access and Egress Points

Secondary access and egress points should adhere to the following minimum criteria (further guidance is provided in Appendix 6.1:

- Parking
    - Off-road parking for a recommended minimum of 5 spaces (including space for trailers)[15]
- Information Panel – see Signage
- Formal staging area i.e. a hard surface staging area (min 3m x 3m) out with the car park to allow gathering of equipment and preparation
- Unrestricted and easy access from parking to water access
- Water access infrastructure should be fit for purpose, robust and safe at all points of water level

Signage

See Appendix 7

---

[15] The Blueway Developer is tasked with determining the scale of the trailhead required

Appendix 6.1 Paddling Trailhead Guidance

Car Parking

Car parking at trailheads should be within designated parking i.e. off the public highway.

It is the task of the Blueway Developer to determine the scale of the trailhead. If an existing car park / amenity is being used it is important to consider the current volume of use, for example if the car park is already full on most weekends then additional provision will be required.

When developing new car parks, consideration should be given to the surface most appropriate to the setting. Products such as TRUCKPAVE provide useful alternatives to tarmac or gravel.

http://www.terram.com/projects/truckpave-grass-paver-install-in-liverpool.html

When designing a car park consider the following:

- the space required for the parking and navigation of vehicles and canoe trailers as well as their loading and offloading 'flow' requirements
- the nature of paddling activities (canoes, kayaks, stand up paddleboards) require the need for generous parking bays
- car park height restriction barriers can prevent inappropriate use, however these barriers should take into account the requirement for cars carrying canoes on roof racks or mini buses with trailers. A minimum height of 2m is required for cars, however a management process should be considered for when barriers are likely to prevent access.

Toilets and Changing Facilities

Remember the 'dabbler' will have higher expectations for toilet and changing facilities than an enthusiast. Toilets and changing facilities should therefore be provided within close proximity.

Composting toilets offer an environmentally friendly solution and have lower construction costs with respect to power and effluent treatment, however care is required in their location and they require occasional management especially in high use areas of the trail.

Given their likely proximity to a watercourse, non-composting type toilets will require either an advanced waste water treatment system or a holding tank. The latter will require the on-going management of this waste water. Chemical toilets should be a last resort option.

Formal Staging Area

Formal staging areas are congregation spaces which facilitate the gathering of equipment in the trailhead close to the parking and en-route to the water access area.

Informal staging areas in the car park leads to the casual positioning of water-sports craft and equipment, the blocking of user flow as well as an increased potential for theft and slip, trips and falls. A three meter by three meter concrete or compacted gravel staging area should be sufficient.

Unrestricted and easy access from parking to water access

Passage between the water and the trailhead will typically require a short section of walking trail.

These trails should not act as drainage slopes as this can lead to erosion and the transfer of soil and other contaminants into the water trail. The following principles and criteria are suggested for such trails:

- The trail from the parking area to the launch should be a maximum of a 10% gradient
- Maximum trail cross slope 2%
- Resting intervals (max 3% slope), are required for trails in excess of 100 metres with a slope in excess of 5%. Especially at water egress trailheads
- No dips on trails or other features that increase the risk of ponding
- Minimum trail width of 2 metres
- Minimum overhead clearance of 2.5 metres
- Swing clearance on bends of 2 metres either side of the trail.

To prevent inadvertent entering into the water, fencing or margin vegetation planting between the trail/car park and the water may be required. Further guidance is available within Risk Control For Inland Sites – Irish Water Safety http://www.iws.ie/_fileupload/advice/risk_control_for_inland_water_sites.pdf

Launch points should be fit for purpose, robust and safe at all typical points of water level

Launch points or water access points will often require bespoke solutions to the exact location. The following guidelines provide some recommended approaches:

- Existing in-situ facilities (when possible) should be used to facilitate to trail. This is preferential to constructing additional new infrastructure. However:
  - It should not be assumed that current infrastructure such as a pier, slipway, pontoon or jetty implies access for all water users. It may have been developed for a specific use e.g. anglers, ferries, fishing craft. Consultation and permission is therefore required
  - Existing infrastructure may require adaptations – for example standard floating pontoons can be difficult to use to exit from a kayak as the height of the pontoon from the water can be excessive. Dropped pontoons positioned lower to water level can be attached to alleviate this.

- The design and positioning of water access points must take into account prevailing conditions such as wind, tide, flow direction, varying water levels. The launch site should offer a calm environment to begin a Blueway journey.

