

Galway City Destination & Experience Development Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement

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Environmental Assessment

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Glossary

Appropriate Assessment

The obligation to undertake Appropriate Assessment derives from Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

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

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

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

Environmental Problems

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

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

Environmental Vectors

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

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing a human action, be it a plan, programme or project. Mitigation involves ameliorating significant negative effects. Where there are significant negative effects, consideration should be given in the first instance to preventing such effects or, where this is not possible, to lessening or offsetting those effects.

Protected Structure

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

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Recorded Monument

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

SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment)

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

SEA Scoping

Scoping is the process of determining what issues are to be addressed, and setting out a methodology in which to address them in a structured manner appropriate to the plan or programme. SEA 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 Objective (SEO)

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

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement for the Galway City Destination and Experience Development Plan 2025-2030 (hereafter referred to the 'Plan' or the 'GCDEDP').

This SEA Statement, which should be read in conjunction with the GCDEDP, has been prepared by Brady Shipman Martin, environmental, planning and landscape consultants, on behalf of Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority.

The following report has been prepared to comply with the provisions of Article 16(2)(b) of S.I. 435 of 2004 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations – as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.

Directive 2001/42/EC¹ on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the 'SEA Directive') requires EU Member States to assess the 'likely significant environmental effects' of plans and programmes prior to their adoption. This provides for the assessment of strategic environmental considerations at an early stage in the decision-making process. SEA is a process for evaluating, at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental quality and consequences of Plans or Programmes (P/Ps). The purpose is to ensure that the environmental consequences of P/Ps are assessed both during their preparation and prior to their adoption. The SEA process also gives specified environmental authorities, interested parties and the general public, an opportunity to comment on the environmental impacts of the proposed P/P and to be kept informed during the decision-making process.

Article 1 of the SEA Directive states that:

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

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish law through:

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

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

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

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

This SEA Statement is a reflective document that looks back on the SEA process, what has been achieved and it also sets out what monitoring will be done in the future.

1.2 Destination & Experience Development Plans

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

The GCDEDP is focused on an area comprising of Galway City and Salthill. The GCDEDP represents a multi-stakeholder approach focused on growing the economic value of tourism and increasing the length of stay in the city. The approach within the plan recognises the important tourism linkages between the Galway City and County experience and will work with other regional DEDPs such as Connemara Coast & Aran Islands DEDP, Burren DEDP, etc.

1.3 Appropriate Assessment

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

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

As set out in Department Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08² (15 February 2008), Screening for AA is of relevance to SEA screening in that “where following screening, it is found that the draft plan or amendment may have an impact on the conservation status of a Natura 2000 site or that such an impact cannot be ruled out, adopting the precautionary approach:

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

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

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

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

1.4 Content of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement

In accordance with Article 16(2)(b) of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, (as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011), the SEA Statement will summarise the following:

² NPWS SEA letter: <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

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- (i) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme;
- (ii) how:
- (I) the environmental report prepared pursuant to article 12,
 - (II) submissions and observations made to the competent authority in response to a notice under article 13, and
 - (III) any consultations under article 14.
- have been taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme,
- (iii) the reasons for choosing the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and
- (iv) the measures decided upon to monitor, in accordance with article 17, the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan or programme or modification to a plan or programme.

1.5 SEA Stages and Process

The key focus of SEA is to take environmental issues, and in particular ‘likely significant environmental effects’ of a P / P, into consideration during the plan or programme making process. The key stages in the SEA process as they relate to the GCDEDP are outlined in **Table 1.1** below.

Table 1.1 Outline of the SEA Process

Stage	Description	Status
1. Screening	<p>The requirement to undertake a SEA is mandatory for certain Plan / Programme (P / P). Where SEA is not a mandatory requirement, the P / Ps is subject to a ‘Screening process’, to consider if it is <i>likely to have significant effects</i> on the environment, and therefore, if SEA is required.</p> <p>The preparation of the <i>Draft GCDEDP</i> has been screened for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and it has been concluded that potential for effects on the integrity of European sites cannot be excluded beyond all reasonable scientific doubt and is required to undergo Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>Therefore, in accordance with <i>Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08</i> the <i>Draft GCDEDP</i> was also required to undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with <i>Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment</i> (known as the SEA Directive).</p>	<p>Completed</p> 
2. Scoping	<p>Preparation of a SEA Scoping Report highlighting that the Environmental Report is required to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ methods of assessment; ■ contents and level of detail in the Plan / Programme; ■ the stage in the Plan or Programme-making process; and ■ the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process in order to avoid duplication of environmental assessment. <p>Scoping provides for consultation with the Environmental Authorities specified in Article 13 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011, and the process</p>	<p>Completed</p> 

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Stage	Description	Status
	allows for incorporation of the views of the environmental authorities within the P / P and the SEA Environmental Report.	
3. Environmental Report	<p>Preparation of a systemic identification and evaluation of alternatives and assessment of the <i>likely significant environmental effects</i> of implementing the P / P.</p> <p>The findings of the assessment, which is carried out at various stages in the P / P making (<i>e.g.</i> Draft, Amended Draft <i>etc.</i>), are provided in the SEA Environmental Report in accordance with Article 12 (including Schedule 2) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011.</p> <p>The output from this stage is an Environmental Report which accompanied the draft P / P required on public display.</p>	<p>Completed</p> 
4. SEA Statement	<p>Completion / adoption of the Final GCDEDP, taking account of <i>likely significant environmental effects</i>, any submissions or observations received from consultations and integration of mitigation and monitoring measures within the Plan.</p> <p>The Environmental Report is concluded and an SEA Statement is prepared in accordance with Article 16(2)(b) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011, summarising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan / Programme; ▪ how the environmental report, and any submissions /observations or consultations have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan / Programme; ▪ the reasons for choosing the Plan / Programme in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and ▪ the measures decided for monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan / Programme. 	<p>Completed</p> 
5. SEA Monitoring	<p>The Plan is adopted and implemented, and the environmental effectiveness of the implementation of the Plan is monitored and reported on through the life of the Plan.</p>	<p>On-going</p>

2 Integration of Environmental Considerations into the Plan

2.1 Introduction

This section details how both the SEA Environmental Report and submissions and observations made to Fáilte Ireland on the Environmental Report and SEA process have been taken into account during the preparation of the GCDEDP.

The SEA and AA team worked with the Plan-preparation team at Fáilte Ireland in order to integrate requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan. Consideration has been given to the requirement to undertake environmental assessment of this Plan in order to ensure full legal compliance and to further integrate protection, enhancement and promotion of the environment in developing and implementing the Plan. The key findings of the SEA and AA Process for the Plan and key requirements for Environmental Considerations are included in Appendix 1 of the GCDEDP.

2.2 SEA Consultation

A number of opportunities are integrated into the plan-making process to allow for consultation with the environmental authorities and the general public on the plan and SEA. Submissions and observations were made at each of these stages, and these informed the preparation and finalisation of the Plan and the SEA process.

2.2.1 SEA Scoping Consultation

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

The consultation was undertaken with the following Environmental Authorities specified in Article 9(5) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended, on 20 March 2025:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- Department of Climate, Environment & Energy;
- Department of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and the Marine;
- Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht;
- Department of Enterprise, Tourism & Employment;
- Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.

Submissions / observations on the scoping of the Environmental Report were received from the environmental authorities and comments have been incorporated into the Plan and Environmental Report as set out in **Table 2.1**.

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Table 2.1 SEA Scoping Submissions / Observation from Environmental Authorities

Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
<p>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage – Development Applications Unit (DAU)</p>	<p>The submission from DAU outlined heritage related observations and recommendations.</p> <p><u>Policy Context</u></p> <p>The submission notes that a number of key national policy documents pertaining to archaeology and built heritage include Heritage Ireland 2030, the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for the Built and Archaeological Heritage (2019), the Built Vernacular Strategy (2021) and the National Policy on Architecture (2022). Where appropriate, the policies and objectives of these core documents should be considered and referenced in the SEA Scoping for the DEDP.</p> <p>The submission further notes that the development of these new policy documents position archaeology and built heritage as a central and integrated theme within all government policy, planning and funding frameworks. These new policies are of strategic importance in terms of our alignment with EU policies and funding programmes, ensuring resilience in the face of significant challenges.</p> <p>The Department recognises that this is an important time to be working collaboratively and strategically with Local Authorities and other statutory bodies, particularly with regard to vulnerable built and archaeological heritage sites, the safeguarding of vacant buildings and the promoting/enabling reuse and repurposing of existing cultural assets. In this regard, the Department notes the importance of new areas of interest, including our built vernacular architecture and its setting – both rural and urban – and the protection and potential of planned and designed landscapes for recreational and amenity purposes.</p> <p>The Programme for Government supports the 17 no. Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations and built on the principle of ‘leaving no one behind’. Cultural and natural heritage, as part of the wider built environment, is represented by Goal No. 11 – make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Targets to be achieved are wide-ranging including the adoption and implementation of integrated policies and plans towards ‘inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters and implement holistic disaster risk management at all levels’, whilst</p>	<p>The information and datasets provided have informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>

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Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p>targets for cultural and natural heritage are focused on strengthening its protection. Ireland is increasingly considered as being at the vanguard of research on the impacts of Climate Change on the archaeological heritage and is a forerunner in implementing actions to ensure continued conservation and enhancement of our heritage assets in the face of these impacts.</p> <p><u>Galway Historic Town Core</u></p> <p>The submission highlights that Galway City contains a Historic Town Core of medieval origin which is reflected in the surviving streetscape and in the fabric of many buildings in the city centre. Cultural Heritage, incorporating Archaeological Heritage, is interlinked and interacts with the vision, themes, and objectives of the statutory Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 – including but not limited to – the Vision and Core Strategy, Climate Action, Economic Development, Housing & Sustainable Neighbourhoods (including well-being and quality of life), Sustainable Mobility & Transportation, Physical Infrastructure (including Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Enhancement), Tourism, Urban Design and Place-making.</p> <p>The submission recommends that the over-arching vision for Galway City, together with the relevant Goals, Policies, Objectives and Development Management Process of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029, as they pertain to archaeological heritage, should be considered and referenced where appropriate in the SEA for the DEDP to assist in highlighting and assessing these interactions as they relate to the strategy for Galway City. In particular, the specific Strategic Aims for Public Realm and Built Environment, Travel and Mobility and Heritage-based Tourism, as set out in the County Development Plan, should be considered and referenced in the SEA Scoping process where these interact with Cultural Heritage.</p> <p>The Department further notes that notwithstanding the unique built and archaeological heritage of Galway City and the benefits and opportunities that this presents, the stated target outcomes and objectives of the DEDP do not explicitly reference this theme. In this regard, it is important to note that the Historic Town Core of Galway, together with numerous individual recorded sites and monuments located within the city, are each subject to statutory protection in the Record of Monument and Places (RMP), established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 (and as will be superseded by implementation</p>	<p>While stated targets do not expressly reference the unique built and archaeological heritage of the city, these aspects are referenced across the wider DEDP including within KPIs for environmental aspects, environmental considerations and guiding principles. Built and</p>

