

SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

FOR THE

DRAFT INISHOWEN PENINSULA DESTINATION EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

for:

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List of Abbreviations

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

Glossary

Appropriate Assessment

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

Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

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

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

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

Environmental Problems

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

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

Environmental Vectors

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

Mitigate

To make or become less severe or harsh.

Mitigation Measures

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

or extent, probability and/or severity of effects; repair effects after they have occurred; and compensate for effects, balancing out negative impacts with other positive ones.

Protected Structure

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

Recorded Monument

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

Scoping

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

Strategic Actions

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

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)

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

Section 1 SEA Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction and Terms of Reference

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

1.2 SEA Definition

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

1.3 SEA Directive and its transposition into Irish Law

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27th June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA

be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including tourism.

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

1.4 Implications for the Plan

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

- a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive¹, or
- b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive² i.e., the Directive requires that SEA is undertaken where Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)³ is being undertaken on plans, programmes etc.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 2 The Plan

2.1 Overview

The Draft Inishowen Peninsula DEDP is a five-year plan designed to be a roadmap for enhancing the existing Inishowen Peninsula⁴ visitor proposition to achieve the objectives of addressing seasonality, increasing visitor numbers and spend, and increasing dwell time and visitor dispersion across the destination.

The challenge is to deliver enough memorable moments that will inspire visitors to share their experience and also encourage them to return, while providing the tourism industry with a central focus for experience development. The focus of this Plan is ultimately on encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more, and to develop a new appreciation for the unique values of Inishowen and its people.

The Plan's **Vision Statement** highlights the significant eco-cultural heritage of Inishowen: *"A destination recognised for our internationally significant marine ecosystem, our distinctive maritime and military heritage, our creative story, and the opportunity it offers to pursue adventure, health, and well-being year-round."*

Elevating this distinctive identity lies at the core of this DEDP and work towards achieving the vision will require a collaborative approach that brings the diverse community of interests together including agency representatives, community groups with ecological and cultural heritage aspirations, and businesses. This approach has the potential to play a pivotal role in the ongoing development and promotion of Inishowen Peninsula as a unique bio-cultural region on the Wild Atlantic Way.

The purpose of the Plan is to present the destination development themes organised into an experience development framework to be adopted as a destination action plan for the next five years. This framework will provide the context for tourism operators and stakeholders to work in partnership, create new and improve existing visitor experiences, and communicate coherent and unified stories to the visitor.

The **Plan Goals** are:

- To enrich communities through sustainably growing and spreading the benefits of tourism across the peninsula year-round.
- To adopt new ways of working collaboratively to differentiate Inishowen and deliver compelling HERO experiences.
- To add value to our sense of place and to ensure that the integrity of our ecosystems, landscapes and traditions are respected.

The **Key Objectives** of the Plan are to develop compelling experiences for this stretch of the Wild Atlantic Way that will:

- Position Inishowen as a 'must do' destination and motivate visitors to stay overnight and spend more;
- Extend the length of the season;
- Improve the overall economy of communities through strengthening individual businesses, creating new entrepreneurial opportunities, sustaining and increasing job creation, and increasing the attractiveness of the area for other forms of economic growth;
- Align to the Wild Atlantic Way brand and target markets; Support community values and aspirations, and strengthen community appreciation of local culture and intangible heritage;
- Support sense of place enhancement; Promote collaboration and partnership, support engagement of businesses, and build lasting links between national and regional partners, local agencies and associations, and local tourism experiences; and
- **Protect the natural heritage and special environmental character of the region.**

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

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

⁴ Focused on the area stretching from the waters of the Atlantic Ocean to the north, Lough Foyle to the east and Lough Swilly to the west.

certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance⁵ with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

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

The Inishowen Peninsula DEDP is under the **Wild Atlantic Way key proposition**, which is to: *"Experience one of the wildest, most enhancing and culturally rich coastal touring routes in the world. Wherever you travel along the Wild Atlantic Way you'll find magic, adventure, history and beauty in abundance"*.

The Plan's **Destination Development Focus** covers three overarching themes: **"Maritime and Military Might"**; **"Inishowen's Creative Story"** and **"Wild Oasis"**, under which a range of **Catalyst Projects** and **HERO Experiences** have been aligned that will contribute to the creation of the in-destination conditions for tourism growth. The **Action Plan** is presented in four sections:

Section One: Catalyst Projects - initiatives designed to generate significant momentum across the region. It is anticipated that they will strengthen the positioning of the Inishowen Peninsula as a visitor destination, and will act as a stimulant for both local and regional sustainable economic growth:

1. Fort Dunree
2. Malin Head
3. North West Greenway Network
4. Creative Hubs
5. Inishowen Blueway

Section Two: Developing HERO Experiences – additional experiences that will strengthen Inishowen as a Destination, designed to complement the Catalyst Projects

and to further elevate the region's eco-cultural identity:

6. Grianán of Aileach
7. Inishowen Maritime Museum and Planetarium
8. Inch Wildfowl Reserve
9. Inishtrahull Island
10. Heritage Sites – The O'Doherty Story
11. Adventure Activities
12. Dark Skies
13. Marine Ecotourism
14. Well-being From Nature
15. Inishowen's Culinary Experience

Section Three: Strengthening Supportive Infrastructure and Sense of Place - the emphasis is on enhancing competitiveness through improvements to infrastructure and sense of place to support the development and delivery of experiences and are essential for the longer-term sustainable growth of tourism in the Inishowen Peninsula:

16. Improving Access Within The Inishowen Peninsula
17. Improving Infrastructure and Policy for Marine Tourism
18. Developing a Trail Network
19. Promoting Investment in Accommodation
20. Strengthening Sense of Place and Community Hubs

Section Four: Building Industry Capacity and Supporting Services - highlights the importance of building capacity within the industry and ensuring that adequate supporting services are in place; a priority initiative is the establishment of a new framework that will raise industry and community awareness of the eco cultural significance of Inishowen Peninsula and will generate ongoing dialogue and innovative thinking across the region on how to realise the vision.

21. Establishing a New Approach to Dialogue and Leadership
22. Developing Industry Capacity and promoting Quality Assurance
23. Building the Eco-Cultural Knowledge Base and Strengthening the Assets
24. Promoting Thematic Events
25. Utilising Technology to Enrich and Join up Hero Experiences
26. Enhancing Visitor Awareness of Hero Experiences in Inishowen
27. Implementation

The Plan is supported by Appendices relating to:

- An overview of each experiential theme;
- Considerations that need to be addressed in elevating these themes;

⁵ Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

- A description of each locality, its HERO products and supporting experiences and the theme-based stories; and
- Environmental considerations.

2.2 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes

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

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

Implementation of the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be

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

Section 3 SEA Methodology

3.1 Introduction to the Iterative Approach

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



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

3.2 Appropriate Assessment and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

3.2.1 Appropriate Assessment

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

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

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

3.2.2 Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

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

Scoping

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

Baseline

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

Alternatives

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

⁶ These components comprise biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

Impact assessment

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

Mitigation and monitoring

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

Reporting

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

Communication and consultation

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

3.3 Scoping

3.3.1 Introduction

The scope of environmental issues to be dealt with by the SEA together with the level of detail to which they are addressed was broadly decided upon taking into account the collection of environmental baseline data and input from environmental authorities. Scoping allowed the SEA to become focused upon key issues relevant to the environmental components that are specified under the SEA Directive⁶.

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

3.3.2 Scoping Notices

Relevant environmental authorities⁷ identified under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations, as amended, were sent SEA scoping notices by Fáilte Ireland

⁷ The following authorities were notified: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Environment, Climate and Communications; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

indicating that submissions or observations in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report could be made to Fáilte Ireland.

3.3.3 Scoping Submissions

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

- Environmental Protection Agency;
- Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (from the Geological Survey Ireland); and
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

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

3.4 Alternatives

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

3.5 Environmental Report

In this SEA Environmental Report, the likely environmental effects of the Plan and the alternatives are predicted and their significance evaluated.

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

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

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

This Environmental Report contains the information specified in Schedule 2 of the

European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004) as amended (see Table 3.1).

3.6 The SEA Statement

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

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

3.7 Difficulties Encountered

No significant difficulties were encountered in undertaking the assessment.

Table 3.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report

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

Section 4 Environmental Baseline

4.1 Introduction

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

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

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

The area to which the Plan relates (shown on Figure 4.1) covers the Inishowen Peninsula area in County Donegal⁸.

4.2 National Reporting on the Environment

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

Environmental Policy Position

A national policy position for Ireland's

⁸ Focused on the area stretching from Muff to Inch Island with its boundary being the Lough Foyle coastline to the

Environment.

Full implementation

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

Health and Wellbeing

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

Climate

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

Air Quality

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

Nature

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

Water Quality

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

Marine

Reduce the human-induced pressures on the marine environment.

Clean Energy

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

Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture

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

Water Services

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

Circular Economy

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

Land Use

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

east, the North Atlantic coastline to the north and Lough Swilly to the west.

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

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

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

4.4 Sustainable Development Goals

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

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

4.5 Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

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

Ecosystems are multifunctional communities of living organisms interacting with each other and their environment. Ecosystems provide a series of services for human well-being (ecosystem services) either directly or indirectly contributing towards human wellbeing. There are four main types; provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural services. Provisioning services are the products obtained from ecosystems such as food, fresh water, wood, fibre, genetic resources and medicines. Regulating services are defined as the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes such as climate regulation, natural hazard regulation, water purification and waste management, pollination or pest control. Support services highlight the importance of ecosystems to provide habitat for migratory species and to maintain the viability of gene-pools. Cultural services include non-material benefits that people obtain from ecosystems such as spiritual enrichment, intellectual development, recreation and aesthetic values⁹.

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

- Air quality;
- Noise pollution;
- Light pollution;

⁹ <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/topics/ecosystem-services>

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

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

4.6 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

4.6.1 Overview

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

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

- **Rare species and habitats** protected in the designated Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);
- **Peatlands** associated mainly with upland and coastal locations;
- **Aquatic and riverine ecology** associated with the various lakes, streams, rivers, and estuaries; and
- **Coastal areas and marine waters and associated aquatic ecology** downstream of the area to which the Plan relates.

Ecological designations include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)¹⁰;
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)¹¹;
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)¹²;
- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)¹³;
- Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas¹⁴;
- Salmonid Waters¹⁵
- Shellfish Waters¹⁶;
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)¹⁷;
- Flora Protection Order¹⁸ Sites;
- Wildfowl Sanctuaries¹⁹;
- RAMSAR Sites²⁰; and
- Nature Reserves²¹.

Relevant ecological designations in Northern Ireland include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)²²;
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)²³;
- Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs)²⁴;
- Nature Reserves²⁵; and
- RAMSAR Sites²⁶.

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

- CORINE land cover mapping (including areas likely to contain a habitat listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive)²⁷;
- Watercourses, wetlands and peatlands;
- Other relevant County Development Plan designations;
- The EPA's Framework National Ecological Network for Ireland²⁸; and

¹⁰ Refer to Section 4.6.3 for more detail.

¹¹ Refer to Section 4.6.3 for more detail.

¹² Refer to Section 4.6.4 for more detail.

¹³ Refer to Section 4.6.4 for more detail.

¹⁴ Refer to Sections 4.6.6 and 4.9.7 for more detail.

¹⁵ Refer to Section 4.6.7 for more detail.

¹⁶ In order to protect existing shellfish waters and to ensure the future protection of these areas, the European Union introduced the Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC). The purpose of this Directive is to put in place concrete measures to protect waters, including shellfish waters, against pollution and to safeguard certain shellfish populations from various harmful consequences, resulting from the discharge of pollutant substances into the sea. The Directive applies to the aquatic habitat of bivalve and gastropod molluscs only (includes oysters, mussels, cockles, scallops and clams). It does not include crustaceans such as lobsters, crabs and crayfish. **There are two areas of Shellfish Waters designated within, partially within or adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates (as shown on Figure 4.5): Trawbreaga Bay and Lough Swilly.**

¹⁷ TPOs are a planning mechanism whereby individual trees or groups of trees can be identified as important and protected by a TPO. Refer to the local authority for more detail.

¹⁸ The Flora (Protection) Order, 2015 (S.I. No. 356 of 2015) gives legal protection to 65 species of bryophytes in the Republic of Ireland (25 liverworts and 40 mosses). **There are a number of locations within the area to which the Plan relates with species protected by the Order, including locations at Bunrana, Fahan, Bulbin and Soldiers Hill.**

¹⁹ Wildfowl Sanctuaries are areas that have been excluded from the 'Open Season Order' so that game birds can rest and feed undisturbed. There are 68 sanctuaries in the State. Shooting of game birds is not allowed in these sanctuaries.

There is one Wildfowl Sanctuary within the area to which the Plan relates: Trawbreaga Bay (WFS-17).

²⁰ Refer to Section 4.6.8 for more detail.

²¹ Refer to Section 4.6.8 for more detail.

²² Refer to Section 4.6.3 for more detail.

²³ Refer to Section 4.6.3 for more detail.

²⁴ Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) are protected areas that represent the best of Northern Ireland's wildlife and geological sites that make a considerable contribution to the conservation of Northern Ireland's most valuable natural places. **ASSIs designated partially within or adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.3), include: Lough Foyle ASSI; Binevenagh ASSI; Magilligan ASSI; Altikeeragh ASSI; Tircrevan ASSI; Aghanloo Wood ASSI; Bann Estuary ASSI; River Faughan and Tributaries ASSI; River Roe and Tributaries ASSI; Lower Creevagh ASSI; and Tircreevan ASSI.**

²⁵ Refer to Section 4.6.8 for more detail.

²⁶ Refer to Section 4.6.8 for more detail.

²⁷ The CORINE land cover mapping classifies land cover under various headings. This dataset allows for the identification of lands that are likely to be most valuable to biodiversity including those which are likely to contain a habitat listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive e.g., natural grasslands, peat bogs, salt marshes. CORINE Land Cover (CLC) is a map of the European environmental landscape based on interpretation of satellite images. Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface.