Recommended Access and Egress Infrastructure Criteria are as follows:

Infrastructure	Dimensions	Comment
Access and Egress – landing stage heights	• Ideal Height of the landing stage above water - 300 mm or less • Maximum Height of the landing stage above water - 700 mm	• Kayak steps are the most appropriate and cost effective where water levels fluctuate on rivers • A floating pontoon should be used where water levels fluctuate significantly[16] • Heights above 600 mm may need to be supplemented by hand-holds at a lower height • Where there is significant water flow at the landing stage, heights should be closer to the ideal than the maximum • Beaches and slipways also provide suitable access and egress points, where they are uncovered at all stages of the tide, or are at typical lake water levels
Access and Egress – landing stage platforms	• Ideal Height of the landing stage above water - 300 mm or less • Maximum Height of the landing stage above water - 700 mm • Minimum landing stage platform Length - 800 mm, width - 300 mm	• Landing stage platforms should allow for the placing of the participants paddle on the shore, and facilitate the relatively ungainly body movement required in accessing and egressing the canoe/kayak

---

[16] Standard floating pontoons can be difficult to use to exit from a kayak as the height of the pontoon from the water can be excessive. Dropped pontoons positioned lower to water level can be attached to alleviate this.

	• Ideal landing stage platform Length - 3 metres, width - 1.5 metres • Slope to and from the landing stage - ideally no more than 1:3 • Risers - typically 250 mm	
Access and Egress – landing stage obstructions	• 3 metres of unobstructed riverbank is recommended	• Canoes/kayaks range in length from 1.6 to 2 metres
Access and Egress – landing stage surfaces	• The edge of the landing stage nearest the water should ideally be curved to a 50 degree radius	• Reduces fall injuries, and rubbing damage to canoe/kayaks
Canoe slides	• The tie-off point on lowering stanchions should be higher than the highest point on the slide • Canoe slides should ideally be set at 45 degrees, however the bank's slope will dictate this • Access to either side of the canoe at the end of the slide is preferred • Wood or durable plastic should be used as the sliding surface • Sharp corners are to be avoided on all sliding areas • Slide designs should not facilitate sliding by individuals • Appropriate description and safety signage is required	• Stanchions heights will typically be determined by the slide height • Canoes are primarily made of plastic and abrade readily on sharp surfaces • An overly shallow slope will require the pulling of the canoe downwards, due to the friction of the canoe on the slide surface • Open canoeists should be encouraged to carry painters (bow and stern ropes), each of which is at least the length of their boat, as painters facilitate the lowering of the canoe on slides
Portage	• A portage of less than 100 metres is preferred	• Unladen open canoes weigh circa 20 kilos • You may wish to consider providing trolley wheels

| Portage dimensions | • Open canoes are up to 6 metres long and 1 metre wide. All turning points on a portage must accommodate this, or facilitate the lifting of the craft | • On land canoes can be raised at one end, in order to minimise their length when turning in tight spaces. However, their weight makes this manoeuvre difficult |

Consideration of activity provider requirements

Given activity providers are essential to the Blueway experience, it is important to consider how their services can be incorporated within trailheads. Consideration is required in terms of:

- Physical space required by activity providers e.g. for point of sale, trailers, equipment etc
- The practical operation of a permit system to control the provision of commercial activities

Appendix 7: Blueway Signage Guidelines

Principles Relating to Signs

- A balance must be made between providing sufficient minimal signage to encourage and give practical support to the user while not undermining the aesthetic value of the trail through sign clutter and the urbanising of the unspoilt or wilderness experience.
- Signage should where possible animate the Blueway and encourage the participant to do more.
- Signage should confer quality and be consistent.
- Positive signs indicating what is possible should where practical be used in preference to signs which indicate limitations.

Further reference should be made to Blueway Design & Brand Guidelines – include link

Irish Language

The Official Languages Act (Republic of Ireland only) sets out the statutory requirements regarding the use of the Irish language by public bodies. Most Blueways will be developed or funded by public bodies and hence it is likely that these requirements will apply. The following is an excerpt of some of these requirements:

- Place names on information signs must be in both Irish and English except:
- In Gaeltacht areas, where the names of places should be in Irish only.
- Where the spelling of a place name is similar in both languages, in which case only the Irish form of the name should be shown
- All Irish text should be in italic print, in lower case lettering, with initial letters in capitals.
- Irish script should be inclined to the right at an angle of 15 degrees to the vertical. All English text should be in upper case roman letters

Note that the content of Blueway information panels must be presented in Irish and English, including Gaeltacht areas. To identify the correct spelling of a place-name in Irish, consult www.logainm.ie

The use of icons instead of text on signs reduces the difficulty in comprehending sign content for non-native speakers of Irish and English.