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Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p>of the relevant parts of the recently enacted Historic, Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023).</p> <p>Any design proposals deriving from the DEDP must be cognisant of the requirement to conserve and enhance the setting and amenity of the historic streetscape, street furniture and features, as well the archaeological heritage of Galway City Centre generally. Any future projects, as may be proposed stemming from the implementation of the DEDP, should be subject to Archaeological Impact Assessment and resultant designs should include specific archaeological mitigation where this requirement is identified by the impact assessment process.</p> <p>The Department welcomes the opportunities that the Destination & Experience Development Plan will bring to Galway City Centre. This will be strategically important to enhancing accessibility to, and appreciation of, the city’s heritage assets. The Department supports the integration and communication of multiple strands of cultural and natural heritage, particularly through the implementation of blue and green infrastructural projects that holistically deal with all aspects of archaeological, built and natural heritage. By delivering high quality renewal and enhancement to existing places, the social, environmental and economic objectives for sustainable development of communities will be met, and cultural heritage significance, conservation best practice and preservation and protection of the biodiversity of these places will be raised in general to the benefit of all.</p>	<p>archaeological heritage factors are also included within the SEA Monitoring programme.</p>
<p>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p>	<p>The submission from EPA includes the following comments and recommendations:</p> <p>EPA highlights several key environmental issues to consider in preparing the Plan and SEA. The submission includes specific comments on the SEA Scoping Report in Appendix I and has also attached the following resource document - ‘<i>SEA of Local Authority Land-Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources</i>’ (Version 1.25, 2025).</p> <p>Governance and Implementation – The submissions recommends to set out the implementation arrangements and governance structures, including lines of responsibility for implementation and delivery as well as provisions for interim review and progress reporting. The relationship between the Plan and the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>

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Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p>Economic Strategies and the implications of the Plan in the context of existing Local Authority Plans should be set out.</p> <p>Synergies with key national plans - The relevant actions of the Climate Action Plan 2024 and the objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework, Water Action Plan 2024, and the Northern & Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy should be aligned with and considered, as appropriate.</p> <p>Integration of the SEA and the Plan - The integration of the SEA process into the Plan should reflect the overall objective of the SEA Directive <i>“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”</i>.</p> <p>The submission advises that the SEA should address the complex and cross cutting nature of climate and biodiversity issues and include targets and measures where relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>Recommendations from the SEA & AA including mitigation measures and monitoring proposals should be integrated into the Plan. SEA Environmental Report and the Plan should include a chapter on how the recommendations and mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>EPA recommend that the Plan includes summary tables outlining the key findings of the SEA and linking the significant environmental effects identified to the proposed mitigation measures, monitoring programme and Plan policies/measures. Fully integrating the findings and recommendations of the SEA into the Plan will be key to strengthening its overall positive commitments while ensuring that any potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan are mitigated.</p> <p>EPA recommend that the SEA Environmental Report should include summary tables outlining the key findings of the SEA and linking the significant environmental effects identified to the proposed mitigation measures, monitoring programme and, where relevant, Plan policies/measures.</p>	

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Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p>The submission notes that EPA has published a guidance note – EPA Good Practice Guidance on SEA for the Tourism Sector to help provide guidance and ideas on how to carry out strategic environmental assessments (SEA) of tourism sectoral plans and programmes in Ireland.</p> <p>The submission notes that EPA has published the 'Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2024'. This report should be considered, and relevant aspects integrated as appropriate, in implementing the Plan outputs/ recommendations.</p> <p>EPA highlights the requirement under the SEA Regulations to consult with Environmental Authorities (EPA, Minister of Housing, Local Government & Heritage, Minister for Environment, Climate & Communications, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine)</p> <p>Appendix I to the EPA submission includes comments on the SEA Scoping Report - scope of the SEA, data and knowledge gaps, range of effects, monitoring, implementation & reporting, SEA statement, available guidance & resources, webtools.</p>	

2.2.2 Draft Plan Consultation

The Draft GCDEDP, together with the SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) were placed on public display and submissions received.

Consultation was also undertaken with the Environmental Authorities as specified in Article 13 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011 and for incorporation of the views of the Environmental Authorities within the Plan or Programme and the SEA Environmental Report.

Submissions received are detailed in **Table 2.2** below.

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Table 2.2 SEA Consultation Response

Submission	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
<p>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p>	<p>The submission from EPA includes the following comments and recommendations:</p> <p>Ensure the Plan aligns with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes is consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>
	<p>Biodiversity Considerations</p> <p>EPA notes that the important ecosystem services within the Plan area should be promoted in an appropriate manner to enhance eco-tourism. This could also be supported by increasing awareness of the need for environmentally sustainable and responsible tourism. This would help protect the significant environmental resources of the area, including the many designated sites and protected species within and adjacent to the Plan area.</p>	<p>The Plan sets out guiding principles for sustainable and responsible tourism under Appendix 1 of the Plan. The importance of integrating requirements for environmental protection and management are also considered throughout the Plan.</p>
	<p>Invasive Species Management and Control</p> <p>EPA advises the Plan to include a commitment to ensure the awareness of the need for management and control of invasive species within the Plan area. This is an important consideration, particularly in relation to promoting and developing or enhancing walking routes and marine activities. Awareness of biosecurity, management, monitoring and control and the promotion of these key considerations, in collaboration with other stakeholders, should be a priority.</p>	<p>The SEA ER identifies the potential issues relating to the management and control of invasive species. Appropriate mitigation measures as per the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 have been addressed in Section 9 of the SEA ER.</p> <p>Additionally, the following text has been added to Appendix 1 of the final Plan –</p> <p><i>‘Control and Management of Invasive Species</i></p> <p><i>Proposals and the development of Visitor Management plans shall consider the control and management of invasive species having regard to existing objectives contained within the County Development Plan to include: Developers and managers of existing tourism or recreational sites and/ or future development should adhere to best practice and facilitate the development of</i></p>

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Submission	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
		<p><i>appropriate facilities to minimise the spread of invasive species including along Blueways and Greenways. Further information and resources on “Check, Clean, Dry, Disinfect” should be sought on invasives.ie</i></p> <p><i>Failte Ireland shall work with partners to encourage greater awareness of potential threats caused by invasive species and how they can spread.’</i></p>
	<p>Link between the SEA and the Plan</p> <p>The note highlights that the SEA should identify the key environmental resources to be protected in implementing the Plan. Where tourism-related projects are proposed, in implementing Plan, it will be important that these are carefully assessed, developed, monitored and maintained.</p>	<p>The key environmental resources of the Plan have been identified in Section 5 of the SEA ER that provides a detailed description of the environmental baseline. The assessment of the Strategic Objectives and Strategic Development Pillars, Catalyst Projects and Enabling Projects is covered under Section 8 and Appendix 1 of the SEA ER. The mitigation measures and monitoring requirements are further addressed under Sections 9 & 10, respectively.</p>
	<p>EPA recommends that a commitment is included to collaborate with key stakeholders such as Galway City Council and the National Parks and Wildlife Service in delivering many of the projects included in the Plan. Where relevant, and as appropriate, the requirements of the EIA and Habitats Directives should be taken into account. The potential for cumulative effects that may arise from multiple tourism initiatives needs to be a key consideration also. It will be important that environmental management plans are prepared, where appropriate, to ensure that important natural and cultural resources are afforded the required protection.</p>	<p>The Plan includes a commitment to implementation and consent under Appendix 1 of the Plan and emphasises the requirements for project level environmental assessments such as EIA, AA & SSFRA and also development of visitor management plans. The cumulative assessment at a strategic level is included in Section 8 of the SEA ER, further consideration of cumulative effects specific to each site shall be undertaken at project level.</p> <p>Additionally, the following text in Appendix 1 of the final Plan has been updated as follows –</p> <p><i>‘Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection, and Management and Collaboration into the Plan</i></p>

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Submission	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
		<p><i>The SEA and AA team worked with the Plan preparation team at Fáilte Ireland to integrate requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan. This process included changes to text in the plan and inclusion of new actions/projects in order to embed sustainability into the plan itself. Projects are varied and relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.</i></p> <p><i>Fáilte Ireland is committed to collaborating with relevant stakeholders, including Galway City Council and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to ensure projects and initiatives coming from this Plan consider in full the requirements of project level environmental regulation and are afforded the correct level of environmental management to ensure natural and cultural resources are protected.'</i></p>
	<p>Visitor Numbers</p> <p>EPA notes that increases in visitor numbers can disturb or damage the natural environment. Expanding or creating new tourism developments may also impact land use, greenfield sites, and natural and cultural heritage. It's important to develop tourism in suitable, environmentally sustainable locations to minimise adverse impacts.</p>	<p>The Plan and the Environmental Report take into account integrating requirements for environmental protection and management under Appendix 1 of the Plan and is also considered throughout the Plan.</p>
	<p>Critical Service Infrastructure Provision</p> <p>EPA recommends that a commitment is included to engage with Uisce Éireann to ensure that adequate and appropriate wastewater and drinking water services are put in place to service any tourism-related projects arising from the Plan.</p>	<p>This infrastructure capacity assessment is included under Appendix 1 – 'Infrastructure Capacity'. This has been further updated to include a commitment to continue to</p>

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Submission	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p>Additionally, appropriate and sustainable waste management practices should be promoted.</p> <p>Traffic Management</p> <p>EPA recommends that the Plan recognises the need for effective traffic management within the Plan area. Supporting efforts to enhance opportunities for walking, cycling, public transport and water-related transport alternatives within the Plan area, would help improve traffic management. The Plan could also consider supporting and promoting opportunities for greater use of electric vehicles for tourism-related travel and the provision of associated charging infrastructure.</p>	<p>engage with Uisce Éireann and also identifies the need for traffic management.</p> <p><i>Infrastructure Capacity</i></p> <p><i>With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste, and transport) the potential environmental impacts associated with increase visitor numbers and increase pressure on capacities of existing infrastructure (including accommodation) will require careful planning and assessment.</i></p> <p><i>The potential environmental effects of the likely increase in tourism volumes resulting from the relevant projects in this plan will need to be considered at project level and mitigated as appropriate. Critical transport infrastructure to support all forms of transport around Galway City is important. This Plan supports the completion of the Galway City Transport Action Strategy in this regard. In addition, communication where relevant, between Fáilte Ireland and Uisce Eireann over the implementation period of this plan will be important to ensure projects resulting from this plan will have sufficient water and wastewater resources to sustainably function.</i></p> <p><i>This aspect should be linked to the development of visitor management plans as appropriate. The promotion of developing visitor friendly supporting infrastructure where it is required will also be encouraged.</i></p>
	<p>Mitigation Measures</p> <p>EPA recommends that where there is potential for likely significant effects is identified, the SEA ER should provide appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or</p>	<p>This is already provided in Section 9 of the SEA ER. Furthermore, there are further reiterated in Appendix 1 of the Plan. As such this is already addressed and no further change is required.</p>

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Submission	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p>minimise these. Additionally, the Plan should include clear commitments to implement the mitigation measures identified in the SEA ER.</p>	
	<p>Monitoring</p> <p>EPA notes that the Monitoring Programme should be flexible to take account of environmental issues and unforeseen adverse impacts should they arise. It should consider and deal with the possibility of cumulative effects. Monitoring of both positive and negative effects should be considered. The monitoring programme should set out the various data sources, monitoring frequencies and responsibilities for each of the monitoring indicators identified. If the monitoring identifies adverse impacts in implementing the Plan, Fáilte Ireland should ensure that suitable and effective remedial action is taken.</p>	<p>The monitoring plan for the GCDEDP is provided under Section 10 of the SEA ER.</p>
	<p>Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2024</p> <p>The Submission refers to the State of the Environment Report – Ireland's Environment 2024.</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>
	<p>EPA advises that any future amendments to the Plan should be screened for likely significant effects.</p>	<p>The response has been noted.</p>
	<p>EPA advises on the preparation of the SEA statement and to send a copy of the SEA Statement to any environmental authority consulted during the SEA process.</p>	<p>The SEA statement has been prepared and will be forwarded to the EPA.</p>
Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment	<p>The response from the Department acknowledges the receipt of the correspondence.</p>	<p>The response has been noted.</p>
Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)	<p>The submission from GSI encourages the use of their various datasets for EIAR, SEA, planning and scoping processes and to attribute them correctly. GSI appreciate the use of their Bedrock, Subsoil, Geoheritage, Landslide Susceptibility and Groundwater Vulnerability and Aquifer maps and datasets within the draft Galway City Experience DEDP and SEA.</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>

3 SEA Environmental Report

The SEA Environmental Report has been prepared to comply with the provisions of Article 12 of S.I. 435 of 2004 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations – as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.