²⁸ The EPA's Framework National Ecological Network provides a classification of the relative importance of areas

- Other sites of high biodiversity value or ecological importance as identified by, for example, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (badger sets), relevant datasets from the National Biodiversity Data Centre and BirdWatch Ireland's 'Important Bird Areas' (Crowe et al., 2009)²⁹.

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

4.6.2 Existing Fáilte Ireland Environmental Monitoring and Guidance

Fáilte Ireland regularly engages with environmental research that is used to make informed management decisions and produce robust guidelines to facilitate the protection of the environment. From its inception in 2014, the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) Operational Programme Monitoring Programme (undertaken to date by CAAS on behalf of Fáilte Ireland guided by relevant stakeholders) has been conducting research into the impacts of tourism on the receiving environment guided by an independent working group including the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

On site observational surveys and ecological assessments have covered 57 locations and monitored the activities and effects of over 26,000 visitors. The findings, published in the form of Visitor Observation Reports and Ecological Impact Reports, show that visitors cause low levels of effects and that relatively higher levels of effects are predominantly caused by the mismanagement of sites – or the lack of management. Effectively managed sites have been identified where visitor movements are facilitated alongside protection of environmental receptors such as Derrynane House. The research has shown that the protection of sites does not have to rely on infrastructure or visitor restrictions to avoid environmental effects. The monitoring has shown that that activity dynamics are key drivers of both impact occurrence and impact severity. Therefore, it is fundamental that management practices identify and appropriately manage the activities

by virtue of the biodiversity and flora that they contain and the connectivity they provide. Many of the areas identified are corridors.

available at nature-based destinations. From the monitoring work it was seen that 75% of all visitor observations resulted in no identifiable effects; which highlights the feasibility of 'no impact tourism' being an achievable target.

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

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

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

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

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

Furthermore, Fáilte Ireland is preparing a guidelines to facilitate broad scale identification

²⁹ **Trawbreaga Bay, Lough Foyle and River Foyle, and Lough Swilly including Blanket Nook and Inch Lake are regarded as 'Important Bird Areas'.**

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

4.6.3 European Sites

European sites occur along the waterways within and downstream of the area to which the Plan relates. These European sites (mapped on Figure 4.2) comprise:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)³⁰; and
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)³¹.

The SEA uses the same zone of influence cited in the AA; a 15 km buffer around the area to which the Plan relates (see sites within this zone mapped on Figure 4.2). The AA review of all sites within this zone has allowed a determination to be made that in the absence of significant hydrological links

the characteristics of the Plan will not impose effects beyond the 15 km buffer.

There are a number of SACs designated within and within 15 km buffer of the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.2) comprising:

- Ballyarr Wood SAC (Site Code: 000116)³²;
- Inishtrahull SAC (Site Code: 000154)³³;
- Lough Nagreany Dunes SAC (Site Code: 000164)³⁴;
- Magheradrumman Bog SAC (Site Code: 000168)³⁵;
- Kindrum Lough SAC (Site Code: 001151)³⁶;
- Sheephaven SAC (Site Code: 001190)³⁷;
- Ballyhoorisky Point to Fanad Head SAC (Site Code: 001975)³⁸;
- North Inishowen Coast SAC (Site Code: 002012)³⁹;
- Mulroy Bay SAC (Site Code: 002159)⁴⁰;
- Leannan River SAC (Site Code: 002176)⁴¹;
- Lough Swilly SAC (Site Code: 002287)⁴²;
- River Finn SAC (Site Code: 002301)⁴³; and
- Hempton's Turbot Bank SAC (Site Code: 002999)⁴⁴.

³⁰ SACs have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats)(Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010. The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.

³¹ SPAs have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) - referred to as the Birds Directive - due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the EU.

³² Sensitive features include: old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles.

³³ Sensitive features include: vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts.

³⁴ Sensitive features include: embryonic shifting dunes; shifting dunes along the shoreline with herbaceous vegetation; decalcified fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation; decalcified fixed dunes with *Empetrum nigrum*; Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes; dunes with *Salix repens ssp. Argentea*; humid dune slacks; machairs; oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea*; and slender naiad.

³⁵ Sensitive features include: Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*; and blanket bogs.

³⁶ Sensitive features include: oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea*; and slender naiad.

³⁷ Sensitive features include: mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; annual vegetation of drift lines; vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Altantic salt meadows; Meditteranean salt meadows; embryonic shifting dunes; shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila aneraia*; fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation; humid dune slacks; machairs; old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles; marsh fritillary; and petalwort.

³⁸ Sensitive features include: perennial vegetation of stony banks; vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea*; hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara spp.*; narrow-mouthed whorl snail; and slender naiad.

³⁹ Sensitive features include: mudflats and sandflats not covered by sea water at low tide; perennial vegetation of stony banks; vegetated sea cliffs; of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation; machairs; European dry heaths; narrow-mouthed whorl snail; and otter.

⁴⁰ Sensitive features include: mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; large shallow inlets and bays; reefs; and otter.

⁴¹ Sensitive features include: oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains; oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea*; freshwater pearl mussel; salmon; otter; and slender naiad.

⁴² Sensitive features include: estuaries; coastal lagoons; Atlantic salt meadows; *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils; old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles; and otter.

⁴³ Sensitive features include: oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*; blanket bogs; transitions mires and quaking bogs; salmon; and otter.

⁴⁴ Sensitive features include: sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time.

The SPAs designated within and within 15 km buffer of the area to which the Plan relates (Figure 4.2) comprise:

- Trawbreaga Bay SPA (Site Code: 004034)⁴⁵;
- Lough Fern SPA (Site Code: 004060)⁴⁶;
- Lough Swilly SPA (Site Code: 004075)⁴⁷;
- Greers Isle SPA (Site Code: 004082)⁴⁸;
- Lough Foyle SPA (Site Code: 004087)⁴⁹;
- Inishtrahull SPA (Site Code: 004100)⁵⁰;
- Malin Head SPA (Site Code: 004146)⁵¹;
- Fanad Head SPA (Site Code: 004148)⁵²; and
- Horn Head to Fanad Head SPA (Site Code: 004194)⁵³.

The SACs and SPAs in Northern Ireland designated within 15 km buffer of the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.2), include:

- Magilligan SAC (UK0016613)⁵⁴;
- Bann Estuary SAC (Site Code: UK0030084)⁵⁵;
- Binevenagh SAC (Site Code: UK0030089)⁵⁶;
- River Foyle and Tributaries SAC (Site Code: UK0030320)⁵⁷;
- River Roe and Tributaries SAC (Site Code: UK0030360)⁵⁸;
- River Faughan and Tributaries SAC (Site Code: UK0030361)⁵⁹;
- Skerries and Causeway SAC (Site Code: UK0030383)⁶⁰; and
- Lough Foyle SPA (Site Code: UK9020031)⁶¹.

There are a number of sites within a 15 km buffer designated immediately within or partially within the area to which the Plan relates (Figure 4.2),

including: Magheradrumman Bog SAC; North Inishowen Coast SAC; Lough Swilly SAC and SPA; Trawbreaga Bay SPA; Lough Foyle SPAs (Side Code: UK9020031 and Side Code: 004087); and Malin Head SPA.

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

4.6.4 Natural Heritage Sites and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

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

NHAs and pNHAs designated within a wider 15 km buffer of the area to which the Plan relates including those immediately within the area to

⁴⁵ Sensitive features include: barnacle goose; light-bellied brent goose; chough; and wetland and waterbirds.

⁴⁶ Sensitive features include: pochard; and wetland and waterbirds.

⁴⁷ Sensitive features include: great crested grebe; grey heron; whooper swan; graylag goose; shelduck; wigeon; teal; mallard; shoveler; scaup; goldeneye; red-breasted merganser; coot; oystercatcher; knot; dunlin; curlew; redshank; greenshank; black-headed gull; common gull; sandwich tern; common tern; Greenland white-fronted goose; and wetland and waterbirds.

⁴⁸ Sensitive features include: black-headed gull; common gull; and sandwich tern.

⁴⁹ Sensitive features include: red-throated diver; great crested grebe; bewick's swan; whooper swan; graylag goose; light-bellied brent goose; shelduck; wigeon; teal; mallard; eider; red-breasted merganser; oystercatcher; golden plover; lapwing; knot; dunlin; bar-tailed godwit; curlew; redshank; black-headed gull; common gull; herring gull; and wetland and waterbirds.

⁵⁰ Sensitive features include: shag; barnacle; and common gull.

⁵¹ Sensitive features include: corncrake.

⁵² Sensitive features include: corncrake.

⁵³ Sensitive features include: fulmar; cormorant; shag; barnacle; peregrine; kittiwake; guillemot; razorbill; chough; and Greenland white-fronted goose.

⁵⁴ Sensitive features include: fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation; dunes with *Salix repens ssp. Argentea*; humid dune slacks; embryonic shifting dunes; marsh fritillary butterfly; petalwort; and shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria*.

⁵⁵ Sensitive features include: fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation; Atlantic salt meadows; embryonic shifting dunes; and shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria*.

⁵⁶ Sensitive features include: species-rich nardus grassland, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas; calcareous and calchist screes of the montane to alpine levels; and calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation.

⁵⁷ Sensitive features include: otter; Atlantic salmon; and watercourses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation.

⁵⁸ Sensitive features include: otter; Atlantic salmon; water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation; and old sessile oak woodlands with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles.

⁵⁹ Sensitive features include: otter; Atlantic salmon; and old sessile oak woodlands with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles.

⁶⁰ Sensitive features include: reef; sandbanks which are slightly covered by seawater all the time; submerged or partially submerged sea caves; harbour porpoise; common seal; grey seal; and bottlenose dolphine.

⁶¹ Sensitive features include: bewick's swan; whooper swan; golden plover; bar-tailed godwit; light-bellied brent goose; great crested grebe; cormorant; greylag goose; shelduck; wigeon; teal; mallard; eider; red-breasted merganser; oystercatcher; lapwing; knot; dulin; curlew; and redshank.

which the Plan relates are mapped on Figure 4.3 and listed on Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 NHAs and pNHAs within and within 15 km of the area to which the Plan relates

NHAs and pNHAs within the area to which the Plan relates		
Designation	Site Name	Site Code
NHA	Illies Hill Bog	001127
	Slieve Snaght Bogs	002322
	Camowen River Bog	002405
	Umrycam Bog	002406
pNHA	Bulbin Mountain	000120
	Lough Swilly including Big Isle, Blanket Nook and Inch Island	000166
	Magheradrumman Bog	000168
	Carndonagh Wood	001098
	Lough Fad West	001161
	North Inishowen Coast	002012
	Old Rectory, Fahan	002056
pNHAs within 15 km of the area to which the Plan relates		
Designation	Site Name	Site Code
pNHA	Ballyarr Wood	000116
	Greer's Island (Massmount), Mulroy Bay	000146
	Inishtrahull	000154
	Lough Nagreany Dunes	000164
	Port Lough	000180
	Ballymastocker Dunes	001089
	Glashedy Island	001135
	Kindrum Lough	001151
	Lough Fern	001162
	Sheephaven	001190
	The Point, Mulroy	001196
	Ballyhoorisky Point to Fanad Head	001975
	River Swilly Valley Woods	002011
	Carlan Isles (Mulroy Bay)	002055
	Ramelton Hill	002057
	River Foyle, Mongavlin to Carrigans	002067

4.6.5 Land Cover Mapping

CORINE⁶² land cover mapping for the area to which the Plan relates is shown on Figure 4.4. The most dominant land cover types in the area to

⁶² The CORINE (Coordinated Information on the Environment) land cover data series was devised as a means of compiling geo-spatial environmental information in a standardised and comparable manner. CORINE has become a key data source for informing environmental and planning policy on a national and European level. The main land cover type in Ireland is agricultural land including forestry, which accounts for two-

thirds of the national landmass. Most of this is permanent grassland pastures, woodlands and peat bogs.

Categories from CORINE mapping that may indicate areas likely to contain Annex I habitats in the area to which the Plan relates (shown on Figure 4.7), include:

- Mineral extraction sites;
- Pastures;
- Non-irrigated arable land;
- Complex cultivation patterns;
- Land principally occupied by agriculture with significant areas of natural vegetation;
- Broad-leaved forest;
- Coniferous forest;
- Mixed forest;
- Natural grassland;
- Moors and heathlands;
- Transitional woodland-scrub;
- Beaches – dunes – sands;
- Sparsely vegetated areas;
- Burnt areas;
- Bare rocks;
- Peat bogs;
- Intertidal flats;
- Salt marshes;
- Estuaries;
- Water bodies; and
- Sea and ocean.

4.6.6 Register of Protected Areas

In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive a number of water bodies or parts of water bodies that must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs). Entries to the RPAs within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates, designated by virtue of their value to biodiversity include a number of water-dependent habitats within the area that have been listed on RPAs relating to biodiversity – these relate to designated SACs and SPAs (see Section 4.6.3).

- WFD Shellfish Areas (as shown on Figure 4.5) – including Trawbreaga Bay and Lough Swilly and associated WFD Surface and Groundwater in Shellfish Areas; and
- WFD Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only) – Lough Swilly is designated as Salmonid Waters under S.I. No. 293, and associated WFD Surface Water

thirds of the national landmass. Most of this is permanent grassland pastures. Peatlands and wetlands are the second most widespread land cover type, covering almost one-fifth of the country. While forested areas cover about one-tenth of the country. Despite rapid development in the past two decades, Ireland's landscape is predominantly rural and agricultural.

and Groundwater in Salmonid Regs, as shown on Figure 4.6.

Designations in Northern Ireland include WFD Shellfish Areas (mapped on Figure 4.5).

RPA's designated by virtue of their value to humans are addressed under Section 4.9.7.