Directional Signs to the Blueway

- Directions to the main entry trailheads along the Blueway should be signed. Signing should commence at the nearest town, village or junction with the nearest national road. Thereafter all junctions from the first sign en-route to the trailhead must be signed.

- Minor trailheads may be signed similarly to the main trailheads if required. The main trailheads should be easy to find however it may not be appropriate to provide directional signs from centres of local population and national roads to all of the trailheads due to sign costs as well as the risk of confusion where there are signs to multiple Blueway entry points in the same area.

- Signs which are used on Public Roads in the Republic of Ireland should follow the guidelines within DTTAS Traffic Signs Manual – See Section 4.22 'Tourist Attractions and Facilities' 2010 http://www.dttas.ie/roads/publications/english/traffic-signs-manual-2010

- Signs which are used on Public Roads in Northern Ireland should follow the guidelines within Transport NI 'The Signing of Tourism Attractions and Facilities' 2014 https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/drd/the-signing-of-tourist-attractions-and-facilities-rsppg-e029.pdf

Blueway Trailhead Signage

Trailhead Entrance / Identifier Sign

In many cases, a trailhead entrance or identifier sign may be required to identify the trailhead / access points. The requirement for a trail head information panel to be in close proximity to the water often means they can be hidden within busy car parks.

This trailhead entrance or identifier sign will therefore provide reassurance the visitor is in the right place. It should:
- be clearly visible to passing traffic
- not block visibility to those entering or exiting the site / car park
- never be used in place of a white on brown road sign / directional sign

Trailhead Information Panels

Trailhead information panels should be:

- clearly visible from the car park
- positioned so as not to impact visitor flow i.e. visitors reading the panel should not disturb the flow of vehicles or people throughout the site

If a trailhead combines water and land-based trails it is good practice to separate the information relating to the individual activities e.g. one panel for a paddling trail and one panel for a walking trail. An overview panel may be useful to provide insight into the spatial relationship of the component trails.

It is recommended that trailhead panels have a secure updateable section to update visitors on frequently changing aspects for example events, trail closures etc.

Water Based Trails - Trailhead Information Panels

For the majority of newly developed Blueways, the water-based trail will be the new element. Trailhead information panels should be placed close to the water. If the access point is not obvious from the location of the trailhead information panel then additional directional signage may be required. Trailhead signage for water-based trails should include:

Trail Description detailing:

- Named Access & Egress Point
- Distance Km
- Duration
- Difficulty
- Short Description

Map – a large simple trail map

- A clear legend of symbols
- A scale plus kilometre marker
- A north pointer
- The complete trail section[17]
- 'You are Here' pointer
- Start and Finish Locations
- All defined access & egress points
- Location of obstructions, hazards or increase in difficulty

Other

- Key contacts and emergency information
- Method for visitor feedback – website / email / phone number
- Responsibility Statement
- Invasive Species Messaging – See Appendix 9

Maps must be oriented to suit the map board location for trails next to open water (note this might not be North up)

Water Based Trails – On trail signage

Signage along water-based trails should be kept to a minimum so as not to ruin the natural aesthetic. However, the following signs may be required:

- Colour coded indicator markers – indicating the safe or navigable heights of water levels at access points on river Blueways. These indicators may make use of existing structures such as bridges or slipway walls
- Flags or Wind Socks – are useful to indicate wind strength/direction and also identify access/egress points from the water
- Confirmatory signs -are only to be used where essential, for example where there are multiple indistinct choices some of which have the potential to significantly undermine the Blueway experience – for example routes around river islands

Water Based Trails – Portages

Portages should be provided on inland trails where either the route on the Blueway is impassable for example the presence of a dam or if the route is beyond the ability of the target Blueway user, for example the presence of a weir or rapid on a placid water trail.

- The portage egress should be clearly identifiable from the waterway, either due to the visibility of infrastructure or if necessary appropriate signage. Where the egress for the portage is reasonably visible from the water, a small courtesy egress sign might be located at this site so as to provide reassurance to the Blueway user.