Article 5(1) and Annex I of the *SEA Directive* provides detail on the information to be included in an Environmental Report. **Table 3.1** provides a checklist of the information referred to in Article 5(1) with a confirmation of where the relevant information is contained within the SEA. Refer to the standalone SEA Environmental Report prepared for the GCDEDP.

Table 3.1 Information required under Annex I of the SEA Directive

Information referred to in Article 5(1)	Environmental Report Section
(a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Section 2 & Section 4
(b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;	Section 5
(c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	Section 5
(d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;	Section 5
(e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	Section 6
(f) the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;	Section 8 and Appendix 1
(g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	Section 9
(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Section 7
(i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10;	Section 10
(j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.	Refer to Non-technical Summary Report

3.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives

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

A series of Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) have been prepared in line with current guidance and also with specific reference to the SEA for the GCDEDP (refer to **Table 3.2**). The SEOs provide a basis for the assessment of the environmental effects of the GCDEDP and are framed in such a manner as to enable the GCDEDP to be fully assessed in environmental terms.

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

Table 3.2 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) for GCDEDP

Theme	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)	B_1	Ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annex habitats and species ³ and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.
	B_2	Preserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, including internationally, EU and nationally designated sites, habitats and protected species.
	B_3	Ensure GCDEDP does not contradict biodiversity protection, restoration and rehabilitation objectives in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029.
Population & Human Health (PHH)	PHH_1	Promote sustainable high quality tourism within the Counties that supports economic development and maximises potential for employment and investment.
	PHH_2	Improve health and wellbeing by provision of recreational and tourism-related activities.
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG)	LSG_1	Minimise green field development and protect land and soil resources from pollution and degradation.
Water Quality (WQ)	WQ_1	Protect, maintain and where necessary improve water quality and the management of watercourses, groundwater and the marine environment, in compliance with the requirements of the WFD objectives and measures.
	WQ_2	Implement and comply with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management and Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidelines to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.

³ 'Annexed habitats and species' refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

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

3.2 Assessment of Effects of the Galway City Destination & Experience Development Plan

The GCDEDP has been subject to an assessment for potential effects arising from the implementation of the Plan on the baseline environment as characterised. The assessment was carried out having regard to the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) established for the aspects of the baseline environment which have potential to be impacted by the GCDEDP.

The Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 states that-

'Policy 6.8 Tourism Sector (1.) - Recognise the significant contribution that national and international tourism makes to the local economy and the vitality of the city and facilitate, in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and key stakeholders, the sustainable development of associated infrastructure, attractions, including a destination attraction of scale and events particularly where they reflect the distinctive history, culture and environment of Galway and highlight the significance of Galway as the only city on the "Wild Atlantic Way" and as a gateway to the Northern and Western Region.'

The Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, states that-

'VEDP 1 Visitor Experience Development Plans - To support the preparation and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans (VEDPs) In the county and to underpin the overarching tourism benefits and to promote the natural and cultural assets of the county.'

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It is noted that during its preparation the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029⁴ and Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028⁵, was subject to full SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

The environmental assessment of the 'Strategic Objectives' and of the 'Catalyst Projects/Enabling Projects/Destination Projects' of the GCDEDP are set out separately in the Environmental Report. The finding of the assessment is that 14no. strategic objectives/ pillars will have either potential positive effects or no effects on the environment. The finding of the assessment is that 19no. strategic objectives/pillars will have potential for either negative effects or for uncertain effects on the environment.

There are 8no. catalyst projects, 7no. enabling projects and 4no. destination projects in total. The projects where there is a requirement for development of existing and new infrastructure might also give rise to uncertain environmental effects on other environmental themes and SEOs that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. Refer to Appendix 1 of the SEA ER.

Where potential negative or uncertain environment effects have been identified appropriate mitigation has been provided as set out in **Section 3.3** of this Report.

In working with the SEA process, the Plan acknowledges the requirement for any development to adhere to best practice in terms of environmental governance. Indeed protection and enhancement of the environment is a critical pillar underpinning the core objectives and success of the GCDEDP. In this context any proposals for development arising from the GCDEDP must meet the proper planning and sustainable development policies, objectives and development management provisions of the statutory Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029.

Following the consultation stage, a number of minor amendments were made to the GCDEDP. Refer to the Environmental Report.

3.3 Mitigation Measures

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

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

The projects included in this Plan will have to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which this Plan is not part and does not contribute towards. The Plan includes requirements for environmental protection and

⁴ Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029- <https://www.galwaycity.ie/services/planning/development-plan-2023-2029>

⁵ Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 - <https://consult.galway.ie/en/consultation/adopted-galway-county-development-plan-2022-2028>

management including the ones set out in the *Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027* especially the *Wild Atlantic Way Regional Tourism Development Strategy*.

As stated in the GCDEDP these include:

- **Infrastructure Capacity** - *With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste, and transport) the potential environmental impacts associated with increase visitor numbers and increase pressure on capacities of existing infrastructure (including accommodation) will require careful planning and assessment.*
The potential environmental effects of the likely increase in tourism volumes resulting from the relevant projects in this plan will need to be considered at project level and mitigated as appropriate. Critical transport infrastructure to support all forms of transport around Galway City is important. This Plan supports the completion of the Galway City Transport Action Strategy in this regard. In addition, communication where relevant, between Fáilte Ireland and Uisce Eireann over the implementation period of this plan will be important to ensure projects resulting from this plan will have sufficient water and wastewater resources to sustainably function.
This aspect should be linked to the development of visitor management plans as appropriate. The promotion of developing visitor friendly supporting infrastructure where it is required will also be encouraged.
- **Visitor Management** - *Partners tasked with progressing actions and projects shall seek to sustainably manage existing and any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour to avoid significant effects on the environment including loss of habitat and/or disturbance to sensitive species (including human beings and biodiversity) where relevant. This shall include for example, ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor management plans will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.*
- **Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services** - *Blue and Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services - Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance and enhancement of existing blue and green infrastructure and its ecosystem services. Proposals for the development of any blue and green infrastructure or activities in these areas 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 protected landscape sensitivities.*
- **Control and Management of Invasive Species** - *Proposals and the development of Visitor Management plans shall consider the control and management of invasive species having regard to existing objectives contained within the County Development Plan to include: Developers and managers of existing tourism or recreational sites and/or future development should adhere to best practice and facilitate the development of appropriate facilities to minimise the spread of invasive species including along Blueways and Greenways. Further information and resources on “Check, Clean, Dry, Disinfect” should be sought on invasives.ie.*
Failte Ireland shall work with partners to encourage greater awareness of potential threats caused by invasive species and how they can spread.

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

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

Therefore, the key environmental protection measures included in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029, provide for appropriate and detailed mitigation of potential uncertain environmental effects of the GCDEDP. These measures include the following selected policies / objectives:

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Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028	Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029
Policy Objectives	Protective Policies / Objectives
Biodiversity (including Flora & Fauna)	
<p><i>F5 Deforestation - To promote the avoidance of deforestation or commercial afforestation within European sites unless directly relating to the management of the site for its qualifying interests.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.1 Green Network and Biodiversity</i> 1. Support sustainable use and management of areas of ecological importance, parks and recreation amenity areas and facilities through an integrated green network policy approach in line with the Galway Recreation and Amenity Needs Study and where superseded by the Green Space Strategy, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of European sites.</p>
<p><i>MCH 2 Marine Based Environment - It is a policy objective of the Local Authority to protect and enhance where appropriate marine biodiversity in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.1 Green Network and Biodiversity</i> 4. Support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2017- 2021 (and any subsequent NBAP) and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (2021-2025) and support the actions of the City Council's Heritage Plan 2016-2021 and Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 relating to the promotion of ecological awareness, biodiversity and best practices.</p>
<p><i>MCC 1 Environmental Value of the Coast - Protect the amenity, character, visual, recreational, economic potential and environmental values of the coast. Ensure that natural coastal defences including sand dunes, beaches and coastal wetlands are not compromised by inappropriate development.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.1 Green Network and Biodiversity</i> 6. Promote the integration of nature based solutions and green/blue infrastructure in all new developments as appropriate to contribute to the city's climate resilience and require large scale development proposals to include a green infrastructure and biodiversity plan.</p>
<p><i>MCC 2 Protection of Coastal Habitats - To strictly control the nature and pattern of development within coastal areas and ensure that it is designed and landscaped to the highest standards and sited appropriately so as not to detract from the visual amenity of the area.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i> 1. Protect European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network (including Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) in accordance with</p>

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Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028	Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029
<p><i>(a) Development shall be prohibited where the development poses a significant or potential threat to coastal habitats or features, and/or where the development is likely to result in altered patterns of erosion or deposition elsewhere along the coast;</i></p> <p><i>(b) To prohibit development along the coast outside existing towns and villages where such development is not adequately safeguarded over the lifetime of the development without the need to construct additional coastal defences.</i></p>	<p><i>the requirements in the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) and associated national legislation.</i></p>
<p><i>MCC 3 Protection of Coastal Area - It is a policy objective to protect the Coastal Area through the following measures:</i></p> <p><i>(a) Ensure that conservation works undertaken in coastal areas are in accordance with best practice and measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats are supported;</i></p> <p><i>(b) Seek to prevent the unauthorised removal of sand and related beach material;</i></p> <p><i>(c) Protect, enhance and conserve beaches in the County from inappropriate development and seek to maintain the current status of the designated Blue Flag beaches and Green Coasts and to increase the number of beaches and coasts holding this status in the future;</i></p> <p><i>(d) Facilitate an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and protection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>2.Ensure that all plans or projects within the Plan area will only be authorised and / or supported after the competent authority has ascertained based on scientific evidence, screening for appropriate assessment and /or a Habitats Directive Assessment that:</i></p> <p><i>i. The plan or project will not give rise to an adverse direct, indirect or secondary effect on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or</i></p> <p><i>ii. The plan or project will have an adverse effect 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</i></p> <p><i>iii. The plan or project will have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but</i></p>