4.6.7 Salmonid Waters

The Salmonid Regulations (S.I. 293/1988) designate the waters capable of supporting salmon (*Salmo salar*), trout (*Salmo trutta*), char (*Salvelinus*) and whitefish (*Coregonus*) as protected. 34 (No.) rivers, tributaries and lakes are listed and protected under these Regulations that prescribe quality standards for salmonid waters, the sampling programmes and the methods of analysis and inspection to be used by local authorities to determine compliance with the standards. A section of transitional waters of Lough Swilly is listed under these Regulations.

4.6.8 Other Designations

Other relevant designations within the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.7) include Nature Reserves and Ramsar Sites.

Nature Reserves are areas of importance to wildlife, protected under Ministerial order. There are currently 78 Statutory Nature Reserves in Ireland. Most are owned by the State but some are owned by organisations or private landowners. There is one State-owned Nature Reserve located within the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.7): Inch Levels Wildfowl Reserve.

Ramsar Sites are designated and protected under the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Water Fowl Habitat, which was established at Ramsar in 1971 and ratified by Ireland in 1984. Ireland presently has 45 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance, with surface areas of 66,994 hectares. The objective of a Ramsar site is the conservation of wetlands for wildfowl. While Ireland ratified the Ramsar Convention in 1984 there is no legal backing for Ramsar sites unless they are also Nature Reserves or SPAs and as such are protected by the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000 or the Birds or Habitats Directives. There is one Ramsar Site located within the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.7): Trawbreaga Bay Ramsar Site (Site number: 841).

Relevant designations in Northern Ireland (also mapped on Figure 4.7) include: Binevenagh Nature Reserve and Magilligan Point Nature Reserve and Lough Foyle Ramsar Site.

4.6.9 Existing Problems

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

Categories for pressures and threats on Ireland's habitats and species identified by the report comprise:

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

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

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

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



Figure 4.2 European sites within and within 15 km of the area to which the Plan relates



Figure 4.3 Natural Heritage Areas, Proposed Natural Heritage Areas and NI Areas of Special Scientific Interest within and within 15 km of the area to which the Plan relates

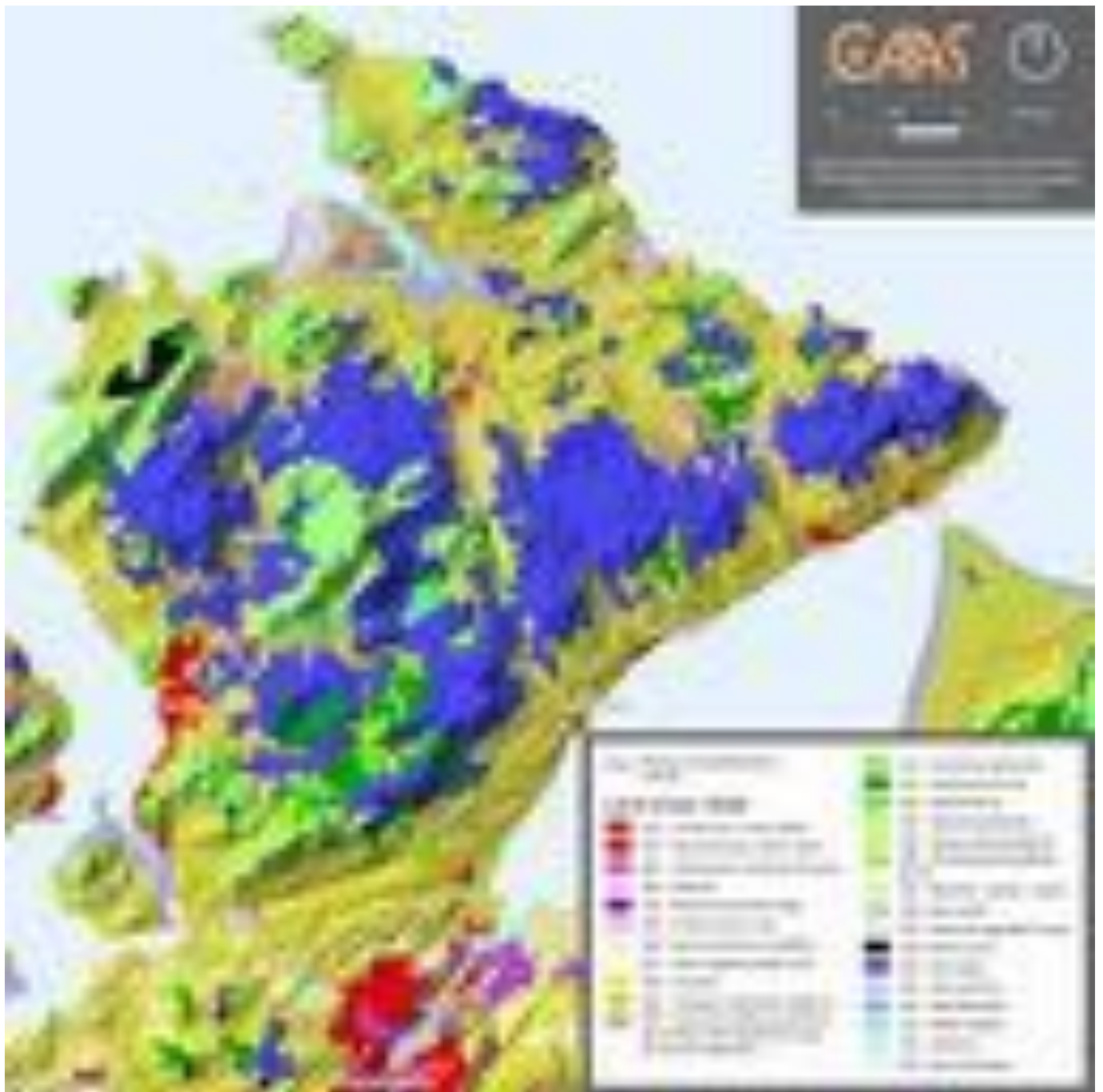


Figure 4.4 CORINE Land Cover 2018



Figure 4.5 WFD RPA Shellfish Area



Figure 4.6 WFD RPA Salmonid Waters



Figure 4.7 Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites and Areas Likely to Contain Annex I Habitats

4.7 Population and Human Health

4.7.1 Population

Using the 2016 Census data, the population of the area to which the Plan relates was identified as being located within the Inishowen Local Electoral Area⁶³.

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

- Recreational and development pressure on habitats and landscapes (see Section 4.6);
- Contribution towards an increase in demand for wastewater treatment at the municipal level (see Section 4.11);
- Contribution towards increase in demand for water supply and associated potential impact of water abstraction (see Section 4.11);
- Potential interactions in flood-sensitive areas (see Section 4.9); and
- Potential effects on water quality (see Section 4.9).

4.7.2 Human Health

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

4.7.3 Existing Problems

The greatest health risk from radiation in Ireland is caused by radon. The presence of radon gas, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that originates from the decay of uranium in rocks and soils, occurs across the country. It accounts for more than half of the total radiation dose

received by the Irish population. As a known carcinogen, in the same category as tobacco smoke and asbestos it is a cause of lung cancer. Exposure to radon for long periods or at high concentrations can lead to lung cancer.

The number of homes within the area to which the Plan relates with radon levels above the reference level is within the normal range experienced in other locations across the country⁶⁴.

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

4.8 Soil

4.8.1 Introduction

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

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

⁶³ Detailed information on the population for the area to which the Plan relates can be accessed from the CSO – *Census 2016 Small Area Population Statistics* mapping: <https://cso.maps.arcgis.com>.

⁶⁴ Mapping available at <http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap>

4.8.2 Soil Types

Active blanket bogs and active raised bogs are considered to be priority habitats, listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. Ombrotrophic (rain-fed) and minerotrophic (groundwater fed) peat soils are often indicative of areas that are the most sensitive to development due to ecological sensitivities and impeded drainage issues. Many of these peat areas are also subject to ecological designations (see Section 4.6). Ombrotrophic peat bogs are a dominant soil type occurring extensively within the area to which the Plan relates (see Figure 4.8).

Other soil types (shown on Figure 4.8) identified across the area to which the Plan relates include:

- **Brown podzolics**⁶⁵ (occurring in the east, south-east, south and west of the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Brown earths**⁶⁶ (occurring in the north of the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Alluvial soils**⁶⁷ (occurring along the rivers and estuaries within the area to which the Plan relates);
- **Lithosol soils**⁶⁸ (occurring in the upland and coastal locations throughout the area to which the Plan relates); and
- **Surface water and groundwater gleys**⁶⁹ (occurring in the north-west of the area to which the Plan relates).

Tidal marshes can be found along rivers and coasts which flood and drain by the tidal movement of the adjacent estuary, sea or ocean. Sand dunes are small ridges or hills of sand found at the top of a beach, above the usual maximum reach of the waves. They form from windblown sand that is initially deposited around obstacles on the beach such as driftwood, rocks or a fence. Areas of tidal marsh occur along estuaries surrounding the area to which the Plan relates and blown sand and dunes occur in the north of the area to which the Plan relates. These areas are often very sensitive to development due to ecological sensitivities. Outcropping rock is found mainly in the coastal and upland areas.

Various soil types in Northern Ireland adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates are also mapped on Figure 4.8.

⁶⁵ Dark brown humus-mineral soil covered with a thin mat of partly decayed leaves.

⁶⁶ Well-drained mineral soils, associated with high levels of natural fertility.

⁶⁷ These are associated with alluvial (clay, silt or sand) river deposits.

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

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

4.8.3 Geological Heritage

Geological Survey of Ireland coordinates the Irish Geological Heritage Programme, which seeks to identify and select sites of geological interest within each county across the country. County Geological Sites, when audited, do not receive statutory protection like Natural Heritage Areas but receive an effective protection from their inclusion in the planning system.

The audit report of geological sites in County Donegal was published in 2020⁷⁰. There are a number of County Geological Sites across the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.9) with the highest concentration of these sites occurring within coastal and upland locations, including:

- Inishtrahull;
- Malin Head;
- Trawbreaga Bay;
- Doagh Isle;
- Five Finger Strand;
- Ballycramsey;
- Malin Flat;
- Carndonagh Fan;
- Corvish;
- Carndonagh (Well Field);
- Lagh Hill;
- Tremone Bay;
- Kinnagoe Bay;
- Inishowen Head;
- Dunagree Point;
- Merville to Greencastle;
- Quigley's Point (Lough Foyle);
- Quigley's Point (Cabry River);
- Burnfoot Spread;
- Glentogher Mine;
- Lough Swilly; and
- Fahan Pier.

⁶⁸ Thin soil consisting mainly of partially weathered rock fragments.

⁶⁹ Wetland soils with slowly permeable horizons resulting in seasonal waterlogging.

⁷⁰ The audit of County Geological Sites in County Donegal is available from GSI at (www.gsi.ie). Twenty-seven counties (including all local authority areas), have completed their geological audits to date.

4.8.4 Landslides

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

The area to which the Plan relates has numerous locations with a history of landslide events⁷¹ and many of these events are associated with the upland peatland areas.

The GSI have identified⁷² the area to which the Plan relates as having mainly low levels of landslide susceptibility with some areas of moderately high and high levels of landslide susceptibility associated with peatlands and coastal and upland locations (mapped on Figure 4.10).

4.8.5 Existing Problems

There have been a small number of landslide events across the area to which the Plan relates and there are various areas identified by the GSI as being of elevated levels of landslide susceptibility (see Section 4.8.4).

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

⁷¹ Landslide events are recorded in the National Landslides Database available from GSI (www.gsi.ie).

⁷² <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/programmes-and-projects/geohazards/projects/Pages/Landslide-Susceptibility-Mapping.aspx>



Figure 4.9 Geological Heritage



Figure 4.10 Landslide Susceptibility and Previous Landslide Events

4.9 Water

4.9.1 The Water Framework Directive

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

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

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

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland) publish an annual "*Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report*", which includes information on the status of waterbodies⁷³. The 2021⁷⁴ report identified that:

⁷³ The most recent "*Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report*" was issued in May 2022, however, WFD data included is not updated each year due to the timescales of the monitoring. <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/water-framework-directive-statistics>

⁷⁴ The latest Water Framework Directive statistics on the status of all water body types: rivers, lakes, transitional, coastal and groundwater were published in 2021.

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

4.9.2 Zone of Influence

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

4.9.3 Surface Water Drainage

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

The area to which the Plan relates falls within two large river catchments: Donagh-Moville⁷⁵ catchment and Lough Swilly⁷⁶ catchment.

The main waterbodies in the area to which the Plan relates include: Lough Swilly; Lough Foyle; Lough Fad; Trawbreaga Bay; Northern Atlantic Seaboard; River Crana; and the River Donagh.

4.9.4 Surface Water Status

The WFD defines 'overall surface water status' as the general expression of the status of a

⁷⁵ This catchment includes the area drained by the River Donagh and all streams entering tidal water between Dunaff Head and Culmore Point, County Derry.

⁷⁶ This catchment includes the area drained by all streams entering tidal water in Lough Swilly between Fanad Head and Dunaff Head, County Donegal.

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

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

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

The WFD surface water status (2013-2018) for rivers and lakes within and surrounding the area to which the Plan relates, including a number of *unassigned*,⁷⁷ waterbodies is shown on Figure 4.11.

The WFD status of the rivers and lakes within the area to which the Plan relates is classified as *high*, *good* and *moderate* however, sections⁷⁸ of rivers and streams (including: Aghaweel; Ardagh; Ballycramsy; Ballyhallan; Bredagh; Burnfoot; Carrigans; Carrowen; Carrowhugh; Cashelnacor; Clonmany; Cloontagh; Crana; Culdaff; Donagh; Drumbrinet Stream; Glennagannon; Greencastle; Long Glen; Malin Stream; Mill; Owenboy; Owenerk; Portaleen; Roosky; and Skeoge) are identified as being of *poor* due to unsatisfactory ecological/biological and/or physio-chemical status.