---

[17] For paddling trails this should be a line however Blueway sites incorporating may indicate areas for snorkelling or kayaking

- The portage route should be safe, as short as possible, clearly identifiable, have a suitable surface and an appropriate egress and access point to the water. Portage is not preferable on Blueways.

Land Based Trails

Where Blueways incorporate land-based trails i.e. waking and cycling trails that are already in existence then is it acceptable to utilise existing trailhead information panels, signage and waymarking as long as they meet the Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails.

However, the development of the Blueway may provide an opportunity to refresh the trailhead panels to follow the Blueway brand and therefore be consistent with the water-based trails.

All new signage and waymarking on land based trails should conform to the requirements of the Sport Ireland – Management Standards for Recreational Trails.

Appendix 8: Activity Provider Accreditation

National Statutory / Voluntary Accreditation Schemes

Northern Ireland

Although there is the provision for statutory licencing of activity providers in Northern Ireland through The Activity Centres (Safety of Young Persons) Northern Ireland Order 1997, the legislation to date has not been enacted. The Department of Communities has currently adopted **'Adventuremark'** as a suitable adventure activity accreditation scheme for activity providers in Northern Ireland in lieu of statutory licensing. This approach was identified following extensive consultation with the outdoor activity industry.

Adventuremark is a non-statutory safety scheme devised by the Adventure Activity Industry Advisory Committee (AAIAC)[18] for providers of adventurous activities that are outside the scope of AALA. Adventuremark allows providers to demonstrate to their customers or users that the provider's arrangements for managing the potential risks of adventure activities have been inspected and found to meet the necessary standards of good practice in the adventure activity industry. Independent external assessment is required.

See http://www.adventuremark.co.uk/

Adventuremark is often utilised by activity providers that offer a range of activities. It is particularly useful for those activities which do not have a National Governing Body or centre based accreditation scheme. However, many activity providers (especially those that only offer one activity) still chose to obtain accreditation via a robust National Governing Body scheme – see below.

Republic of Ireland

There is currently no voluntary or statutory accreditation scheme for outdoor activity providers in the Republic of Ireland.

Following an incident at Clogher Head, Co.Louth in 2011 (when six school girls were rescued from the water by a lifeboat whilst partaking in sea kayaking under the supervision of an instructor from an activity centre) the Marine Casualty Investigation Board recommended the relevant Minister consider the regulation of the provision of adventure activities.

In 2013, Minister of State for Tourism and Sport, Michael Ring T.D. asked the Irish Sports Council to examine the issues associated with safety and standards in the adventure activities sector and the development of a register of adventure activity providers.

The Irish Sports Council established the Adventure Activities Working Group 'to assist the Council to define the scope and application of the registration system, and the standards to be applied.' The Group's recommendations for a statutory 'Adventure Activities Registration Scheme for Ireland' were made to the Minister in mid-2014. At the time of writing the scheme is not in place and the timeline for delivery is not known.

---

[18] AAIAC, the Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee, is the sector's lead body for safety in adventure activities. It is representative of a wide range of stakeholders from the UK adventure activities sector and is supported by the Institute for Outdoor Learning.

The Irish Association of Adventure Tourism https://iaat.ie/what-we-do/ was launched in Spring 2018. In the context of accreditation the IAAT aims to:

'promote best practise in all areas of our businesses, including: a. The highest service and safety standards (but not to regulate them) in a practical way that is sustainable and workable for the industry'

Blueway developers may find close liaison with this body to be useful.

National Governing Bodies

National Governing Bodies (NGBs) have the responsibility for managing their specific sport. The table below demonstrates the activity provider accreditation schemes (relevant to activities undertaken on Blueways) delivered by NGBs in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Accreditation schemes included within the table apply to the underline centre / provider rather than the individual instructor.

Activity	Northern Ireland	Republic of Ireland
Canoeing	Not Available	**Canoeing Ireland** - Course Provider Registration https://canoe.ie/provider-registration/ - a new scheme is under development therefore this link will need updated in October 2018
Cycling	Not Available	Not Available
Sailing	**Royal Yachting Association** - Recognised Teaching Centre http://www.rya.org.uk/training-support/Pages/thinking-of-running-a-centre.aspx	**Irish Sailing** – Training Centre https://www.sailing.ie/Training/Clubs-Centres/Become-a-Centre
Snorkelling	Irish Underwater Council – Approved Snorkelling Centres http://diving.ie/	
Walking	Not Available	Not Available

As the table above identifies, there is not an option currently for activity providers to be externally accredited by National Governing Bodies for all the key activities anticipated to be offered by a Blueway.