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Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028	Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029
	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>MCC 4 Integrated Framework Management Plan - Support the preparation of an Integrated Galway Bay Framework Management Plan by all relevant stakeholders to provide for the sustainable and integrated development of the Galway Bay Area in a co-ordinated manner.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>3. Protect, conserve and promote the nationally designated sites of ecological importance, including existing and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NHA and pNHAs) in the city.</i></p>
<p><i>NHB 1 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity of Designated Sites, Habitats and Species - Protect and where possible enhance the natural heritage sites designated under EU Legislation and National Legislation (Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and Wildlife Acts) and extend to any additions or alterations to sites that may occur during the lifetime of this plan.</i></p> <p><i>Protect and, where possible, enhance the plant and animal species and their habitats that have been identified under European legislation (Habitats and Birds Directive) and protected under national Legislation (European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011), Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 and the Flora Protection Order (SI 94 of 1999).</i></p> <p><i>Support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network, the protection of Natural Heritage</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>4. Protect, conserve and support the development of an ecological network throughout the city which will improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</i></p>

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Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028	Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029
<p><i>Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, Wild Fowl Sanctuaries (and other designated sites including any future designations) and the promotion of the development of a green/ ecological network.</i></p>	
<p><i>NHB 2 European Sites and Appropriate Assessment - To implement Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and to ensure that Appropriate Assessment is carried out in relation to works, plans and projects likely to impact on European sites (SACs and SPAs), whether directly or indirectly or in combination with any other plan(s) or project(s). All assessments must be in compliance with the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. All such projects and plans will also be required to comply with statutory Environmental Impact Assessment requirements where relevant.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>6. Protect Local Biodiversity Areas, wildlife corridors and stepping stones based on the Galway Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 and support the biodiversity of the city in the Council's role/responsibilities, works and operations, where appropriate.</i></p>
<p><i>NHB 3 Protection of European Sites - No plans, programmes, or projects etc. giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on European 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 Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes, etc. or projects.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>7. Encourage, in liaison with the NPWS, the sustainable management of features which are important for the ecological coherence of the network of European sites and essential, by their linear or continuous nature or as stepping stones for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.</i></p>
<p><i>NHB 4 Ecological Appraisal of Biodiversity - Ensure, where appropriate, the protection and conservation of areas, sites, species and ecological/networks of biodiversity value outside designated sites. Where appropriate require an ecological appraisal, for development not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European Sites, or a proposed European Site and which are likely to have significant effects on that site either individually or cumulatively.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>8. Support the actions of the Galway City Council Heritage Plan 2016-2021 and any update and Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 relating to the promotion of ecological awareness and biodiversity, the protection of wildlife corridors and the prevention of wildlife habitat fragmentation.</i></p>

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<p><i>NHB 5 – Ecological Connectivity and Corridors - Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity in non-designated sites, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, stone walls, geological and geomorphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife areas where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>10. Protect and conserve rare and threatened habitats and their key habitats, (wherever they occur) listed on Annex I and Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43EEC) and listed for protection under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2000 and plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order 2015.</i></p>
<p><i>NHB 6 Implementation of Plans and Strategies - Support the implementation of any relevant recommendations contained in the National Heritage Plan 2030, the National Biodiversity Plan, the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and the National Peatlands Strategy and any such plans and strategies during the lifetime of this plan.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>11. Ensure that plans and projects with the potential to have a significant impact on European sites (SAC or SPA) whether directly, indirectly or in combination with other plans or projects are subject to Appropriate Assessment, under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43EEC) and associated legislation and guidelines, to inform decision making.</i></p>
<p><i>NHB 7 Mitigation Measures - Require mitigating measures in certain cases where it is evident that biodiversity is likely to be affected. These measures may, in association with other specified requirements, include establishment of wildlife areas/corridors/parks, hedgerow, tree planting, wildflower meadows/marshes and other areas. With regard to residential development, in certain cases, these measures may be carried out in conjunction with the provision of open space and/or play areas.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>14. Support and implement measures to control and manage alien/invasive species, where appropriate in accordance with the EU (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.</i></p>
<p><i>NHB 9 Protection of Bats and Bats Habitats - Seek to protect bats and their roosts, their feeding areas, flight paths and commuting routes. Ensure that development proposals in areas which are potentially important for bats, including areas of woodland, linear features such as hedgerows, stone walls, watercourses and associated riparian vegetation which may provide migratory/foraging uses shall be subject to suitable assessment for potential</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance</i></p> <p><i>15. Protect the ecological integrity of statutory Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, refuges for fauna and Annex 1 Habitats.</i></p>

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<p><i>impacts on bats. This will include an assessment of the cumulative loss of habitat or the impact on bat populations and activity in the area and may include a specific bat survey. Assessments shall be carried out by a suitably qualified professional and where development is likely to result in significant adverse effects on bat populations or activity in the area, development will be prohibited or require mitigation and/or compensatory measures, as appropriate. The impact of lighting on bats and their roosts and the lighting up of objects of cultural heritage must be adequately assessed in relation to new developments and the upgrading of existing lighting systems.</i></p>	
<p><i>NHB 10 NPWS & Integrated Management Plans - Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for European sites 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 by the NPWS for European sites (or parts thereof), the NPWS shall be engaged with in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Plan and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations, including those of local communities.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.8 Public Realm</i></p> <p><i>5.Promote nature based SUDS solutions in the public realm where possible to enhance biodiversity and resilience to climate change.</i></p>
<p><i>NHB 11 Increases in Visitor Numbers to Semi-Natural Areas, Visitor and Habitat Management - Seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that any new projects, such as greenways, are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian zones. Where relevant, the Planning Authority and those receiving permission for development under the Plan shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.7 Light Pollution</i></p> <p><i>3. Lighting on linear infrastructures, including greenways and blueways, should be carefully managed to ensure coherence of the supporting habitats of European sites, as outlined in Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</i></p>

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<p><i>change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects, including loss of habitat and disturbance. Management measures may include ensuring that new projects and activities are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor/Habitat Management Plans will be required for proposed projects as relevant and appropriate.</i></p>	
<p><i>WTWF 1 Wetland Sites - Protect and conserve the ecological and biodiversity heritage of the wetland sites in the County. Ensure that an appropriate level of assessment is completed in relation to wetland habitats that are subject to proposals which would involve drainage or reclamation that might destroy, fragment or degrade any wetland in the county. This includes lakes and ponds, turloughs, watercourses, springs and swamps, marshes, fens, heath, peatlands, some woodlands as well as some coastal and marine habitats. Protect Ramsar sites under The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (especially as Waterfowl Habitat).</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.7 Light Pollution</i></p> <p><i>4. Ensure the design of external lighting does not have an adverse impact on wildlife and ecosystems and encourage the use of dark zones and sensor lighting where feasible.</i></p>
<p><i>P 1 Protection of Peatlands - Ensure that peatland areas which are designated (or proposed for designation) as NHAs, SACs or SPAs are conserved for their ecological, climate regulation, education and culture, archaeological potential including any ancient walkways (toghers) through bogs.</i></p>	
<p><i>IS 1 Control of Invasive and Alien Invasive Species - It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to support measures for the prevention and eradication of invasive species</i></p>	
<p><i>IS 2 Invasive Species Management Plan - Ensure that proposals for development do not lead to the spread or introduction of invasive species. If developments are proposed on sites where invasive species are currently or were previously present, an invasive species management plan will be required. A landscaping plan will be required for developments near water bodies and such plans must not include alien invasive species.</i></p>	

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<p><i>PO 1 Delivery of All Ireland Pollinator Plan - To facilitate the delivery of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan where possible. In the interest of preserving and enhancing biodiversity and working in conjunction with the All Ireland Pollinator Plan - It shall be the policy objective of the Planning Authority to ensure that at least 20% of the green space on all housing estates being built will have to be dedicated, developed and maintained as a pollinator zone. The area dedicated can be confined to one single lot or various lots around the site providing that the total area of the lots meets the minimum requirement of 20%. The pollinator zones should be planted with a mix of pollinator friendly-bulbs, self seeding annuals and biennials, perennials, shrubs, trees, fruit trees and fruit bushes and the majority of this planting should consist of native plants.</i></p>	
<p><i>TWHS 1 Trees, Hedgerows, Natural Boundaries and Stone Walls - Protect and seek to retain important trees, tree clusters and tree boundaries, ancient woodland, natural boundaries including stonewalls, existing hedgerows particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows, where possible and replace with a boundary type similar to the existing boundary. Ensure that new development proposals take cognisance of significant trees/tree stands and that all planting schemes developed are suitable for the specific site and use suitable native variety of trees of Irish provenance and hedgerows of native species. Seek Tree Management Plans to ensure that trees are adequately protected during development and incorporated into the design of new developments.</i></p>	
<p><i>TWHS 3 Protection of Forestry - Protect all substantial areas of deciduous forest, other than areas of commercial forestry. Proposals for development in these areas should seek to interact with the landscape character of the forested areas and its limits while also enhancing the forested areas so as to increase biodiversity value.</i></p>	

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<p><i>GBI 1 New Developments - Require all proposals for large scale development to contribute to the protection, management and enhancement of the existing green/blue infrastructure of the County and the delivery of new green/blue infrastructure, where appropriate by including a green/ blue infrastructure plan as an integral part of any planning application. This plan should identify environmental and ecological assets, constraints and opportunities and shall include proposals which protect, manage, and enhance the development of green infrastructure resources in a sustainable manner.</i></p>	
<p><i>SRA 2 Promote Public Access to Natural Amenities - Recognize the role played by natural amenities as a major resource for visitors and local people and support, protect and promote public access to natural amenities that have been traditionally used for outdoor recreation (water-based facilities, recreational activities, and marinas).</i></p>	
Population and Human Health	
<p><i>MAS 1 Separation Distances from SEVESO Sites - To ensure that appropriate distances are maintained between any proposed development and any existing Seveso II establishment, in the interest of the health and safety of the occupiers of the proposed development.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.5 Safe Environment - Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso III Directive)</i></p> <p><i>1. Consult with the Health and Safety Authority (also known as the National Authority for Occupational and Health Standards) when changing any policies/objectives and assessing any proposed relevant developments in or in the vicinity of sites identified under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso III Directive), in order to prevent major accidents involving dangerous substances and to limit their consequences to the environment and community.</i></p>
<p><i>MAS 3 SEVESO III Sites - Take into account the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive, relating to the control of major accident hazards involving dangerous substances, and the recommendations of the Health and</i></p>	

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<p><i>Safety Authority in the assessment of all planning applications located within the consultation distance of such sites.</i></p>	
<p>Land, Soils and Geology</p>	
<p><i>SQ 1 Soil Impact Assessments - Ensure good soil quality throughout the county by requiring developments of a certain nature (as specified in the relevant environmental legislation) to carry out assessments of the impact of the development on soil quality.</i></p>	
<p><i>SQ 2 Soil Protection Measures - To ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate.</i></p>	
<p><i>SQ 3 Soil Protection, Contamination and Remediation - 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.</i></p> <p><i>All undeveloped, contaminated sites shall be remediated to internationally accepted standards prior to redevelopment. All applications shall be accompanied by a report from a qualified, expert consultant remediation incorporating international best practice and expertise on innovative ecological restoration techniques including specialist planting and green initiatives that create aesthetically improved sites, healthy environments and contribute to the provision of new green open spaces as integral parts of newly created areas.</i></p> <p><i>Treatment/management of any contaminated material shall comply as appropriate with the Waste Management Act 1996 (waste licence, waste facility permit), as amended, and under the EPA Act 1992 (Industrial Emissions licensing, in particular the First Schedule, Class 11 Waste), as amended. These measures will ensure that contaminated material will be</i></p>	