The status of transitional and coastal waterbodies within and adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates ranges from *moderate* to *high* and *good*, however Blanket Nook Lough is identified as being of *poor* due to unsatisfactory ecological/biological and/or physio-chemical status.

⁷⁷ There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. Overall status is currently not assigned and the term "unassigned status" applies in respect of these waterbodies.

⁷⁸ As per EPA classification system (gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps).

The WFD status of river and coastal waterbodies in Northern Ireland (2018)⁷⁹ adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates is also shown on Figure 4.11.

In addition to this, many water bodies are identified as being at risk of not achieving their water quality objectives due to the damage being caused by significant pressures⁸⁰. Significant pressures, those pressures which need to be addressed in order to improve water quality, have been identified for waterbodies that are 'At Risk' of not meeting their water quality objectives under the WFD. Significant pressures for surface water bodies within or adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates are identified on Table 4.2. There are various types of pressures identified, such as:

- **Agricultural pressures** - can include issues related to farming including loss of excess nutrients and sediment loss to surface waters from diffuse sources such as spreading of fertilisers and manures. Excess phosphorous and sediment are typically issues for rivers and lakes, and too much nitrogen is the main issue for estuaries and coastal waters.
- **Urban run-off pressures** - can include leaking sewers and run-off from paved and unpaved areas and misconnections where private foul connections are connected to storm sewers instead of the foul sewer network.
- **Urban wastewater pressures** - can include direct discharge of nutrients from urban wastewater treatment plants and discharge from combined storm overflows or storm water overflows. Discharges of elevated concentrations of phosphorus, ammonium and nitrogen impact on the ecology of surface waters.
- **Hydromorphological and anthropogenic pressures** are identified together in many instances. Hydromorphological pressures can include: modifications to the physical habitat conditions or the natural functioning of a waterbody which can impact on ecology, caused by dredging and straightening of rivers (chanellisation), land drainage or hard infrastructure such as dams, weirs, culverts or other obstructions. Anthropogenic pressures can include: water abstractions; invasive species; agriculture; use of fertilizers, manures and pesticides; animal husbandry activities; inefficient irrigation practices; deforestation of woods; aquaculture; pollution due to industrial effluents and domestic sewage; mining; and recreational activities.
- **Extractive industry-related pressures** - can include different activities that lead to the

⁷⁹ The 2018 WFD datasets are the most recent GIS and mapping datasets available for Northern Ireland: <https://gis.daera-ni.gov.uk>.

⁸⁰ EPA (2019): Report on Water Quality in Ireland 2013-2018

extraction of raw materials from the earth, such as oil, metals, mineral and aggregates. Impacts from extractive sites include sediment/siltation pollution and alteration to the physical environment.

- **Forestry pressures** - can include poorly managed and inappropriately sited forest operations, negatively impact on water quality and aquatic habitats and species. The most common water quality problems arising from forestry relate to the release of sediment and nutrients and the impacts from acidification. Forestry may also give rise to changes in stream flow regimes caused by associated land drainage.
- **Domestic wastewater pressures** – can include septic-tank systems associated with one-off housing and small unlicensed private urban waste-water treatment plants. If not correctly installed and well maintained, these systems can result in leakage of untreated effluent to waters.

Table 4.2 WFD River, Lake, Transitional and Coastal Waterbodies Status⁸¹

Waterbody Name (EPA Identification Code) ⁸²	Waterbody Type	WFD Surface Waterbody Status (2013 -2018) ⁸³
Aghaweel_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and domestic waste water sources.
Ardagh_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from urban waste water sources.
Ballycramsy_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Ballyhallan_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and domestic waste water sources.
Bredagh_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from urban run-off and urban waste water sources.
Burnfoot_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from urban waste water sources.
Carrigans_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.
Carrowen_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Carrowhugh_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Cashelnacor_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and domestic waste water sources.
Clonmany_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and domestic waste water sources.
Clonmany_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and domestic waste water sources.
Clonmany_030	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Cloontagh_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Crana_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural, extractive industry-related and forestry sources.
Crana_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and extractive industry related sources.
Crana_030	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Culdaff_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Culdaff_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Donagh_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Donagh_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Donagh_030	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Drumbarnet Stream_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.
Glennagannon_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Greencastle_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from urban run-off sources.
Long Glen_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Malin Stream_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and domestic waste water sources.
Mill (Donegal)_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Owenboy (Crana)_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural, domestic waste water and waste sources.
Owenerk_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Owenerk_020	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Owennasop_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.
Portaleen_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and domestic waste water sources.
Roosky_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Skeoge_010	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from urban waste water sources.

⁸¹ Source: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> and <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water>.

⁸² The number at the end of each river water body name indicates where the water body is located along the main river channel. For example, the water body at the source is coded '_010', the next water body downstream is coded '_020' and the final water body before the river becomes transitional is '_180'.

⁸³ There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. There are a number of waterbodies within the area to which the Plan relates with overall status currently not assigned to them and the term "unassigned status" applies in respect of these waterbodies. These are not included on Table 4.2.

Blanket Nook Lough	Transitional	Poor – due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Ardmore_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Cabry_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from waste sources.
Glar_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.
Glenvar_010	River	Moderate. No pressures identified.
Straid_010	River	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and extractive industry-related sources.
Crana Estuary	Transitional	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.
Inch Lough	Transitional	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological sources.
Outer Swilly Estuary	Transitional	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from domestic waste water, urban run-off and urban waste water sources.
Foyle and Faughan Estuaries	Transitional	Moderate. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from anthropogenic sources.
Aught_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Ballyboe_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Ballygorman_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Burnfoot_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from extractive industry related sources.
Cooly_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Crocklummon_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from hydromorphological sources.
Drumhallagh_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Drung_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Glack_Or_Bohullion_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Glennagannon_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Gortyarrigan_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Keenagh_020	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Lenan_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Lisfannon_010	River	Good. No pressures identified.
Lough Nastackan Stream_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Rashenny_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Redford_Glebe_010	River	Good. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Fad Meendoran	Lake	Good. No pressures identified.
Lough Foyle	Coastal	Good. No pressures identified.
Lough Swilly	Coastal	Good. No pressures identified.
Trawbreaga Bay	Coastal	Good. No pressures identified.
Keenagh_010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Mill (Donegal)_010	River	High. No pressures identified.
Doo DL	Lake	High. No pressures identified.
Northern Atlantic Seaboard (Has 40,02)	Coastal	High. No pressures identified.
Northern Atlantic Seaboard (Has 37;38)	Coastal	High. No pressures identified.
Fad (Redcastle)_010	River	Unassigned. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources.
Mill_Brook_010	River	Unassigned. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from forestry sources.
Portstewart Bay	Coastal	Unassigned. No pressures identified.

4.9.5 Groundwater

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

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

The WFD groundwater status (2013-2018) of all groundwater underlying the area to which the Plan relates (shown on Figure 4.12) is identified as being of *good* status, meeting the objectives of the WFD.

4.9.6 Aquifer Vulnerability and Productivity

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

Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter into groundwater. The vulnerability of aquifers underlying the area to which the Plan relates are mapped on Figure 4.13 and generally classified as being of:

- *High, Moderate or Low vulnerability*, throughout the area to which the Plan relates; and
- *Extreme vulnerability and extreme (rock at or near-surface or karst)* mainly within and along coastal and upland locations within the area to which the Plan relates.

The GSI also rates aquifers based on the hydrogeological characteristics and on the value of the groundwater resource; this is

referred to as aquifer productivity. Productivity classifications (mapped on Figure 4.14) relevant within the area to which the Plan relates include:

- *Locally important aquifer bedrock which is moderately productive only in local zones;*
- *Poor aquifer bedrock which is generally unproductive except for local zones;*
- *Poor aquifer bedrock which is generally unproductive; and*
- *Locally important gravel aquifer.*

The Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI) provides regional groundwater aquifer and vulnerability classification for Northern Ireland. More detail on groundwater vulnerability (Figure 4.13) and groundwater resources (Figure 4.14) for Northern Ireland are available from the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland's (GSNI) GeoIndex.⁸⁴

4.9.7 WFD Registers of Protected Areas

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

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

- WFD RPA Drinking Water Surface Water Bodies⁸⁵ (as mapped on Figure 4.15), including lakes (such as Fad Meendoran and Doo) and rivers (such as: Greencastle and Fad, Redcastle). Groundwater beneath the entire area to which the Plan relates is also included.
- WFD RPA Bathing Waters and associated WFD Surface Waters in Bathing Locations (as shown on Figure 4.16), including bathing locations at: Culdaff; Stroove; Lady's Bay, Bunrana; and Lisfannon.

(Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 278/2007).

⁸⁴https://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/GSNI_Geoindex/home.html

⁸⁵ Various water bodies are used for drinking water abstraction in accordance with European Communities

Relevant entries to the RPAs in Northern Ireland adjacent to the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.15), include WFD RPA Surface Drinking Water Areas and WFD RPA Groundwater Drinking Water Areas.

There are also a number of RPAs in the area to which the Plan relates designated by virtue of their value to biodiversity - these are addressed under Section 4.6.

4.9.8 Bathing Waters

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

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

The most recent available data from the EPA for 2021⁸⁶ shows that locations of designated bathing waters (shown on Figure 4.16) are classified as *poor* at Lady's Bay in Buncrana, *good* at Lisfannon and *excellent* at Culdaff and Stroove.

The Blue Flag award is given to beaches and marinas that have excellent water quality and maintain other standards including effective and appropriate management to ensure the protection of the natural environment and safety standards. Bathing locations at Culdaff and Stroove were awarded with the Blue Flag in 2021.

4.9.9 Flooding

Certain areas across the area to which the Plan relates are at risk from pluvial⁸⁷, fluvial⁸⁸ and coastal⁸⁹ flooding. Historical flooding is documented at a number of locations within the area to which the Plan relates.

⁸⁶ EPA (2022) Report: *Bathing Water Quality in Ireland 2021*

⁸⁷ Resulting from high intensity rainfall events where run-off volume exceeds capacity of surface water network.

⁸⁸ Watercourse capacity is exceeded or the channel is blocked and excess water spills from the channel onto adjacent floodplains.

Predictive OPW Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment mapping, OPW Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Mapping and OPW National Indicative Fluvial Mapping indicate areas likely to be at most risk of flooding across the country, including the area to which the Plan relates. A number of settlements within the area to which the Plan relates are identified by this mapping as being at elevated risk of flooding.⁹⁰

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

4.9.10 Existing Problems

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

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

⁸⁹ Resulting from higher sea levels than normal causing the sea to overflow onto land. Such flooding is influenced by high tide level, storm surges and wave action.

⁹⁰ www.floodinfo.ie



Figure 4.12 WFD Groundwater Status (2013-2018) and NI Ground Waterbodies Status (2020)

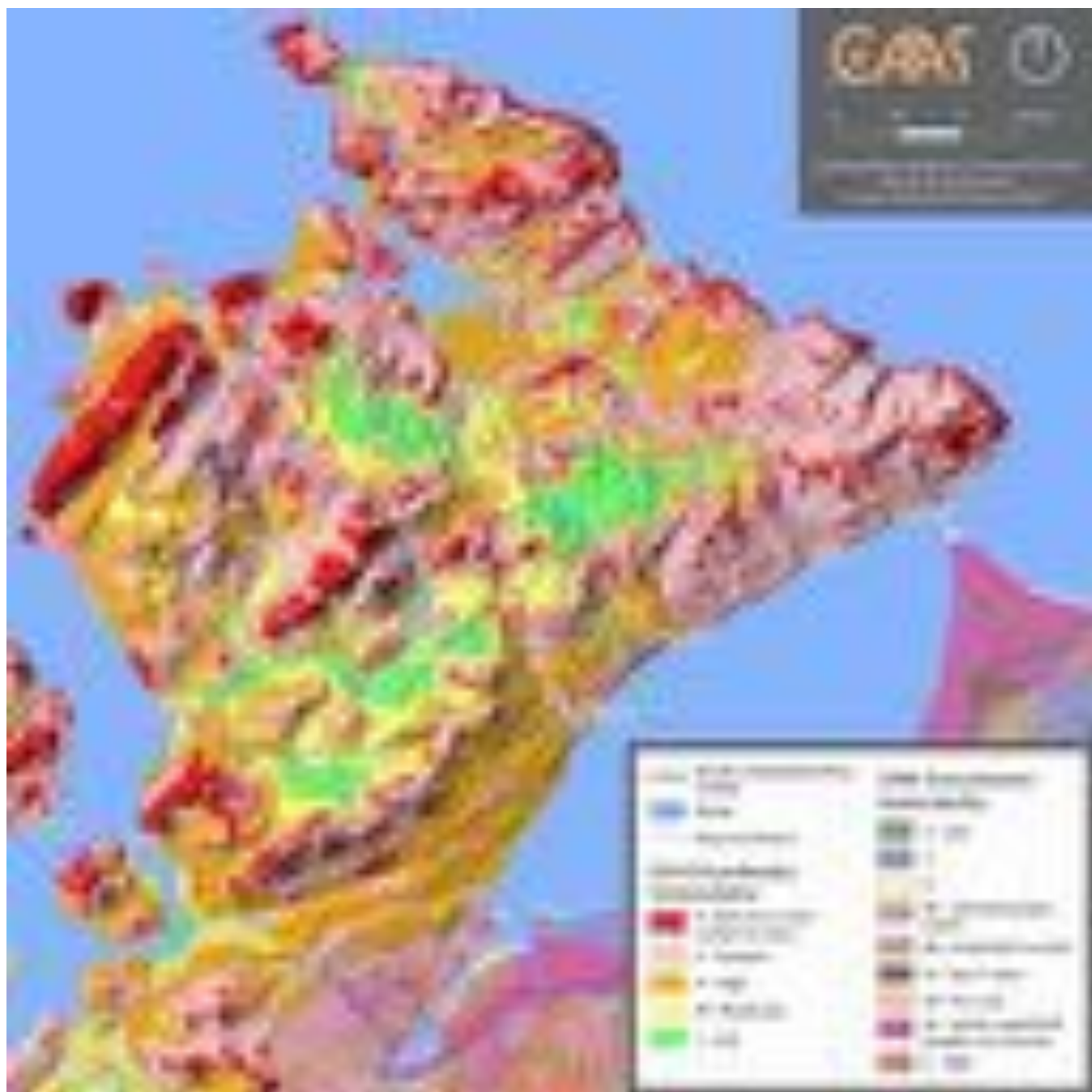


Figure 4.13 Groundwater Vulnerability



Figure 4.14 Groundwater Productivity



Figure 4.15 WFD Register of Protected Areas: Drinking Water



Figure 4.16 WFD Register of Protected Areas: Bathing Waters

4.10 Air and Climatic Factors

4.10.1 Climatic Factors

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

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

Interactions with climatic factors are also present with other environmental components including water/flooding (see Section 4.9).