Appendix 9: Biosecurity & Invasive Species

The Local Authority Waters and Communities Officer highlights that biosecurity best practice is critical to break such pathways and the need inspect, remove, wash and dry all equipment or clothing will help reduce the risk of spreading pathogens and invasive alien species. To help stop the spread of alien invasive species it is critical that users wash and dry their equipment especially when traveling between different catchments and water courses. It is also critically important that on every occasion a user leaves a watercourse or a catchment that canoes, kayaks and boards should be inspected for aquatic vegetation, mud, materials or living organisms / materials. All such materials should be removed on site.

As a minimum, Blueway developers should incorporate the 'Check – Clean – Dry' message within their visitor information.

It is recommended the following notice appears on information boards, publications and websites for all freshwater Blueways.

Check – Check vessels, equipment and clothing for living plants and animals. Pay particular attention to areas that are damp and hard to inspect.

Clean – Clean and wash all vessels and equipment thoroughly with freshwater

Dry – When removing a vessel, trailer and other equipment drain water from every area that can hold water before leaving the site. Clothing / equipment should be thoroughly dried for as long as possible before it is used elsewhere.

Crayfish Plague Guidance

With specific reference to the outbreak of Crayfish Plague users are asked to remain within their own local area. If gear needs to be moved gear and boats should be thoroughly washed and dried for at least 48 hours before going to another catchment / water course.

Caution: Care should be taken when using hot water to avoid burns to the skin or eye contact.

- Drain water from watercraft.
- Inspect watercraft (inside and out) and other gear. Remove and safely dispose of all attached plant and animal material, mud or debris.
- Rinse and disinfect all gear thoroughly this should be followed by a 48-hour drying period. Milton can be used as a disinfectant, either make a solution or a spray or by washing gear in water over 40 degrees.
- Disinfecting kayaks/canoes/paddles with (Virkon / Milton Solution) or power hose with hot water over 60 degrees Celsius this should be followed by a 48-hour drying period.
- Try to avoid paddling in the water bodies inflected with Crayfish Plague if they are not your local river. This will help prevent the spread of Crayfish Plague to other waterways.
- For anyone travelling to compete in any competition or event, please wash and dry your gear before competing and make use of wash stations at events before you leave.

Appendix 10: Responsibility Statement

To demonstrate the shared responsibility between the visitor and the Blueway Developer / Manager the following Responsibility Statement provides a useful basis for adaptation by individual Blueways.

This statement relates to water based trails:

Your safety on Blueways

We aim to provide an enjoyable Blueway experience and will ensure that our actions do not jeopardise your safety and health. We view the responsibility for your safety as one that is shared between you and us. We have taken reasonable measures to minimise but not eliminate all risks. Water sports are adventure sports and as such should be treated with respect.

New to Water Sports?

Paddling trails on Blueways have been designed with the novice in mind, however, those with limited skills and experience should use a local operator / guide. They will be able to provide:

- Appropriate safety equipment and clothing
- Appropriate itinerary
- Expertise relating to weather and water conditions
- Tuition / coaching

In addition, they will be able to add real value to your Blueway experience through their insight into local culture and heritage, places to eat and visit.

Prior Experience

If you are undertaking the Blueway without a local operator guide, you can help ensure your own safety by:

Take Advice – Make sure you have the necessary skills and experience for the location and the activity, and are aware of your limitations. Consult (website) or local operators / guides.

Plan – Plan your trip well in advance. Tell a responsible adult of your intended route and estimated time of return.

Group – It is not recommended to canoe alone – 3 boats is the minimum required for most rescues

Conditions – Consult weather forecasts, tides / water levels in advance of your trip. Ensure you are properly equipped for changes in weather.

Equipment – Carry essential safety equipment – spare clothes, extra food, warm drink, form of shelter, First Aid kit, means of communication (VHF radio / mobile phone in a water proof case), torch and whistle. Always wear a buoyancy aid. Canoe/ craft buoyancy should be enough to keep it afloat if you capsize.

Emergencies - In the event of emergencies contact 99 or 112 for emergency services. Use VHF Radio Channel 16 to contact Coastguard.