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<p><i>managed in a manner that removes any risk to human health and ensures that the end use will be compatible with any risk.</i></p>	
<p><i>MAS 2 Soil Protection Measures - To require that, the siting of new establishments, or modification of existing establishments classified under the Seveso II Directive, and new development in the vicinity of existing establishments shall take into account the need to prevent major accidents involving hazardous substances and safeguard both the public and the environment.</i></p>	
<p><i>PG 1 Geological and Geo-Morphological Systems - Protect and conserve geological and geo-morphological systems, county geological heritage sites and features from inappropriate development that would detract from their heritage value and interpretation and ensure that any plan or project affecting karst formations, eskers or other important geological and geo-morphological systems are adequately assessed with regard to their potential geophysical, hydrological or ecological impacts on the environment.</i></p>	
<p><i>PG 2 Geological Heritage of County Galway - Support the implementation of recommendations made in the Geological Heritage of County Galway – An Audit of County Geological Sites in County Galway (2019). Consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland when undertaking, approving or authorising developments which are likely to impact on County Geological Sites or involve significant ground excavations including sites identified as part of the Geological Heritage of County Galway – An Audit of County Geological Sites in County Galway (2019).</i></p>	
<p><i>PG 3 Promotion of and Access to Geological Sites - Encourage greater awareness of the geological heritage sites of the county and promote, where appropriate, public access to geological and geomorphological sites and avoid inappropriate development.</i></p>	

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<p><i>ESK 1 Protection of Eskers Systems - Protect and conserve the landscape, natural heritage and biodiversity value of esker systems in the county. Assess applications for quarrying and other proposed developments with reference to their status or relative importance, for example, amenity, landscape and scientific value in the context of the overall esker system.</i></p>	
Water Quality	
<p><i>CT 1 Tourism Resource - To protect beaches, and bathing areas as valuable local amenities and as a tourism resource and support the maintenance, protection and improvement of access to these amenities.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i> 1. Protect and maintain the integrity of the coastal environment and waterways by avoiding significant impacts and meeting the requirements of statutory bodies, national and European legislation and standards.</p>
<p><i>CT 5 Tourism Products - To support the protection and enhancement of our islands, coastline and waterways as tourism products and attractions, subject to community and environmental carrying capacity.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i> 2. Conserve and protect natural conservation areas within the coastal area and along waterways and ensure that the range and quality of associated habitats and the range and populations of species are maintained.</p>
<p><i>LWT 1 Lakeland and Waterways Tourism - To support the development of tourism activities in lakeland areas and waterways subject to Normal Planning and environmental criteria. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and all relevant EU Directives.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i> 5. Support the implementation of the recommendations of the River Basin Management Plan in relation to the protection of water quality of surface waters, groundwater and coastal waters.</p>
<p><i>NMPF 1 Marine Planning Framework - To seek to implement the policy objectives as set out within the National Marine Planning Framework to support the effective management of marine activities and more sustainable use of the county's marine resources.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i> 6. Ensure development and uses adhere to the principles of sustainable development and restrict any development or use which negatively impact on water quality.</p>
<p><i>MCD 1 Protection of the Coastline - To protect the special character of the coast by preventing inappropriate development, particularly on the seaward side of coastal roads. New development, wherever possible, shall be</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i> 7. Have regard to European and national best practice when assessing development in or near coastal areas which is likely to have significant effects</p>

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<i>accommodated within existing developed areas and shall be climate resilient in its location and design.</i>	<i>on the integrity, defined by the structure and function, of any designated European sites, protected coastal and marine fauna and flora.</i>
<i>MCD 2 Pattern of Development along the Coast - To strictly control the nature and pattern of development within coastal areas and ensure that it is designed and landscaped to the highest standards and sited appropriately so as not to detract from the visual amenity of the area.</i>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i></p> <p><i>8. Ensure the conservation of the canal corridor and require that developments abutting the canal relate to the context of the adjacent environment and contribute to the overall amenity, and explore the possibility of opportunities for public access.</i></p>
<i>SF1 Shellfish Waters Directive - To continue to work with local communities, relevant stakeholders and with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine to ensure the proper and successful implementation of the Shellfish Waters Directive along County Galway's coastline.</i>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i></p> <p><i>12. Ensure the protection of the River Corrib as a Salmonid River, where appropriate.</i></p>
<i>SF2 Protection of Shellfish Waters - To seek to protect the quality of designated shellfish waters off the County Galway coast.</i>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i></p> <p><i>14. Facilitate sustainable flood defence and coastal protection works in order to prevent flooding and coastal erosion, subject to environmental and visual considerations as guided by the Corrib go Cósta, Galway City Flood Relief Scheme project.</i></p>
<i>MCT 1 Water Based Sports and Marine Recreation - To encourage proposals that promote sustainable development of water-based sports and marine recreation in coastal areas and on river systems across the County in accordance with environmental considerations.</i>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i></p> <p><i>16. Ensure any development within the aquatic environment shall be carried out in consultation with prescribed bodies and with adherence to their guidelines.</i></p>
<i>MCT 2 Coastal Tourism and Recreation - To facilitate sustainable tourism and recreation activities where appropriate, whilst encouraging the diversification and utilisation of existing facilities in accordance with environmental considerations.</i>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i></p> <p><i>17. Protect and maintain, where feasible, undeveloped riparian zones and natural floodplains along the River Corrib and its tributaries.</i></p>

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<p><i>WR 1 Water Resources - Protect the water resources in the plan area, including rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, springs, turloughs, surface water and groundwater quality, as well as surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and water dependant 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 River Basin District Management Plan 2018 – 2021 and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same) and also have regard to the Freshwater Pearl Mussel Sub-Basin Management Plans.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways</i></p> <p><i>18. Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation, on protected species.</i></p>
<p><i>WR 2 River Basin Management Plans - It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to implement the programme of measures developed by the River Basin District Projects under the Water Framework Directive in relation to: Surface and groundwater interaction, Dangerous substances, Hydromorphology, Forestry, On site wastewater treatment systems, Municipal and industrial discharges, Urban pressures, Abstractions.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 5.4 Green Spaces: Urban Woodlands and Trees</i></p> <p><i>3. Integrate existing trees and hedgerows on development sites where appropriate and require tree planting, as part of landscaping schemes for new developments.</i></p>
<p><i>IW 1 Inland Waterways –</i></p> <p><i>(a) Protect and conserve the quality, character and features of inland waterways by controlling developments close to navigable and non-navigable waterways in accordance with best practice guidelines.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Preserve, protect and enhance Galway’s inland lakes and waterways for their amenity and recreational resource amenity.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Protect the riparian zones of watercourse systems throughout the County, recognising the benefits they provide in relation to flood risk management and their protection of the ecological integrity of watercourse</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.1 Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>3. Ensure the recommendations of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 are taken into consideration in the assessment of developments in identified areas of flood risk and require site specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and associated design and construction measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks arising, in all areas of identified flood risk including on sites where a only small proportion of the site is at risk of flooding and adopt a sequential approach in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).</i></p>

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<p><i>systems and ensure they are considered in the land use zoning in Local Area Plans.</i></p> <p><i>(d) The Planning Authority will support in principle the development and upgrading of the Inland Waterways and their associated facilities in accordance with legislation, best practice and relevant management strategies, key stakeholders and bodies including Waterways Ireland.</i></p> <p><i>(e) Ensure all abstractions of water will be subject to assessment for compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</i></p> <p><i>(f) Seek to provide additional accesses to lake shores and rivers for public rights of way, parking and layby facilities, where appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>(g) Developments shall ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken, where appropriate, including investigations into the nature and extent of any soil/groundwater contamination.</i></p>	
<p><i>FL 1 Flood Risk Management Guidelines - It is the policy objective of Galway County Council to support, 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) and the DEHLG/OPW publication The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009) (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance) and Department Circular PL2/2014 or any updated / superseding version.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.1 Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>4. Protect and promote sustainable management and uses of water bodies and watercourses from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains.</i></p>
<p><i>FL 2 Flood Risk Management and Assessment - Comply with the requirements of the DoEHLG/OPW The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and its accompanying Technical Appendices Document 2009 (including any updated/superseding documents). This will include the following:</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.1 Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>7. Continue to protect the coastal area and the foreshore and avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of coastal erosion and/or would cause and escalate coastal erosion in adjoining areas.</i></p>

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<p><i>(a) Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the Guidelines;</i></p> <p><i>(b) Development proposals in areas where there is an identified or potential risk of flooding or that could give rise to a risk of flooding elsewhere will be required to carry out a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment, and justification test where appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009 (or any superseding document); Any flood risk assessment should include an assessment of the potential impacts of climate change, such as an increase in the extent or probability of flooding, and any associated measures necessary to address these impacts;</i></p> <p><i>(c) Development that would be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding or that would cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations shall not normally be permitted;</i></p> <p><i>(d) Galway County Council shall work with other bodies and organisations, as appropriate, to help protect critical infrastructure, including water and wastewater, within the County, from risk of flooding.</i></p>	
<p><i>FL 3 Principles of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines - The Planning Authority shall implement the key principles of flood risk management set out in the Flood Risk Management Guidelines as follows:</i></p> <p><i>(a) Avoid development that will be at risk of flooding or that will increase the flooding risk elsewhere, where possible;</i></p> <p><i>(b) Substitute less vulnerable uses, where avoidance is not possible; and</i></p> <p><i>(c) Mitigate and manage the risk, where avoidance and substitution are not possible. Development should only be permitted in areas at risk of flooding when there are no alternative, reasonable sites available in areas at lower</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.1 Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>8. Protect and maintain, where feasible, undeveloped riparian zones and natural floodplains along the River Corrib and its tributaries.</i></p>

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<p><i>risk that also meet the objectives of proper planning and sustainable development. Vulnerable development in areas which have the highest flood risk should be avoided and/or only considered in exceptional circumstances (through a prescribed Justification Test) if adequate land or sites are not available in areas which have lower flood risk</i></p>	
<p><i>FL 6 Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) - Maintain and enhance, as appropriate, the existing surface water drainage system in the County. Ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems in all new developments. Surface water run-off from development sites will be limited to predevelopment levels and planning applications for new developments will be required to provide details of surface water drainage and sustainable drainage systems proposals.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.2 Water Quality</i></p> <p><i>1. Support the actions of the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 and future River Basin Management Plan in order to promote and achieve a restoration of good status, reduce chemical pollution and prevent deterioration of surface, coastal and groundwater quality, where appropriate.</i></p>
<p><i>FL 7 Protection of Waterbodies and Watercourses - Protect waterbodies and watercourses within the County 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.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.2 Water Quality</i></p> <p><i>3. Ensure development adheres to prevailing environmental standards and guidelines and accords with emerging legislation and strategy on the marine environment.</i></p>
<p><i>FL 8 Flood Risk Assessment for Planning Applications and CFRAMS - Protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate Flood Zone in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 (or any superseding document) and the guidance contained in Development Management Standard 68.</i></p> <p><i>Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for all planning applications in areas at elevated risk of flooding, even for developments appropriate to the particular flood zone. The detail of these site-specific FRAs</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)</i></p> <p><i>1. Ensure the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and sustainable surface water drainage management, wherever practical in the design of development to enable surface water run-off to be managed as near to its source as possible and achieve wider benefits such as sustainable development, water quality, biodiversity local amenity and climate adaptation.</i></p>