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

Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2020 (EPA, 2021) report details provisional estimates of greenhouse gas emissions for the period 1990-2020. In 2020 total national greenhouse gas emissions are estimated to have declined by 3.6% on 2019 levels to 57.70 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂eq). This reduction in total emissions was driven by the COVID impact on transport and less peat used for electricity generation. It highlights that further, transformative measures will be needed to meet national climate ambitions.

Greenhouse gas emissions from the Transport sector decreased by 15.7% or 1.92 Mt CO₂eq in 2020. This decrease was largely driven by the impact of COVID restrictions on passenger car and public transport usage. International aviation, not included in the national total

emissions, declined by 65% in 2020 or by 2.17 Mt CO₂ eq.

The EPA 2021 publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2020-2040* provides an assessment of Ireland's total projected greenhouse gas emissions from 2020 to 2040, updated using the latest Inventory data for 2019. The report also includes an assessment of progress towards achieving its emission reduction targets for 2020 and 2030 as set out under the EU Effort Sharing Decision⁹¹ and Effort Sharing Regulation⁹². Key findings identified as part of the report's package of documents are that:

- Implementation of "Additional Measures" (including those in the 2019 Climate Action Plan) is projected to save 58 Mt CO₂ eq over the period 2021-2030 compared to the "With Existing Measures". This represents a reduction of 1.8% per annum in emissions over the period.
- Ireland's emissions covered by the 2013-2020 EU Effort Sharing Decision target are estimated to have been 7% below 2005 levels in 2020. Ireland is estimated to have cumulatively exceeded its compliance obligations by 12.2 Mt CO₂ eq over the 2013-2020 period, and will need to use credits and/or purchase surplus annual emission allocations from other member states to achieve compliance.
- These Projections indicate that Ireland can meet its non-ETS EU targets over the period 2021 to 2030 assuming full implementation of the 2019 Climate Action Plan and the use of the flexibilities available. Future, more ambitious targets as presented in the European Climate Law and Ireland's Climate Bill will require many (as yet unidentified) additional measures.
- Increased renewable electricity generation, including a projected 5GW of offshore wind generation, is expected to contribute to a 70% contribution of renewable energy in electricity generation by 2030. Energy industries emissions are projected to decrease by one third by 2030 compared to the most recent figures in 2019.
- Agriculture emissions are projected to decline by 1.2% per annum over the 2021-2030 period, provided the 16.5 Mt CO₂ eq savings from the agriculture sector identified in the 2019 Climate Action Plan are realised. An increase use of protected urea fertilisers and low emission slurry spreading, along with other measures targeting methane emissions from animals, will be required.
- The impact of COVID is projected to have led to a 14% reduction in transport emissions in 2020 compared to 2019. The measures in the 2019 Climate Action Plan

⁹¹ Decision No. 406/2009/EC of 23 April 2009 on the effort of Member States to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to meet the Community's greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments up to 2020.

⁹² Regulation (EU) 2018/842 on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement.

include 936,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2030 and are projected to reduce emissions to 25.5% below 2019 levels by 2030. It will be necessary to avoid a post-COVID surge in emissions to achieve that reduction.

- The projected impact of COVID in the residential sector in 2020 is an increase of almost 9% in emissions compared to 2019, driven by increased working from home. This highlights the need for our houses to become far more efficient, particularly in the context of broader home working. Implementing the 2019 Climate Action Plan measure for the installation of over 600,000 heat-pumps by 2030 as well as retrofitting 500,000 homes to a B2 equivalent BER will help achieve this.
- A strong impact from COVID is seen in the emissions projections for 2020 and 2021. A decrease in transport emissions and increase in residential emissions are the most obvious effects projected. Agriculture emissions are projected to have been little affected and energy emissions decreases are not primarily COVID related. As the economy exits from COVID restrictions, a “green recovery” where investment is targeted at measures which reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions, can result in better outcomes for society and the environment.
- The scale and pace of the changes needed to achieve the targets set out in the 2019 Climate Action Plan are significant, but the extent of change required to meet the Climate Bill and European Climate Law targets is unprecedented. Further ambitious measures in key sectors such as agriculture, transport and power generation will need to be identified, planned and implemented as soon as possible.

In 2020 the sectors with the largest contribution of emissions were agriculture (37.4%), transport (18.4%) and energy industries (14.8%). This projection includes the impact of COVID on the 2020 emissions which due to national lockdowns saw transport emissions decline, but agriculture emissions largely unaffected. The main source of emissions from the transport sector was road transport, accounting for approximately 95% of transport emissions in 2019. The contribution by the transport sector to Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions highlights the need for a concentrated effort to reduce transport emissions.

Ireland’s National Policy position is to reduce CO₂ emissions in 2050 by 80% on 1990 levels across the energy generation, built environment and transport sectors, with a goal of climate neutrality in the agriculture and land-use sector. The emissions for all of these sectors are rising, making the achievement of long-term goals more difficult.

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

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

The use of alternative fuels, including electricity, forms a significant part of government policy to reduce emissions, including from transport. Greater use of alternative fuels, including renewable energy, has the potential to further contribute towards energy security.

4.10.2 Ambient Air Quality

In order to protect human health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU Directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other Member States for a wide variety of pollutants. These pollutants are generated through fuel combustion, in space heating, traffic, electricity

generation and industry and, in sufficient amounts, could affect the well-being of the areas inhabitants. The EU Directives include details regarding how ambient air quality should be monitored, assessed and managed.

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

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

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

- Air quality in Ireland is generally good however there are localised issues.
- Ireland was above the European Environment Agency reference level for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), a toxic chemical, at 4 monitoring sites due to the burning of solid fuel.
- Ireland was above World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guidelines for particulate matter (PM), sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and ozone at 52 monitoring sites across the country.
- The travel restrictions imposed as a result of Covid-19 had a positive impact on air pollution in our urban areas with up to 50% reductions in traffic pollution.
- Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) from transport emissions fell in 2020, however, if long-term changes are not made to modes or patterns of transport it will lead to future exceedances in the urban areas.

Air pollution from transport is dominated by NO_x emissions. Of these, NO₂ is particularly impactful from a health perspective. The report describes that concentrations of NO₂ at urban areas in Ireland are close to the EU annual limit value. The potential implications for air quality with increases in traffic numbers or from certain weather conditions unfavourable to dispersion of pollutants could result in exceedances of the EU limit value.

The report states that:

- "Short-term exposure to NO₂ is linked to adverse respiratory effects including airway inflammation in healthy people and increased respiratory symptoms in asthmatics.

- Long-term exposure is associated with an increased risk of respiratory infection in children. NO_x is a major precursor in the formation of ground level ozone. It is also a major precursor in the formation of photochemical 'smog'."

With regards to solutions, the report identifies that:

- To tackle the problem of particulate matter:
 - Move away from domestic burning of solid fuel (coal, wood, peat) towards cleaner ways of heating homes such as heat-pump technology.
 - Implement the Government's proposed nationwide smoky fuel ban in 2022 which will facilitate people to make clean air choices.
- To reduce the impact of NO₂:
 - Implement the transport options (clean public transport and increasing the use of electric vehicles) as identified in the Government's Climate Action Plan.
 - Avoid reverting to pre-COVID traffic levels, maintain pedestrianisation of Ireland's urban areas and continue to improve cycling infrastructure.

In order to apply with European Directives relating to air quality, the EPA manages the National Ambient Air Quality Network and measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants at locations across the country. The current⁹³ air quality in the area to which the Plan relates is identified by the EPA as being *good*.

4.10.3 Noise

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

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

In compliance with the Directive and transposing Environmental Noise Regulations

⁹³ 01/06/2022 <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

(S.I. No. 140 of 2006), Noise Action Plans have been prepared for each local authority area within the country. The Donegal County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 is currently in force within the area to which the Plan relates. The Action Plans include noise mapping and are required to include measures to manage noise issues and effects, including noise reduction if necessary.

4.10.4 Existing Problems

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

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

4.11 Material Assets

4.11.1 Water Services

4.11.1.1 Wastewater

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

- Wastewater treatment at 12 large urban areas did not meet European standards;
- Raw sewage is released into the environment from 34 urban areas;
- Wastewater from 42 priority areas is the sole threat to waters at risk of pollution;
- Wastewater contributed to poor quality bathing waters at three beaches in 2020;
- Discharges from 12 areas must improve to protect freshwater pearl mussels;
- Seven wastewater collection systems have been found non-compliant with European Union requirements.

Based on the EPA's assessment of monitoring information provided by Irish Water and the enforcement activities carried out by the EPA, this report identifies urban areas with the most

important environmental issues that must be addressed. There are currently⁹⁴ 14 Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTP) in County Donegal listed as priority areas⁹⁵, where improvements are required to resolve urgent environmental issues, including Moville, Buncrana, Bridgend and Burnfoot located within the area to which the Plan relates.

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

The most recent and available Irish Water compliance report for the wastewater treatment plants serving the area to which the Plan relates, provide information on the environmental performance and wastewater discharge licence compliance of the following WWTPs⁹⁶:

- **Clonmany WWTP (Licence No. D0533-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to plant being overloaded due to ammonia and ortho-P exceedance;
- **Ballyliffin WWTP (Licence No. D0351-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to not meeting the required EQS;
- **Fahan WWTP (Licence No. D0535-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to not meeting the required EQS;
- **Buncrana WWTP (Licence No. D0125-01)** – compliant;
- **Carndonagh Malin WWTP (Licence No. D0113-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to not meeting the required EQS;
- **Burnfoot WWTP (Licence No. D0531-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to not meeting the required EQS; and
- **Bridgend WWTP (Licence No. D0532-01)** – non-compliant with the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) set in the wastewater discharge licence due to not meeting the required EQS.

Irish Water in collaboration with Donegal County Council has developed and prioritised a major programme of work which will address deficiencies that exist across the wastewater infrastructure in the county. Settlements within the area to which the Plan relates with proposed wastewater infrastructure and capacity upgrades identified by Donegal County

⁹⁴ Updated list of priority urban areas (EPA, May 2022)

⁹⁵ Including: Ballintra; Bridgend; Buncrana; Burnfoot; Burtonport; Coolatee; Falcarragh; Kerrykeel; Kilcar; Kilmacreehan; Milford; Moville; Ramelton; and Rathmullan.

⁹⁶ Irish Water (2020): *Annual Environmental Reports (AERs)*

Council include Buncrana, Ballyliffin, Bridgend, Greencastle and Moville.⁹⁷

4.11.1.2 Water Supply

Drinking water supply in the area to which the Plan relates is provided by private and public water supply schemes⁹⁸, including the Inishowen Regional Water Supply serving Carndonagh, south of Buncrana⁹⁹, Ballyliffin, Greencastle, Malin and Moville, smaller villages and rural hinterlands. The plant sources water from the Eddie Fullerton Pollan Dam¹⁰⁰.

Irish Water in collaboration with Donegal County Council has developed and prioritised a major programme of work, which will address deficiencies that exist across the water supply network and infrastructure. Settlements within the area to which the Plan relates with proposed drinking water infrastructure and capacity upgrades identified by Donegal County Council include Greencastle and Cardonagh.¹⁰¹ Irish Water is currently preparing a National Water Resources Plan (NWRP)¹⁰² to address urgent issues with the supply and demand for drinking water in Ireland over the short, medium and long term.

Under Section 58 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, the EPA is required to collect and verify monitoring results for all water supplies in Ireland covered by the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000. The EPA publishes their results in annual reports that are supported by Remedial Action Lists (RALs). The RAL identifies water supplies that are not in compliance with the Regulations mentioned above. None of the public water supply schemes serving the area to which the Plan relates are listed on the most recent EPA Remedial Action List (Q4 of 2021).

4.11.2 Public Assets and Infrastructure

Settlements across the area to which the Plan relates include Carndonagh, Clonmany,

Ballyliffin, Buncrana, Greencastle, Malin and Moville.

The area to which the Plan relates is served by bus, cycle network, regional and strategic roads. The ports and harbours located across the area to which the Plan relates have many functions including transport, fishing, marine leisure and tourism. Ferry routes include Greencastle to Magilligan, Northern Ireland and Buncrana to Rathmullan.

The area to which the Plan relates provides with access to Wild Atlantic Way, the natural environment, Malin Head and other significant cultural, tourism, recreation and sports assets including access to lakes, forests and mountains.

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

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

4.11.1 Green Infrastructure

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

⁹⁷ Donegal CDP 2018-2024 (as varied)

⁹⁸ In rural areas, individual wells are used to serve farms and single houses.

⁹⁹ Buncrana's water supply is sourced from Lough Doo and supplied via the Slavery water treatment plant. Water is supplied to the south of the town from the Eddie Fullerton Dam.