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<p><i>will depend on the level of risk and scale of development. A detailed site-specific FRA should quantify the risks, the effects of selected mitigation and the management of any residual risks. The Planning Authority shall have regard to the results of any CFRAM Studies in the assessment of planning applications.</i></p> <p><i>Development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Development Management Justification Test in addition to the site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Where only a small proportion of a site is at risk of flooding, the sequential approach shall be applied in site planning, in order to seek to ensure that no encroachment onto or loss of the flood plain occurs and/or that only water compatible development such as Open Space would be permitted for the lands which are identified as being at risk of flooding within that site.</i></p> <p><i>In Flood Zone C, where the probability of flooding is low (less than 0.1%, Flood Zone C), site-specific Flood Risk Assessment may be required and the developer should satisfy themselves that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to the County Plan SFRA datasets (including the Flood Zones, CFRAMS mapping, historical and predictive groundwater mapping, predictive pluvial mapping and historical flood risk indicator mapping, such as the Benefitting Lands mapping), new and emerging datasets (such as the OPW's National Fluvial Mapping that will supersede existing PFRA fluvial mapping for catchments greater than 5km²) must be consulted by prospective applicants for developments and will be made available to lower-tier Development Management processed in the Council.</i></p> <p><i>Applications for developments in coastal areas and associated assessments shall also consider wave overtopping and coastal erosion.</i></p>	

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Air Quality, Noise and Climate	
<p><i>AQ 1 Ambient Air Quality - To promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive (2008/50/EC) and ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as set out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI No. 180 of 2011) (or any updated/superseding documents).</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.6 Air Quality and Noise</i></p> <p><i>1. Maintain air quality to a satisfactory standard by regulating and monitoring atmospheric emissions in accordance with EU policy directives on air quality and Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive (2008/50/EC) by promoting and supporting initiatives to reduce air pollution and by increasing the use of sustainable transport modes and developing urban woodlands, encouraging tree planting, conserving and creating green open space.</i></p>
<p><i>AQ 2 Assessment of Air Quality - To require developments which would have the potential to have adverse impacts on air quality to carry out assessments of the impact of the development on air quality.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.6 Air Quality and Noise</i></p> <p><i>2. Ensure the design of development incorporates measures to minimise noise levels in their design and reduce the emission and intrusion of any noise or vibration which might adversely impact on amenities, in particular residential amenities where appropriate.</i></p>
<p><i>AQ 3 – Air Quality Mitigation Measures - To require the use of appropriate mitigation measures such as dust dampeners to minimise the potential impacts of developments on air quality.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.6 Air Quality and Noise</i></p> <p><i>3. Consider the details of Galway City Council Noise Action Plan 2019-2023 in the assessment and design of relevant development applications in the interests of protecting future amenity.</i></p>
<p><i>NP 1 Galway County Council Noise Action Plan 2019-2023 - To implement the Galway County Council Noise Action Plan 2019-2023 (and any subsequent Plan) in order to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to environmental noise exposure.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.7 Urban Design and Placemaking</i></p> <p><i>3. Ensure that development delivers high quality urban design, place making and public realm that contributes to urban regeneration in the city and that is resilient to potential impacts of climate change.</i></p>
<p><i>NP 2 Developments within Noise Maps (Noise Action Plan 2019-2023) - To require that where new developments are proposed within the noise limits of the noise maps for the designated sections of roads in the County, appropriate mitigation measures are undertaken so as to prevent harmful effects from environmental noise.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.7 Urban Design and Placemaking</i></p> <p><i>4. Encourage innovation in architecture and promote energy efficiency and green design.</i></p>

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<p><i>NP 3 Noise Impact Assessments - To require an assessment of impact of the development on noise levels, having regard to the provisions of the Environmental Protection Agency Acts 1992 and 2003 and the EPA Noise Regulations 1994 when assessing planning application.</i></p>	
<p><i>NP 4 Noise Pollution and Regulation - Restrict development proposals causing noise pollution in excess of best practice standards and regulate and control activities likely to give rise to excessive noise, other than those activities which are regulated by the EPA.</i></p>	
<p><i>NP 5 Noise Mitigation Measures - Require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigation measures and monitors. The provision of a noise audit may be required where appropriate.</i></p>	
<p><i>LP 2 Lighting and Climate Action - To require the use of low energy LED (or equivalent) lighting in support of Climate Action.</i></p>	
Cultural Heritage	
<p><i>HT2 Heritage Assets - To support and protect the heritage assets (built and natural) that are the focus for tourism development and that best practice standards in relation to the environmental management of tourism enterprises are adhered to.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 7.4 Bilingual City</i></p> <p><i>1. Protect and promote the distinctive cultural and linguistic heritage of the city and continue to support Galway’s status as a Bilingual City and recognise the importance of the Irish language as a cultural, community and economic resource.</i></p>
<p><i>HT3 Sustainable Tourism Industry - To support the development of a more sustainable tourism industry which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, the built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species; leaving them undiminished as a resource for future generations, while supporting social and economic prosperity.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.1 Record of Protected Structures</i></p> <p><i>1. Protect structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures, in accordance with legislation and DEHLG Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011.</i></p>

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<p><i>MCH 1 Cultural and Marine Heritage - To prevent where possible marine development from compromising the quality and significance of marine culture and heritage in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.1 Record of Protected Structures</i></p> <p><i>2.Ensure new development enhances the character or setting of a protected structure.</i></p>
<p><i>TWHS 1 Tentative World Heritage Sites - Protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the tentative World Heritage Sites in County Galway namely the Western Stone Forts and the Burren that are included in the UNESCO Tentative List and engage with other national and international initiatives which promote the special built, natural and cultural heritage of places in the County. Collaborate with landowners, local communities and other relevant stakeholders to achieve World Heritage Site status for the sites identified in County Galway.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.1 Record of Protected Structures</i></p> <p><i>5.Have regard to the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage in the assessment of development.</i></p>
<p><i>AH 1 Architectural Heritage - Ensure the protection of the architectural heritage of County Galway which is a unique and special resource, having regard to the policy guidance contained in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 (and any updated/superseding document).</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.1 Record of Protected Structures</i></p> <p><i>6. Consult with the DHLGH and have regard to recommendations of the DHLGH on planning applications relating to protected structures.</i></p>
<p><i>AH 2 Protected Structures –</i></p> <p><i>(a) Ensure the protection and sympathetic enhancement of structures including their curtilage and attendant grounds included and proposed for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, together with the integrity of their character and setting.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Review the Record of Protected Structures in order to provide a comprehensive schedule for the protection of structures of special importance in the County during the lifetime of the plan.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.1 Record of Protected Structures</i></p> <p><i>7.Implement proactive measures to encourage the conservation of protected structures</i></p>

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<p>(c) Ensure that development proposals are appropriate in terms of architectural treatment, character, scale and form to the existing protected structure and not detrimental to the special character and integrity of the protected structure and its setting.</p> <p>(d) Ensure high quality architectural design of all new developments relating to or which may impact on structures (and their settings) included in the Record of Protected Structures.</p> <p>(e) Promote and ensure best conservation practice through the use of specialist conservation professionals and craft persons.</p> <p>(f) Prohibit development proposals, either in whole or in part, for the demolition of protected structures, save in exceptional circumstances.</p>	
<p>AH 3 Protection of Structure on the NIAH - Give regard to and consideration of all structures which are included in the NIAH for County Galway, which are not currently included in the Record of Protected Structures, in development management functions.</p>	<p>Policy 8.1 Record of Protected Structures</p> <p>8. Promote sustainable building design, best conservation practice and the appropriate maintenance, adaption and reuse of historic buildings.</p>
<p>AH 4 Architectural Conservation Areas - Protect, conserve and enhance the special character of the Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) included in this plan through the appropriate management and control of the design, location and layout of new development, modifications, alterations or extensions to existing structures, surviving historic plots and street patterns and/or modifications to the character or setting of the Architectural Conservation Area. Works within the ACA shall ensure the conservation of traditional features and building elements that contribute to the character of the area. The special character of an area includes its traditional building stock and material finishes, spaces, streetscape, shop fronts, landscape and</p>	<p>Policy 8.2 Architectural Conservation Areas</p> <p>1. Protect and enhance the character and special interest of designated Architectural Conservation Areas, in accordance with legislation and DEHLG Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011.</p>

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<p><i>setting. New proposals shall have appropriate regard to scale, plot, form, mass, design, materials, colours and function.</i></p> <p><i>This will be achieved by;</i></p> <p><i>(a) Protecting all buildings, structures, groups of structures, sites, landscapes and all features which contribute to the special character of the ACA from demolition and non-sympathetic alterations.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Promote appropriate and sensitive reuse and rehabilitation of buildings and sites within the ACA.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Ensure new development within or adjacent to an ACA respects the established character of the area and contributes positively in terms of design, scale, setting and material finishes to the ACA.</i></p> <p><i>(d) Promote high quality architectural design within ACAs.</i></p> <p><i>(e) Seek the repair and reuse of traditional shopfronts and where appropriate, encourage new shop fronts of a high-quality architectural design.</i></p> <p><i>(f) Ensure that all new signage, lighting, advertising and utilities to buildings within ACA are designed, constructed, and located in such a manner that they do not detract from the character of the ACA.</i></p> <p><i>(g) Protect and enhance the quality of open spaces within ACAs and ensure the protection and where necessary reuse of street furniture and use of appropriate materials during the course of public infrastructure schemes within ACAs.</i></p> <p><i>(h) Prohibit development proposals, either in whole or in part for the demolition of a structure within an Architectural Conservation Area that contributes to the special character of the area.</i></p>	

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<p><i>(i) Protect structures in ACAs from non-sympathetic alterations and encourage appropriate infill developments.</i></p> <p><i>(j) Works materially affecting the character of a protected structure or the exterior of a building/ structure within an ACA will require planning permission;</i></p> <p><i>(k) Any works carried out to a protected structure or the exterior of a building/structure within an ACA shall be in accordance with best conservation practice and use sustainable and appropriate materials.</i></p> <p><i>(l) Ensure that any development, modifications, alterations, or extensions materially affecting the character of a protected structure, or a structure adjoining a protected structure, or a structure within or adjacent to an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), is sited and designed appropriately and is not detrimental to the character or setting of the protected structure or of the ACA</i></p>	
<p><i>AH 5 Maintenance and Re-use of existing Building Stock</i></p> <p><i>Promote the maintenance and appropriate re-use of the existing stock of buildings with architectural merit as a more sustainable option to their demolition and redevelopment.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.2 Architectural Conservation Areas</i></p> <p><i>3. Ensure that developments within an Architectural Conservation Area respects and enhances the character and special interest of the ACA.</i></p>
<p><i>AH 10 Designed Landscapes - Protect the surviving historic designed landscapes in the County and promote the conservation of their essential character, both built and natural. Consider protection of the designed landscape by inclusion in an Architectural Conservation Area. Development proposals in designed landscape shall be accompanied by an appraisal of the contributing elements and an impact assessment.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.2 Architectural Conservation Areas</i></p> <p><i>4. Ensure the character of Architectural Conservation Areas is preserved by protecting and conserving historic street furniture and paving features and ensure that new street furniture and surfacing is designed to be compatible with the character of the ACA.</i></p>
<p><i>ARC 1 Legislative Context - Support and promote the preservation, conservation and appropriate management and enhancement of the</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.3 Vernacular Heritage</i></p>

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<i>County's archaeological sites and monuments, together with the settings of these monuments, having regard to the legislative, statutory and policy provisions relevant to the conservation of the archaeological heritage.</i>	2. Take cognisance of the 'The Inventory of Thatched Buildings' in the assessment of any proposed works to such structures.
<i>ARC 4 Protection of Archaeological Sites - Protect archaeological sites and monuments their settings and visual amenity and 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, or that are newly discovered and seek to protect important archaeological landscapes.</i>	Policy 8.4 Archaeology 1. Protect, preserve and promote the archaeological heritage of the city including underwater archaeology in rivers, lakes, intertidal and subtidal environments.
<i>ARC 5 Development Management - All planning applications for new development, redevelopment, any ground works, refurbishment, and restoration, etc. within areas of archaeological potential or within close proximity to Recorded Monuments or within the historic towns of County Galway will take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and the need for archaeological mitigation.</i>	Policy 8.4 Archaeology 2. Ensure that proposed development within the designated city centre Zone of Archaeological Notification is not detrimental to the character of an archaeological site or its setting.
<i>ARC 8 Underwater Archaeological Sites - To protect and preserve the archaeological value of underwater archaeological sites and associated features. In assessing proposals for development, the Council will take account of the potential underwater archaeology of rivers, lakes, intertidal and subtidal locations.</i>	Policy 8.4 Archaeology 3. Have regard to the archaeological recommendations of the DHLGH on any planning applications.
<i>ARC 9 Recorded Monuments - Ensure that any development in the immediate vicinity of a Recorded Monument is sensitively designed and sited and does not detract from the monument or its visual amenity.</i>	Policy 8.4 Archaeology 5. Require the surveying, recording or excavation of archaeological heritage to include standing historic buildings and underwater archaeological heritage during the development process, where appropriate.

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<p><i>ARC 10 Zones of Archaeological Potential - To protect the Zones of Archaeological Potential located within both urban and rural areas and around archaeological monuments generally as identified in the Record of Monuments and Places. Any development within the ZAPs will need to take cognisance of the potential for subsurface archaeology and if archaeology is demonstrated to be present appropriate mitigation (such as preservation in situ/buffer zones) will be required.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.4 Archaeology</i></p> <p><i>6. Seek the preservation in situ or, at a minimum, preservation by record of archaeological sites/monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places and of previously unknown sites, features or objects of archaeological interest that are revealed through development activity.</i></p>
<p><i>ARC 11 Industrial and Post Medieval Archaeology - Protect and preserve the archaeological value of industrial and post medieval archaeology such as mills, limekilns, bridges, piers, harbours, penal chapels and dwellings. Proposals for refurbishment, works to or redevelopment/conversion of these sites should be subject to careful assessment.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.4 Archaeology</i></p> <p><i>7. Ensure that any development proposal with potential to impact on archaeological heritage, including the setting and amenity of sites and monuments, includes for an archaeological assessment. This includes within terrestrial, riverine, inter-tidal and sub-tidal environments.</i></p>
<p><i>CUH 1 Cultural Heritage - Protect and promote the cultural heritage assets and the intangible cultural heritage assets of County Galway as important social and economic assets.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 8.5 Industrial Archaeology</i></p> <p><i>1. Promote the protection of the varied industrial heritage of the city and encourage greater appreciation and public awareness of this heritage.</i></p>
<p><i>CUH 2 Special Places of Historic Interest - To protect and promote where possible special places of historical interest.</i></p>	
<p>Landscape & Visual</p>	
<p><i>LCM 1 Preservation of Landscape Character - Preserve and enhance the character of the landscape where, and to the extent that, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires it, including the preservation and enhancement, where possible of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest.</i></p>	

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<p><i>LCM 2 Landscape Sensitivity Classification - The Planning Authority shall have regard to the landscape sensitivity classification of sites in the consideration of any significant development proposals and, where necessary, require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany such proposals. This shall be balanced against the need to develop key strategic infrastructure to meet the strategic aims of the plan.</i></p>	
<p><i>LCM 3 Landscape Sensitivity Ratings - Consideration of landscape sensitivity ratings shall be an important factor in determining development uses in areas of the County. In areas of high landscape sensitivity, the design and the choice of location of proposed development in the landscape will also be critical considerations.</i></p>	
<p><i>LCM 4 Open/Unfenced Landscape - Preserve the status of traditionally open/unfenced landscape. The merits of each case will be considered in light of landscape sensitivity ratings and views of amenity importance.</i></p>	
<p><i>PVSR 1 Protected Views and Scenic Routes - Preserve the protected views and scenic routes as detailed in Maps 8.3 and 8.4 from development that in the view of the Planning Authority would negatively impact on said protected views and scenic routes. This shall be balanced against the need to develop key infrastructure to meet the strategic aims of the plan.</i></p>	
<p><i>ESK 2 Esker Areas - Have regard to the Landscape Character Assessment of the County of Galway and its recommendations relating to the Esker areas and any other subsequent relevant reports/ data.</i></p>	
Material Assets	
<p><i>GCTPS 1 - It is a policy objective of Galway County Council to support and facilitate the implementation of the Galway County Transport & Planning Study and Galway Transportation Strategy across all modes of transport.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 4.4 Sustainable Mobility – Walk and Cycle 8. Promote, facilitate and maintain maximum connectivity and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists in the design and management of new public and</i></p>

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	<p><i>private projects and in upgrading and retrofitting existing developments in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) and Permeability a Best Practice Guide, NTA (2015).</i></p>
<p><i>NR3 Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audit (RSA) - Require all applications for significant development proposals which have the potential to impact on the National Road Network to be accompanied by a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audit (RSA), carried out by suitably competent persons, in accordance with the TII's Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines and TII Publications (Standard) GE-STY-01024 (Road Safety Audit) respectively.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 4.6 Road and Street Network and Accessibility</i></p> <p><i>5. Implement best practice in road and street design according to the hierarchy of road users as set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) as updated (2019) and 2020, where road design is subject to DMURS.</i></p>
<p><i>NNR 1 Restricted Regional Roads - To safeguard the capacity and safety of Restricted Regional Roads listed in Table 6.3, against development where a maximum speed limit applies in order to protect the carrying capacity and safety of such roads.</i></p>	<p><i>Specific Objectives – Modal Change: Public Transport</i></p> <p><i>13. Ensure biodiversity and appropriate greening/nature based solutions are incorporated, into greenways, segregated cycleways and pathways where appropriate and ensure that paths and structures are constructed from suitable materials and incorporating a SuDS approach that supports and contributes to ecological connectivity and biodiversity.</i></p>
<p><i>NNR 2 Safeguard Regional and Local Roads - To safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of the County's regional and local road network.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.7 Light Pollution</i></p> <p><i>1. Ensure the design of external lighting minimises the incidence of light pollution, glare and spillage into the surrounding environment and has due regard to the visual and residential amenities of surrounding areas.</i></p>
<p><i>NNR 3 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets - Implement the national design standards outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2019) for urban streets and roads within the 50/60 kph zone.</i></p>	<p><i>Policy 9.8 Waste Management</i></p> <p><i>6. Promote the implementation of the City Council Litter Management Plan and other litter management initiatives in order to minimise and control the extent of litter pollution in the city.</i></p>
<p><i>NNR 6 Transport and Traffic Assessments and Road Safety Audits - To require the preparation of Transport and Traffic Assessments and Road Safety Audits</i></p>	

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<p><i>for new developments in accordance with the requirements set out in the TII Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines.</i></p>	
<p><i>NNR 7 Mobility Management Plans - To require mobility management plans to be submitted with applications for trip intensive developments.</i></p>	
<p><i>WS 2 Protection of Water Supplies - Collaborate with Irish Water and the Group Water Federation Scheme to protect, conserve and enhance all existing and potential water resources in the County to ensure compliance with the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2014 (as amended) and compliance of water supplies with the parameters identified in these Regulations.</i></p>	
<p><i>WS 3 River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 - Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021, and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan.</i></p>	
<p><i>WS 4 Requirement to Liaise with Irish Water – Water Supply - Ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with a suitable quantity and quality of drinking water supply and require that all new developments intending to connect to a public water supply liaise with Irish Water with regard to the water (and wastewater) infrastructure required.</i></p>	
<p><i>WS 7 Water Quality - Require that new development proposals would ensure that there would not be an unacceptable impact on water quality and quantity including surface water, ground water, designated source protection areas, river corridors and associated wetlands.</i></p>	

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<p><i>CWS 1 Water Conservation with all Development - To ensure all developments incorporate water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting to minimise wastage of water supply.</i></p>	
<p><i>CWS 3 Promotion of Water Conservation - To support Irish Water in promoting public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, business and industry.</i></p>	
<p><i>WW 4 Requirement to Liaise with Irish Water – Wastewater - Ensure that new developments will only be permitted which are adequately serviced with sufficient capacity for appropriate collection, treatment and disposal (in compliance with the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan) to the public sewer unless provided for otherwise by the plan. Developers shall liaise with Irish Water with regard to the wastewater (and water) infrastructure to ensure sufficient capacity is available prior to the submission of a planning application.</i></p>	
<p><i>WW 7 Sustainable Drainage Systems - To require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of SuDS measures be incorporated in all new development (including extensions to existing developments). All development proposals shall be accompanied by a comprehensive SuDS assessment including run-off quantity, run off quality and impacts on habitat and water quality.</i></p>	
<p><i>WW 8 Storm Water Infrastructure - To support the improvement of storm water infrastructure and to increase the use of sustainable drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in urban environments.</i></p>	
<p><i>WW 10 Surface Water Drainage - To require all new developments to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system and to incorporate</i></p>	

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<p><i>sustainable urban drainage systems where appropriate in new development and the public realm.</i></p>	
<p><i>WW 11 Protection of Irish Water Collection Systems - To prohibit the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water.</i></p>	
<p><i>WM 1 Connacht and Ulster Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 - Support the implementation of the Connacht and Ulster Waste Management Plan 2015- 2021 or any updated version of this document within the lifetime of the plan.</i></p>	
<p><i>WM 2 Requirements for Waste Management - Support and promote the circular economy principles, prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery, and to sustainably manage residual waste. New developments will be expected to take account of the provisions of the Waste Management Plan for the Region and observe those elements of it that relate to waste prevention and minimisation, waste recycling facilities, and the capacity for source segregation.</i></p>	
<p><i>WM 4 Waste Legalisation - To require that all waste disposal shall be undertaken in compliance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency and relevant Waste Management Legislation.</i></p>	
<p><i>WM 5 Construction and Environmental Management Plans - Construction Environment Management Plans shall be prepared in advance of the construction of relevant projects and implemented throughout. Such plans shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures which have been integrated into the Plan and any lower tier Environmental Impact Statement or</i></p>	