¹⁰⁰ Donegal CDP 2018-2024 (as varied)

¹⁰¹ Donegal CDP 2018-2024 (as varied)

¹⁰² The preparation of the NWRP has been divided into two phases, the combination of which will become the final NWRP. The NWRP Framework Plan (Phase 1) has now been adopted. Phase 2 of the NWRP (four Regional Water Resources Plans), currently in preparation, will address the needs across the 535 individual water supplies and identify the solutions to address these needs. <https://www.water.ie/projects/strategic-plans/national-water-resources/>

4.11.2 Forestry

Some parts of the area to which the Plan relates are covered by forestry. Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to their heritage and economic benefits. They are a valuable resource in terms of biodiversity, recreation and tourism, and also important as links in the county's green infrastructure network.

4.11.3 Peatlands

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

4.11.4 Coastline

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

4.11.5 Waste Management

Waste management across the area to which the Plan relates is guided by the Connacht-Ulster Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021. The Connacht Ulster Region comprises: Cavan County Council; Donegal County Council; Galway City Council; Galway County Council; Leitrim County Council; Mayo County Council;

Mayo County Council; Monaghan County Council; and Roscommon County Council. The Plan provides a framework for the prevention and management of waste in a sustainable manner.

4.11.6 Existing Problems

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

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

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

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

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

4.12 Cultural Heritage

4.12.1 Archaeological Heritage

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

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

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

The Inishowen Peninsula, including the area to which the Plan relates, has an important record of archaeological monuments such as: Fort Dunree; Morton God Dolmen; Northburgh Castle; Cooley Cross and Skull House; Carrowmore High Cross; Cloncha High Cross; Temple of Deen; Wee House of Malin; Donagh Cross; Carrickbragh Castle; St. Columba's Church Straid; O'Doherty's Keep; St. Mura's Cross; and An Grianán of Aileach.

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

The term 'monument' includes all man-made structures of whatever form or date except buildings habitually used for ecclesiastical

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

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

A Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)¹⁰³ is a manual containing a numbered list of all certain and possible monuments. An Urban Archaeology Survey was completed in 1995 and contained reports on historic towns dating to before 1700 A.D. with a view to delineating zones of archaeological potential (SMR Zones of Notification). The SMR formed the basis for issuing the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) - the statutory list of recorded monuments established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

Various archaeological monuments, including entries to the SMR and RMP are located within the area to which the Plan relates. Figure 4.17 shows the spatial distribution of recorded monuments within and surrounding the area to

¹⁰³ The RMP was issued for each county between 1995 and 1998 in a similar format to the existing SMR. However, the RMP differs from the earlier lists in that, as defined in the Act, only monuments with known locations or places where there are believed to be monuments are included. The large archive and supporting database are

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

which the Plan relates. Clusters of archaeological heritage are concentrated around the towns and villages across the area to which the Plan relates. These monuments include examples of medieval sites such as Celtic crosses, forts and the ruins of several castles.

These archaeological monuments include a number of National Monuments in State Care Ownership and Guardianship within the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.17):

- Grianan of Aileach;
- Carrdonagh Cross;
- O'Doherty's Keep; and
- Clonca Church, High Cross and Grave Slab.

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

Lakes, rivers, estuaries, coastal and transitional waters within and surrounding the area to which the Plan relates, may contain many

features and finds associated with maritime/riverine heritage such as shipwrecks, piers, quay walls, fords, stepping stones and associated archaeological objects and features. Many shipwrecking events have been recorded within coastal, transitional and marine waters surrounding the Inishowen Peninsula¹⁰⁴.

Relevant archaeological heritage designations in Northern Ireland (also mapped on Figure 4.17), include Scheduled Historic Monuments and entries to the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record¹⁰⁵.

4.12.2 Architectural Heritage

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

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

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

- The interior of the structure;
- The land lying within the curtilage¹⁰⁶ of the structure;
- Any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors; and,
- All fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii).

¹⁰⁴<https://dahq.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=89e50518e5f4437abfa6284ff39fd640>

¹⁰⁵ More detail available at: <https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com>

¹⁰⁶ Curtilage is normally taken to be the parcel of ground immediately associated with the Protected Structure, or in use for the purposes of the structure. Protection extends to the buildings and land lying within the curtilage. While the curtilage sometimes coincides with the present property

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

Similar to the general spatial spread of archaeological heritage, clusters of architectural heritage are indicated within developed urban and suburban locations across the area to which the Plan relates, as shown on Figure 4.18. Examples of Protected Structures within the area to which the Plan relates include: churches; houses; railway stations; castles; lighthouses; watch towers; monuments and bridges. Notable structures include: Dunagree Point Lighthouse; Fort Dunree; Bunrana Castle; The Old Fort Inn; Glengannon Bridge; and Kilderry House.

Industrial architecture includes the coastguard stations and lighthouses in many of the fishing villages throughout County Donegal including Moville, which was also designated by Donegal County Council as one of five 'Heritage Towns' within the County.

The Inishowen Peninsula has a strong legacy of maritime architecture (including coastguard stations and lighthouses together with Napoleonic signal towers and forts and batteries along Lough Swilly and Lough Foyle) and many thatched buildings (with County Donegal identified with the greatest concentration of vernacular buildings found anywhere in the country).¹⁰⁷

In addition to Protected Structures, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides the legislative basis for the protection of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). An ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures, whose character it is an objective to preserve in a development plan. The ACA designation requires that planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in the ACA that might alter the character of the structure or the ACA. There are no ACAs within the area to which the Plan relates¹⁰⁸.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a State initiative under the administration of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and was established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The

purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to the local authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures. Figure 4.18 shows entries to NIAH within the area to which the Plan relates, including historic gardens and designed landscapes such as O'Doherty's Keep and Bunrana Castle.

Relevant architectural heritage designations in Northern Ireland (mapped on Figure 4.18) include Listed Buildings, Defence Heritage and entries to the Industrial Heritage Record.

4.12.3 Existing Problems

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

¹⁰⁷ Donegal CDP 2018-2024 (as varied)

¹⁰⁸ Donegal CDP 2018-2024 (as varied)



Figure 4.17 Archaeological Heritage



Figure 4.18 Architectural Heritage

4.13 Landscape

4.13.1 Introduction

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

The area to which the Plan relates covers Inishowen Peninsula, with a diverse and varied landscape from upland mountainous areas to sandy and rocky coastlines. The west of the Peninsula is mountainous with Urris Hills, Minitagh and Slieve Sneacht dominating the area. The coastline of the west of the Peninsula is defined by a long stretch of sandy coastline. The north-west coastline varies from sandy beaches to rocky coastal edges and sea cliffs. The north of the Peninsula is almost completely defined by a coastal edge with low-lying land with bog either side and generally following a geological fault line. The east of the Peninsula is also an upland, mountainous landscape dissected by broad and narrow river valleys. The uplands are predominantly peat and bogland. The south of the Peninsula is uphill, with the Scalp Mountain and the Grianan Slopes and gently slopes downwards to lower agricultural lowlands.

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

4.13.2 Landscape Character Assessment

The European Landscape Convention was ratified in Ireland in 2002, this required EU Member States to adopt national measures to promote landscape, planning, protection and management.

The purpose of landscape character assessment is to provide the foundation for policy formulation and decision-making for landscape management.

The Donegal Landscape Character Assessment (2016) divided the county into **44 Landscape Character Areas**, within which **23 Landscape Types** were identified.

The area to which the Plan relates is identified as being situated within or partially within following eleven Landscape Character Areas (mapped on Figure 4.19):

- LCA 1: Malin Coast;
- LCA 2: Dunaff Coast;
- LCA 3: North Inishowen Farmland and Coast;
- LCA 4: Urris;
- LCA 5: Slieve Sneacht;
- LCA 6: East Inishowen Mountains and Valleys;
- LCA 7: Lough Foyle Coast;
- LCA 8: Buncrana Coast;
- LCA 9: Scalp Mountain;
- LCA 10: South Inishowen Farmland; and
- LCA 11: Grianan Slopes and Lowlands.

Landscape Character Types found within the area to which the Plan relates (mapped on Figure 4.20) and identified within the Landscape Character Areas as listed above, comprise:

- Atlantic Blanket Bog (0-200m);
- Mountainous Blanket Bog (200-300m);
- Highland Blanket Bog (300m+);
- Agricultural Arable and Pasture;
- Agricultural Coastal;
- Agricultural Estuarine;
- Agricultural Foothills;
- Agricultural Riverine;
- Dunes and Beach;
- Forest/Woodland;
- Golf Courses;
- Heath;
- Intertidal Flats;
- Natural Grassland;
- Salt Marsh;
- Upland Heath and Moorland;
- Urban Fabric; and
- Waterbodies.

4.13.3 Seascapes

A seascape can be defined as the coastal landscape and adjoining areas of open water, including views from land to sea, from sea to land and along the coastline. Donegal Seascape Character Assessment (2016) identified 19 Seascape Character Areas across the County.

County Donegal also shares a large area of Seascape with Northern Ireland along the tidal estuary of Lough Foyle (partially located within

an area to which the Plan relates) that contains part of the international border.

4.13.4 Other Landscape Designations

Landscape designations are assigned to particular areas for the purpose of managing change whilst having regard for the full range of special qualities and natural and cultural values attached to these areas. Designation can help safeguard important and sensitive landscapes and landscape features which are particularly valued and may have limited capacity for change. The designation process can contribute to wider policies for guiding development, by specifically identifying and safeguarding areas of landscape which are of particular importance and sensitivity.

The Donegal Landscape Character Assessment identified **Scenic Amenity** areas and **Viewpoints**.

An area to which the Plan relates is characterised into three landscape values, as mapped on Figure 4.21, including 'Especially High Scenic Amenity', 'High Scenic Amenity' and 'Moderate Scenic Amenity'. The classifications range from sublime natural landscapes of the highest quality to unique, rural and generally agricultural quality. Areas of "High" and "Especially High" Scenic Amenity are identified mainly around coastal and upland areas.

The area to which the Plan relates also contains viewpoints - sites, areas and vantage points from which views over areas of great natural beauty, local landmarks, historic landscapes, may be obtained, also mapped on Figure 4.21.

The landscape designations provided for by the County Development Plan in force in the area to which the Plan relates must be considered when assessing planning applications.

The area to which the Plan relates in County Donegal borders County Derry in Northern Ireland to the east. Relevant landscape designations in Northern Ireland (mapped on Figure 4.21) include an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4.13.5 Existing Environmental Problems

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



Figure 4.19 Landscape Character Areas



Figure 4.20 Landscape Character Types



Figure 4.21 Other Landscape Designations

Section 5 Strategic Environmental Objectives

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

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

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

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

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

Table 5.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives, Indicators and Targets

Environmental Component	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1: To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species ¹⁰⁹	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive	B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under National and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan ¹¹⁰
	B2: To contribute towards compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from the Plan	B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from the Plan
	B3: To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites ¹¹¹ and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of listed species	B3i: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan B3ii: No significant impacts on the protection of listed species resulting from the Plan
Population and Human Health	PHH1: To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses	PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency	PHH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of the Plan
Soil	S1: To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource	S1: Artificial surfaces land cover extent	S1: Contribute towards the target of the National Planning Framework's SEA (2018) to "Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%."
Water	W1: To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters	W1i: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 272 of 2009) W1ii: Mandatory and Guide values as set by the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008)	W1i: No deterioration in the status of any surface water or adverse effect upon the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the Plan W1ii: No deterioration in the value of bathing waters or adverse effect upon the ability of any bathing water to achieve Mandatory values and, where possible, Guide values as a result of the Plan

¹⁰⁹ '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.

¹¹⁰ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) No alternative solution available; (b) Imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the programme to proceed; and (c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

¹¹¹ The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

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

Section 6 Description of Alternatives

6.1 Introduction

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

6.2 Current Situation (Alternative 1: Business as Usual)

As identified in the Plan, there are various **strengths** associated with the current tourism development situation include:

- Ireland's most northerly point.
- Strong thematic story of time.
- Diversity of coastlines – from the wildness of Malin Head to estuaries and Blue Flag sandy beaches.
- Biodiversity – rich marine wildlife, and migratory and resident birdlife.
- Heritage of early Christianity.
- Diverse maritime and military heritage – strong physical assets – Grianán of Aileach, O'Doherty, castles, Fort Dunree, Malin Head, wealth of ship wrecks.
- Exceptional stories associated with the peninsula's creative heritage.
- Experiences and stories that highlight resilience: Famine Village, emigration story.
- New successful product and internationally acclaimed golf.
- Strong contemporary artisan sector.
- Significant strengths in music.
- Amazing Grace story.
- Land and marine-based hard and soft adventure.
- Community festivals.
- Growing culinary strengths.

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

- High level of seasonality and low length of stay.
- Low dwell time at key attractions.
- Peninsula is too easy to pass by.
- Weak linkages between agencies.
- Fragmented offering – appears to lack critical mass and cohesion – lack of coordination.
- Arts and craft sector lacks a clear market identity.
- Large number of local efforts that have limited visibility as tourism products.
- Weak domestic market prior to COVID-19.
- Examples of tired product and interpretive signage.
- Challenges with potential trails development.
- Concern over growing congestion at Malin Head.
- Weak evening economy.
- Lower international ratings on visual appearance and things to do.
- Low awareness of value of tourism.

This current situation presents **Alternative 1 (Business as Usual)** to be considered by the SEA. Overtime, the numbers of visitors would continue to increase under this scenario – consistent with the development of tourism over many decades.

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

The weaknesses presented by the current situation (see Section 6.2) establish a potential need for a plan that seeks to better manage tourism in the Inishowen Peninsula area; facilitating, promoting, supporting and coordinating stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. Such a Plan would not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent (such frameworks fall under the remit of other public authorities). Any projects would continue to be required to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of documents that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

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

- Position Inishowen as a 'must do' destination and motivate visitors to stay overnight and spend more;
- Extend the length of the season;
- Improve the overall economy of communities through strengthening individual businesses, creating new entrepreneurial opportunities, sustaining and increasing job creation, and increasing the attractiveness of the area for other forms of economic growth;
- Align to the Wild Atlantic Way brand and target markets;
- Support community values and aspirations, and strengthen community appreciation of local culture and intangible heritage;
- Support sense of place enhancement;
- Promote collaboration and partnership, support engagement of businesses, and build lasting links between national and regional partners, local agencies and associations, and local tourism experiences;
- Protect the natural heritage and special environmental character of the region.

Fáilte Ireland will track progress through a series of performance indicators that will be monitored annually. The existence of compelling and saleable visitor experiences is the vehicle for:

- Increase bed-nights by 2% year over year ahead of national average from year 3 of implementation of this Destination and Experience Development Plan.
- Increase revenue to attractions by 2% ahead of the national average from implementation.
- Increase length of stay.
- Increase in the saleable product (5 new saleable experiences), improved experiences and better distribution.
- Season extension: extend opening hours annually by 5% annually.
- Increased visitor satisfaction – benchmarked through measures such as Net Promoter Score.

Under Alternative 2 there are two separate alternatives:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 7 Evaluation of Alternatives

7.1 Introduction

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

7.2 Methodology

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

The alternatives are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 7.2 below) in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the SEOs. The SEOs and the alternatives are arrayed against each other to identify which interactions - if any - would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies a likely conflict with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the conflict column - e.g. B1 which stands for the SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species¹¹²'.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects¹¹³.

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

¹¹² '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.

¹¹³ These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives¹¹⁴

Environmental Component	Code	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1	To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species ¹¹⁵
	B2	To contribute towards compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
	B3	To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites ¹¹⁶ and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act
Population and Human Health	PHH1	To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses
Soil	S1	To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource
Water	W1	To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters
	W2	To contribute towards maintaining and improving, where possible, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters
	W3	To contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
Air and Climatic Factors	AC1	To contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation; air quality and noise management objectives.
Material Assets	M1	For development to be 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
	M2	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, including that relating to recreation and leisure, transport, utilities and fisheries
	M3	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse
Cultural Heritage	CH1	To contribute towards the protection of archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
	CH2	To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
Landscape	L1	To avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

Table 7.2 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives on SEOs

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

¹¹⁴ See Section 5 for a description of Strategic Environmental Objectives.

¹¹⁵ '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.

¹¹⁶ The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

7.3 Cumulative Effects

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

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

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

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

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

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

Effects¹¹⁷ that may arise as a result of implementing the Plan, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework, have been mitigated to the extent that the only residual adverse effects likely to occur as a result of implementation of the Plan are those that are identified under Table 8.3.

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

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

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

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

7.4 Detailed Consideration of Alternatives

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

Table 7.3 Effects Common to All Alternatives

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects from all Alternatives, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ¹¹⁸	
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European sites and 	Arising from both construction and operation of tourism related development/activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European sites and Wildlife Sites) and

¹¹⁷ Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services and infrastructure (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Mitigation includes that which has been integrated into the Plan – please refer to Section 9 of this report.

¹¹⁸ Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Effects would be to varying degrees – refer to Table 7.4 for comparative evaluation.

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects from all Alternatives, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ¹⁸	
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated
	<p>Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services. • Contribution towards protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna as a result of contributing towards the protection of environmental vectors, air, water and soil. 	<p>Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects. • Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.
Population and human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards the protection of human health. • Contribution towards the protection of amenity usage and access. • Contribution towards the sustainable growth of tourism and associated sustenance and growth of communities in Inishowen Peninsula area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water are not mitigated. • Potential interactions if additional tourists are directed towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified.
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards minimising land-take and loss of extent of soil resource. • Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination. • Contributes towards protection of designated sites of geological heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse impacts upon the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource. • Adverse effects on designated geological heritage sites. • Potential for increase in river bank erosion.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards the protection of water resources (including the status of surface and groundwaters) and water based designations. • Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. • Increase in flood risk.
Air and climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation; air quality and noise management objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential conflict, in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors including transport and land use planning, between increases in visitors (which is likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions to air, including from aviation, with associated interactions with climatic factors) and local, national and European objectives to reduce carbon emissions. • Potential conflicts between transport movements, including car movements, and air quality.
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes towards protection and allows for continued use of public assets and infrastructure. Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of visitors have the potential to increase traffic levels. • The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Irish Water to provide for such needs). • Increases in waste levels and residual wastes from visitors and construction of developments. • Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure.
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards the long-term protection of archaeological and architectural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential effects on designated and unknown archaeological heritage. • Potential effects on architectural heritage.
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards the protection of landscape designations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occurrence of adverse visual impacts, especially in estuary areas where, and conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape. • Changes in the appearance of the landscape.

Alternative 1: Business as Usual

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

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

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

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

There would be one layer of mitigation under Alternative 1, through the existing statutory planning and consent framework.

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

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

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

Although a Plan would help to improve the seasonal and geographic spread of visitors, a Plan's objective would be to increase the number of visitors to the Inishowen Peninsula area. Although this would be likely to happen without a Plan, a Plan would have the potential to increase numbers of tourists – and associated potential adverse effects – to a greater degree than would be the case if there was no Plan. This would be likely to contribute towards an increase in travel-related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. These increases will be mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2021, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions).

A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects. Notwithstanding this, there would be three layers of mitigation, through:

- The existing statutory planning and consent framework;
- Visitor management strategies; and
- Additional environmental requirements for environmental protection and management, under this alternative.

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

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

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

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

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

A Plan would also help to promote new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments. These would also have the potential to increase adverse effects. Notwithstanding this, there would be one layer of mitigation, through the existing statutory planning and consent framework.

7.4.1 Selected Alternative for the Plan

Taking into account the environmental effects detailed above and the challenges and opportunities present for tourism across the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP area, Fáilte Ireland have proceeded with Alternative 2A "A Plan with Additional Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management". A comparative assessment of all three alternatives against SEOs is provided on Table 7.4 overleaf.

Table 7.4 Comparative Evaluation of Alternatives against SEOs

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

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

Section 8 Evaluation of Plan Provisions

8.1 Introduction

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

The provisions are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 8.2) in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the SEOs. The SEOs and the Plan provisions are arrayed against each other to identify which interactions - if any - would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies a likely conflict with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the conflict column - e.g. B1 which stands for the SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species'¹¹⁹.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects¹²⁰:

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

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

¹¹⁹ '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.

¹²⁰ These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

Table 8.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives

Environmental Component	Code	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1	To contribute towards compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of European sites and Annexed habitats and species ¹²¹
	B2	To contribute towards compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species
	B3	To contribute towards avoidance of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites ¹²² and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of species listed on Schedule 5 of the principal Act
Population and Human Health	PHH1	To contribute towards the protection of populations and human health from exposure to incompatible landuses
Soil	S1	To minimise land take and loss to extent of soil resource
Water	W1	To contribute towards the maintenance and improvement, where possible, of the quality and status of surface waters
	W2	To contribute towards maintaining and improving, where possible, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters
	W3	To contribute towards compliance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines
Air and Climatic Factors	AC1	To contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation; air quality and noise management objectives.
Material Assets	M1	For development to be 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
	M2	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, including that relating to recreation and leisure, transport, utilities and fisheries
	M3	To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse
Cultural Heritage	CH1	To contribute towards the protection of archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context
	CH2	To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage including entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context
Landscape	L1	To avoid conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans

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

Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
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¹²¹ '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.

¹²² The definition of a 'wildlife site' provided by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, includes Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed NHAs.

8.2 Overall Findings (including Transboundary)

The overall findings of the SEA are that:

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

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

Implementation of the Plan will contribute towards efforts to achieve a number of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals¹²³ of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which were adopted by world leaders in 2015 at a United Nations Summit and came into force in 2016.

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

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

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance¹²⁴ with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

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

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

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- Statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (e.g. Development Plans, such as the existing Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied) and Seven Strategic Towns Local Area Plan 2018 – 2024) and that have undergone environmental assessment, as appropriate, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management¹²⁵; and

¹²³ Including: Goal 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Goal 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.; Goal 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; Goal 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; Goal 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; Goal 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

¹²⁴ Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

¹²⁵ For more information please refer to Appendix II of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

- The Climate Action Plan 2021 and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions)¹²⁶.

Further requirements have been integrated into the Plan under the headings of “Infrastructure Capacity”, “Visitor Management” and “Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services” – see Section 1.1 of this Environmental Report.

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

The Plan seeks to lengthen dwell time and grow visitor numbers to the Inishowen Peninsula area and would, in combination with other governmental policies, plans etc., be likely to contribute towards in an increase in travel-related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. These increases will be mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2021, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions).

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

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

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

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

Implementation of the Plan shall be consistent with and conform with the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans, including provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been integrated into these documents, including through SEA and AA processes. In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements

¹²⁶ For more information please refer to Section 4.10 and/or Appendix II of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

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

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

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

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

Table 8.3 Overall Findings – Environmental Effects arising from Plan Provisions

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ¹²⁷			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection and management of biodiversity and flora and fauna (in designated sites, including European sites and Wildlife Sites, and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats) including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor management strategies; and Plan requirements for environmental protection and management. Contributes towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services. Contribution towards the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna as a result of contributing towards the protection of environmental vectors, air, water and soil. 	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of tourism related development/activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna; Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces arising from projects consented through the statutory planning/consent-granting framework. Losses or damage to ecology (these would be: in compliance with relevant legislation; and mitigated as projects would demonstrate compliance with various environmental protection and management measures) 	B1 B2 B3
Population and human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of human health including through Plan requirements for environmental protection and management. Contribution towards the protection of human health as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified. Contribution towards the protection amenity usage and access. Contribution towards the sustainable growth of tourism and associated sustenance and growth of communities in the Inishowen Peninsula area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water are not mitigated. Potential interactions if additional tourists are directed towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors. This has been mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. 	PHH1

¹²⁷ Effects include in-combination effects – those arising from services, infrastructure and other development (to service development, including tourism) that are planned for and consented through the statutory framework including the NPF, RSES and lower-tier land use plans. Examples may include developments/operation of developments relating to water services, transport, access or accommodation. Mitigation includes that which has been integrated into the Plan – please refer to Section 9 of this report.

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ¹²⁷			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various provisions (e.g. relating to maintaining the wildness of areas that have not yet been developed) help to minimise land-take and loss of extent of the soil resource. Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination. Contributes towards protection of designated sites of geological heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse impacts upon the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource. Adverse effects on designated geological heritage sites. Potential for increase in river bank erosion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces. 	S1
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of water resources (including the status of surface and groundwaters) and water based designations including through integrating requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan. Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse impacts upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. Increase in flood risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased loadings as a result of development to comply with the River Basin Management Plan. Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by: measures that have been integrated into the Plan; and the statutory planning/consent-granting framework. 	W1 W2 W3
Air and climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation through measures relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking and cycling; and Contribution towards European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation, taking into account a wide range of detailed measures including those relating to resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential conflict, in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors including transport and land use planning, between increases in visitors (which is likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions to air, including from aviation, with associated interactions with climatic factors) and local, national and European objectives to reduce carbon emissions. Potential conflicts between transport movements, including car movements, and air quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in travel-related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, including from aviation. This has been mitigated by provisions that have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable mobility and compliance with the Climate Action Plan 2021, the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions). Risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to climate and interactions with issues including flooding and material assets. 	AC1
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes towards protection and allows for continued use of public assets and infrastructure. Contains clear objectives around seasonality and regionality which look not only to spread the benefits of tourism but also the potential impacts/ load associated with tourism. Helps to minimise likelihood of exceeding capacity in material assets as a result of not directing additional tourists towards specific locations in instances where significant problems with critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) have been identified. Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of visitors have the potential to increase traffic levels. The need to provide adequate and appropriate water services (it is the function of Irish Water to provide for such needs). Increases in waste levels and residual wastes from visitors and construction of developments. Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher-level waste management policies. Increased loading on critical infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) where no significant problems have been identified with this infrastructure. Exceedance of capacity in critical infrastructure risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however such risks will be mitigated by: measures that have been integrated into the Plan; and the statutory planning/consent-granting framework. Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework. 	M1 M2 M3

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the existing statutory planning/decision-making and consent-granting framework ¹²⁷			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potential Significant Adverse Effect, if unmitigated	Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the long-term protection of archaeological and architectural heritage by encouraging greater levels of awareness and appreciation through, use, interpretation and access, in line with the requirements relating to the protection of cultural heritage including: entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context; and entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential effects on designated and unknown archaeological heritage. Potential effects on architectural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential alteration to the context and setting of architectural heritage however, these will occur in compliance with legislation. Potential alteration to the context and setting of archaeological heritage however, this will occur in compliance with legislation. Potential loss of unknown archaeology however, this loss will be mitigated by measures integrated into the Plan. 	CH1 CH2
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards the protection of landscape designations as a result of: facilitating compliance with relevant plans; and maintaining the wildness of areas that have not yet been developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occurrence of adverse visual impacts, especially in marine, island and ridge areas where, and conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape. Changes in the appearance of the landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residual visual effects (these would comply with landscape designation provisions). 	L1

8.3 Appropriate Assessment

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

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

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

8.4 Interrelationship between Environmental Components

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

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

Table 8.4 Potential for Interrelationships between Environmental Components

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

8.5 More Detailed Assessment of Plan Provisions

The **Draft Inishowen Peninsula DEDP** is a five-year plan designed to be a roadmap for enhancing the existing Inishowen Peninsula visitor proposition to achieve the objectives of addressing seasonality, increasing visitor numbers and spend, and increasing dwell time and visitor dispersion across the destination. The Plan’s **Destination Development Focus** covers three overarching themes: **“Maritime and Military Might”**; **“Inishowen’s Creative Story”** and **“Wild Oasis”**, under which a range of **Catalyst Projects** and **HERO Experiences** have been aligned that will contribute to the creation of the in-destination conditions for tourism growth.