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<p><i>Appropriate Assessment. CEMPs typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) location of the sites and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse;</i> <i>(b) location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities;</i> <i>(c) details of site security fencing and hoardings;</i> <i>(d) details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction;</i> <i>(e) details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage;</i> <i>(f) measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network;</i> <i>(g) measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris;</i> <i>(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> <i>(i) details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels;</i> <i>(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);</i> <i>(k) disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil, including compliance with 2006 Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction</i> 	

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<p><i>and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government;</i></p> <p><i>(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;</i></p>	
<p><i>WM 9 Separate Collection of Waste - Encourage and support the provision of separate collection of waste in accordance with the requirements of the Waste Management (Food Waste) Regulations 2009, the Waste Framework Directive Regulations, 2011 and other relevant legislation.</i></p>	
<p><i>ICT 5 Siting and Design of Telecommunications Infrastructure - To require best practice in both siting and design in relation to the erection of communication antennae and support infrastructure, in the interests of visual amenity and the protection of sensitive landscapes.</i></p>	
<p><i>LP 1 Lighting Schemes - To require that all developments shall ensure lighting schemes are designed so that excessive light spillage is minimised to ensure light pollution in the surrounding environment including residential amenity, wildlife and near public roads is limited. Such lighting schemes shall be submitted and agreed with the Planning Authority</i></p>	
<p><i>LP 3 Dark Skies - To encourage the maintenance of dark skies in rural areas and to limit light pollution in urban and rural areas.</i></p>	
<p><i>MCT 3 Existing Coastal Walkways - To support proposals that improve the existing network of coastal walks within the county in accordance with environmental considerations.</i></p>	
<p><i>TI 4 Tourism and Infrastructure Capacity - The potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as</i></p>	

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<p><i>appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals. Galway County Council will support Irish Water and Fáilte Ireland to ensure that tourism is serviced by adequate and appropriate water services infrastructure.</i></p>	

4 Assessment of Alternatives

4.1 Introduction

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

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

4.2 Alternative 1: Do-nothing / Do-Minimum

Tourism operations in the Galway City & Salthill area would continue to operate as at present outside of a plan, whose objective is to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate the various stakeholders involved in tourism activities and interest.

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

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

While the Plan would co-ordinate activities and stakeholders in the tourism area, it would not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent (such frameworks fall under the remit of other public authorities). Therefore, any projects arising from the Plan would be required to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of documents that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

In essence the Plan would present a five-year sustainable tourism development plan for Galway City & Salthill. The key objectives of the Plan would be:

- *Grow annual revenues from international and domestic visitors to Galway City and increase the value of tourism for the destination.*
- *Progress projects that will disperse tourists across the city beyond the current city centre 'hotspot'.*
- *Motivate visitors to explore Galway's coastal and urban communities through increased levels of collaboration among existing tourism networks and develop the year round appeal of Galway neighbourhoods.*
- *Growing the number of saleable visitor experiences available during the day while protecting the city's status as a vibrant night-time destination.*
- *Grow the appeal of Galway City in the domestic leisure and family markets by leveraging the investment in outdoor activities.*
- *Maximise the large scale capital investment in visitor attractions and activities to broaden the appeal of Galway City among range of visitor segments.*
- *Pursue product development opportunities that build on the city's reputation for culture, arts, festivals and events.*

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- *Establish Galway as an international food destination and hub for major events and festivals.*
- *Enhance the role of Galway City as driver of tourism in county Galway and influencing visitor flows across the Wild Atlantic Way.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.4 Assessment of Alternatives

Three reasonable alternatives for the GCDEDP have been identified and assessed as set out in **Table 4.1**. The potential effects of the reasonable alternatives on the SEOs categorised as follows:

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

4.5 Reasoning for Selection of the Preferred Alternative

Whilst unlikely to have negative environmental effects, Alternative 1 does not deliver positive benefits for tourism in Galway City & Salthill.

Alternative 2A will deliver effective benefit and response for tourism in Galway City & Salthill, whilst at the same providing for sustainable development and environmental protection.

Alternative 2B will deliver effective benefit and response for tourism in Galway City & Salthill, but without ensuring environmental protection.

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

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Table 4.1 Assessment of Alternatives for the Galway City DEDP

Reasonable Alternative	Description	SEO	Environmental Assessment	Environmental Evaluation
Alternative 1 Do-nothing / Do-Minimum	Tourism operations in Galway City & Salthill would continue to operate as at present outside of a plan, whose objective is to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate the various stakeholders involved in tourism activities and interest.	All SEOs	+/-	In comparison to other alternatives, this alternative could give rise to potential uncertain or unplanned environmental effects across all environmental factors. It is likely that this alternative will not realise the wider stakeholder benefits that would be achieved with from a coordinated plan approach. In comparison to other alternatives, this approach may generate uncertain or negative environmental effects, which would not be counterbalanced by the positive environmental effects associated with other alternatives.
Alternative 2A Do-something Prepare a Plan with Environmental Considerations	Tourism operations in Galway City & Salthill would be facilitated, promoted, supported and coordinated through the preparation of a Plan, with environmental considerations, that seeks to better manage tourism in the study area.	All SEOs	+	In comparison to other alternatives, this alternative could give rise to protection of the environment across all environmental factors. At the same time this alternative will also realise the wider stakeholder benefits that would be achieved with from a coordinated plan approach. In comparison to other alternatives, this approach would generate positive environmental effects.
Alternative 2B Do-something Prepare a Plan without Environmental Considerations	Tourism operations in Galway City & Salthill would be facilitated, promoted, supported and coordinated through the preparation of a Plan, without environmental considerations, that seeks to better manage tourism in the study area.	All SEOs	+/- or -	While it is likely that this alternative will realise the wider stakeholder benefits that would be achieved with from a coordinated plan approach, in comparison to other alternatives, this alternative could give rise to potential uncertain, unplanned or negative environmental effects across all environmental factors. In comparison to other alternatives, this approach would generate negative environmental effects.

5 Monitoring

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

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

Fáilte Ireland is responsible for monitoring and the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, clear resolution plan will be produced with assigned responsibilities, timelines and monitoring to address environmental damage and cause of the same. It is recommended that the monitoring for the GCDEDP is undertaken utilising the outputs of monitoring and reviews of the Galway County & City Development Plans for efficiency and given that similar data sets will be used to measure the progress of each plan.

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

The implementation of the Galway City DEDP will be overseen by the creation of a working group that will operate until 2030. The DEDP Working Group is tasked with ensuring stakeholder commitment to project delivery and implementing the DEDP as a five-year operational plan based on the agreed destination development focus for Galway City.

Refer to **Table 5.1** below for the monitoring programme set for the SEA which includes details on the indicators, targets and data sources to monitor the progress of the GCDEDP.

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Table 5.1 Environmental Monitoring Programme

SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)				
B1	Ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annex habitats and species ⁶ and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.	Conservation status of habitats and species protected under European and International legislation.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for habitats and species protected under European and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.	<p>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years)</p> <p>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years)</p> <p>Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) data.</p> <p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p> <p>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.</p>
B2	Preserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, including internationally, EU and nationally designated sites, habitats and protected species.	Conservation status of habitats and species protected under International and National legislation.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under International and National legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.	<p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p>

⁶ 'Annexed habitats and species' refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

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

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG)				
LSG1	Minimise green field development and protect land and soil resources from pollution and degradation.	Extent of conversion of land cover / green field to developed / artificial surfaces.	Contribute towards the target of the SEA for the National Planning Framework's (2018, as revised 2025) to <i>"Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%."</i>	CORINE mapping surveys (every 5 years). EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
Water Quality (WQ)				
WQ1	Protect, maintain and where necessary improve water quality and the management of watercourses, groundwater and the marine environment, in compliance with the requirements of the WFD objectives and measures.	<p>Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 272 of 2009).</p> <p>Groundwater compliance with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC, subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD.</p> <p>Reference to EPA WFD Monitoring programme and status of surface waterbodies, groundwater bodies reported.</p>	No deterioration in the status of any groundwater or surface water, or adverse effect upon the ability of any groundwater or surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the GCDEDP.	<p>Information issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual).</p> <p>Review of WFD status of Bathing Waters, green flag / blue flag for beaches.</p> <p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p>

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
WQ2	Implement and comply with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management and Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidelines to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.	Flood-related incidences related to the GCDEDP.	Compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and to ensure that any new developments granted planning permissions are on appropriately zoned lands.	Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes. Review of planning applications for any new infrastructure to be accompanied by standalone flood risk assessment report in sensitive areas.
Air Quality, Noise & Climate (ANC)				
ANC1	Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality and noise emissions through the reduction of emissions.	Demonstration of compliance with air quality and noise provisions. Number of exceedances of ambient air quality standards in the County, as monitored under the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network.	To maximise the amount of measures relating to air quality and noise minimisation being implemented.	EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes. Review of EPA Air Quality Dashboard for air quality monitoring data results and EPA data for air quality monitoring.
ANC2	Contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with National targets, including Ireland's commitment to realising a climate neutral economy by 2050.	Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation.	To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented.	EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
Material Assets (MA)				
MA1	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, ensure new developments are served with adequate and appropriate critical	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned	No incompatible development (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned material assets infrastructure.	Review of Annual Environmental Reports prepared by Uisce Éireann.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
	infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health.	infrastructure, including water supply, wastewater management, energy and transport infrastructure.		Review of publicly available data from EPA monitoring. EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
MA2	Promote sustainable waste management, minimisation and recovery.	Tonnes of hazardous waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually. Tonnes of W.E.E.E. waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually. Tonnes of Bulky waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually. Tonnes of garden waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.	Increase waste recycling in the City & County. Reduce waste generation in the City & County.	EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
MA3	Promote sustainable transportation including increased use of public transport and active travel measures.	% change in modal split. Kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network. Kilometres of permanent integrated cycling network. Number of Electric Vehicle charging points in the city & county.	Percentage increase in the number of public transport users in the City & County. Increase kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network. Increase kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network.	Review delivery of sustainable transport projects via Galway City & County Council / NTA. Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
		Total Area of road reallocated for sustainable alternatives.	Increase number of Electric Vehicle charging points in the county. Increase Total Area of road reallocated for sustainable alternatives	
Cultural Heritage (CH)				
CH1	Protect and avoid impact on places, features and landscapes of cultural and archaeological importance, including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP).	Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan.	No adverse effects on archaeological or cultural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan.	Review of data available from National Monuments Section of Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
CH2	Protect and avoid impact on places, features, buildings and landscapes of architectural heritage, (including entries to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAHs)).	Percentage of entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan.	No adverse effects on architectural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan.	Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.
Landscape & Visual (LV)				
LV1	To protect landscape character, minimise the loss of historic landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows and scenic views.	Number of unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans.	No unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans.	Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
LV2	Avoid impacts on the statutory landscape & visual designations as identified in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029.	Status of High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects. Number of developments permitted that result in avoidable adverse impacts on High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects.	All action and development proposals supported by the plan must comply with policy objectives relating to the protection of High Amenity Zone and Views and Prospects defined in the Development Plans. No development supported by the plan should have an adverse impact on High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects.	Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes. Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.

6 References

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