8.5.1 Plan’s Vision, Goals and Objectives

	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
<p>The Plan’s Vision Statement highlights the significant eco-cultural heritage of Inishowen:</p> <p><i>“A destination recognised for our internationally significant marine ecosystem, our distinctive maritime and military heritage, our creative story, and the opportunity it offers to pursue adventure, health, and well-being year-round.”</i></p> <p>The Plan Goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enrich communities through sustainably growing and spreading the benefits of tourism across the peninsula year round. To adopt new ways of working collaboratively to differentiate Inishowen and deliver compelling HERO experiences. To add value to our sense of place and to ensure that the integrity of our ecosystems, landscapes and traditions are respected. <p>The Key Objectives of the Plan are to develop compelling experiences for this stretch of the Wild Atlantic Way that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position Inishowen as a ‘must do’ destination and motivate visitors to stay overnight and spend more; Extend the length of the season; Improve the overall economy of communities through strengthening individual businesses, creating new entrepreneurial opportunities, sustaining and increasing job creation, and increasing the attractiveness of the area for other forms of economic growth; Align to the Wild Atlantic Way brand and target markets; Support community values and aspirations, and strengthen community appreciation of local culture and intangible heritage; Support sense of place enhancement; Promote collaboration and partnership, support engagement of businesses, and build lasting links between national and regional partners, local agencies and associations, and local tourism experiences; and Protect the natural heritage and special environmental character of the region. 	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		
<p>SEA Commentary:</p> <p><i>The assessment of the Plan’s Vision, Goals and Objectives against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and</i> <i>Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report.</i> <p><i>Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</i></p> <p><i>The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 “Mitigation Measures” of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and</i> 				

- The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised.


Sustainability and environmental protection have been integrated into the Plan's Vision, Goals and Objectives, for example:

- "Protect the natural heritage and special environmental character of the region"; and
- "To add value to our sense of place and to ensure that the integrity of our ecosystems, landscapes and traditions are respected."

Seasonality and visitor management have been integrated into the Plan's Vision, Goals and Objectives, for example:

- "To enrich communities through sustainably growing and spreading the benefits of tourism across the peninsula year-round"; and
- "Extend the length of the season".

8.5.2 Action Plan: Section 1 "Catalyst Projects"

The Plan should be referred to for more detail than is produced below, including timeframes, leads and partners for each of action.	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs
 <p>The screenshot shows a document titled "Catalyst Projects" with several sections and bullet points. The text is somewhat blurry but includes headings like "Key Objectives", "Strategic Objectives", and "Implementation Objectives". It lists various actions and goals related to the development of the Inishowen Peninsula Destination Experience.</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		

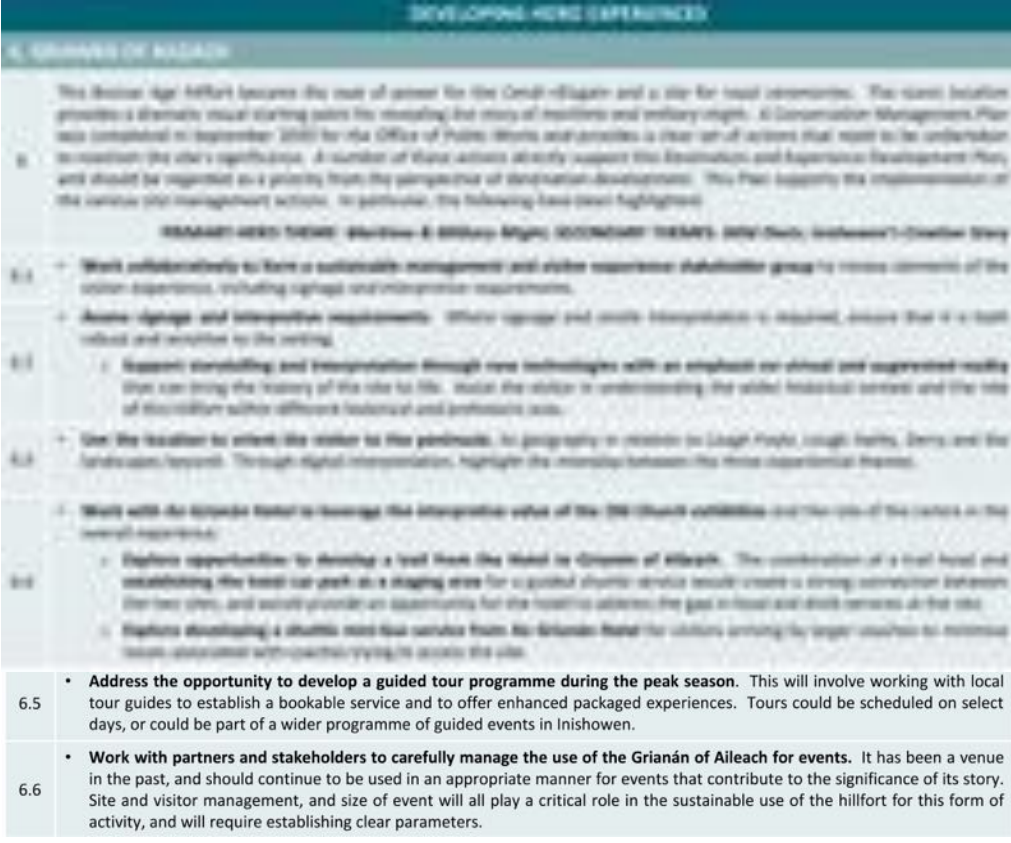
<p>1.5</p> <p>1.6</p> <p>1.7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to develop safe active travel options, and public transportation particularly from Buncrana to Fort Dunree, that will assist in reducing car travel. Consider incentivising this form of travel through a discount voucher. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide bicycle facilities that will allow for secure parking of bikes. • Develop a strategic and sustainable approach when working with coach tour operators. Focus on implementing tactics that will encourage overnight visitation in Inishowen through preferential pricing strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitor the level of coach traffic and consider a tiered discounting strategy, with a reduction in discount to day coaches that have limited economic impact elsewhere in Inishowen. • Work with partners who attract educational markets to explore opportunities to integrate Fort Dunree into any potential educational programming that is focused on the eco-cultural heritage of the peninsula. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess the suitability of developing laboratory or classroom facilities on site. ○ Work with schools in the regional catchment to develop a programme of study that supports the school curriculum – both in Ireland and in Northern Ireland. 				
<p>2</p> <p>2.1</p> <p>2.2</p>	<p>2. MALIN HEAD</p> <p>As Ireland's most northerly point and the first (or last) Signature Discovery Point on the Wild Atlantic Way, Malin Head has been growing in popularity as a destination. It is the focal area of many of Inishowen's maritime and military stories, and offers the best land-based viewing location for the marine wildlife, and outstanding scenery for walking. A Visitor Management Plan has been completed for Malin Head, although has yet to be fully adopted, and issues relating to trail development have yet to be resolved.</p> <p>PRIMARY HERO THEME: Wild Coast, Maritime & Military Might</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work towards implementing the Management Plan. This may need to be undertaken in a series of phased steps. • Focus initially on traffic management. A hub and shuttle service has been proposed and should be advanced as a priority to reduce congestion at Malin Head. Ideally, a hub based in Malin village will assist in strengthening the local village economy, and could act as a stronger staging area for related guided experiences and activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop the proposed one-way shuttle service with a series of hop-on, hop-off stops at sites of interest and business outlets to assist in dispersing the visitor and reducing vehicular traffic. ○ Explore the role of new technologies to provide real-time information on shuttle availability and schedule. ○ Continue to assess the road network in relation to cycling opportunities. Identify preferred routes and implement safety measures, including enhanced signage, speed restrictions, and off-road options. • Continue to advance the preferred infrastructural projects that are designed to bring the Malin Head story to life. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassess the importance of Malin Head from a marine-ecological perspective. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to explore opportunities for developing a facility that has a strong marine focus and a mandate to work with a range of audiences. <p>EXAMPLE: Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre, situated in a remote location on the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, offers unparalleled access to unique coastal, marine and rainforest habitats and exceptional species diversity. It was developed in 1972 and provides world-class research infrastructure for marine and coastal scientists from the five member universities and from other Canadian and International institutes. The Centre offers a range of in-residence programmes to various audiences, including schools, and provides training for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and technicians in practical aspects of marine and coastal research. The research facility has 12 vessels and a dive centre and is internationally renowned for its underwater naturalists. The facility has total aquaria space of 800m², a conference centre, major research facilities and offers food services and accommodation.</p>				

3. NORTH WEST GREENWAY NETWORK				
	<p>This cross-border initiative to walk, cycleways and will ultimately create an active travel corridor between Derry and the Inishowen Peninsula. It is one of a number of greenway projects that are currently under consideration in Donegal. While the North West Greenway is positioned as a coastal path project primarily designed to change local travel behaviour, it will have a major impact on the destination's visitor experience. The concept in its entirety envisages a circular route that will provide connectivity between Derry, Buncrana, Carradough, Malin, Gargry's Point, Muff and back to Derry, with the potential for the development of spurs and bridges to key sites and existing walking trails. Ultimately there are plans to link through to Lifford, and to an expanding greenway network in Northern Ireland. The project is one of a range of greenways highlighted in the National Development Plan 2021-2026, as part of the Government's commitment to strengthening opportunities for active travel.</p> <p>Although completion of a circular greenway route in Inishowen will take time, its potential to connect a series of attractions and communities to a walk and cycling network that is rapidly growing, is substantial and needs to be continually explored as development moves forward. The Greenway will play a critical role in elevating the three experiential themes and telling the story of Inishowen, while being a HERO experience in its own right and a vital new route for active travel.</p> <p>The initial routes to be constructed are between Derry and Buncrana via Inch (22.5 km) and between Derry and Muff (20 km), with the Muff section likely to be developed first.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRIMARY KEY THEMES: WPL3 (A40)</p>			
3.1	<p>1. Establish a multi-departmental approach to developing the project within Donegal County Council through regular dialogue between Roads and Transportation and the Community, Enterprise and Planning Directorate and the Economic Development Unit to ensure a holistic approach to its ongoing development.</p>			
3.2	<p>1. Establish a communication and consultation strategy to engage relevant businesses that are adjacent to the proposed Greenway to explore opportunities on benefiting commercially from the development. Consider the potential for new supporting businesses such as cycle hire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake case research in the initial years, strategically forecasting impacts by the business sector to highlight identifying needs of up to 200,000 within 7 years, will ensure meeting up at least one-fifth of the demand. Communicating this research will be of value in stimulating business development. - Continue to maintain communications with landowners and communities as progress advances. Communications should be tailored to meet the needs of different audiences. 			
3.3	<p>2. Work collaboratively to review signage and interpretation requirements, location of interpretive and general Greenway infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider creating an interpretation strategy for the entire Greenway corridor and work towards developing a shared Greenway interpretation plan. An implementation would move forward as the Greenway project progresses. - Continue to assess the location and requirements of visitor access points, including parking requirements, public toilets, and information needs. Consider the potential to develop similar public or interpretive facilities, such as huts. 			
3.4	<p>3. Assess opportunities to connect with visitor experience within the vicinity of the proposed Greenway, and identify actions required to improve access from the Greenway route to sites and attractions of interest to visitors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where sites can be accessed, review site parking facilities and begin to work with relevant site managers to address facilitating requirements. 			
3.5	<p>4. As the Greenway develops, encourage the improvement of cycling infrastructure within local communities, particularly Buncrana and Carradough. Ensure ease of safe access from the Greenway corridor into Derry through the development of connecting cycle lanes, and ensure that communities have sufficient bike parking facilities. This will encourage cyclists to stop and spend time in communities.</p>			
3.6	<p>5. Support the advancement of stage two of the Greenway development – funding is already in place to begin securing opportunities around both arms – one to Carradough and the other to Gargry's Point.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When assessing route options to Carradough, focus on ensuring good connectivity with Strathroy, Glenties and Bellefleur – this will support the growth of tourism-related business visitors in these settlements. - Encourage ongoing consultation of communities that lie within the proposed Greenway route. 			
3.7	<p>6. Secure funding for the remaining development phases that will eventually create a full circuit.</p>			

<p>4. DESTINATION THEMES</p> <p>The peninsula offers a range of water-based activities and has become well recognised regionally for the activities offered at Moville and Fort Dunree. However, it has no strong stand-out water-based experience that would compel international markets or domestic markets from further afield. The concept of an Inishowen Blueway would meet that requirement and would strengthen the marine ecotourism offering.</p> <p>PRIMARY HERO THEME: Wild Oasis; SECONDARY THEME: Maritime & Military Might</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop international recognition for kayaking through establishing a Marine Blueway that incorporates the East Inishowen Sea Kayak Trail from Lifford to Moville (developed by the Lough Agency), and extend this trail around Malin Head and into Lough Swilly – with the potential of going to Letterkenny. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards extending the existing East Inishowen Sea Kayak Trail guide to include the route from Moville to Malin Head and the western side of the peninsula. Identify all access points, and assess suitability for launching a kayak or small craft. Identify suitable overnight stops and work with local stakeholders to identify sites for building bothies and areas where small-scale camping can occur. Explore the opportunity to develop an online Inishowen Blueway information tool for trip planning. This has the potential to be developed as a pilot for roll-out on a much larger scale. 				
<p>5. INISHOWEN BLUEWAY</p> <p>The peninsula offers a range of water-based activities and has become well recognised regionally for the activities offered at Moville and Fort Dunree. However, it has no strong stand-out water-based experience that would compel international markets or domestic markets from further afield. The concept of an Inishowen Blueway would meet that requirement and would strengthen the marine ecotourism offering.</p> <p>PRIMARY HERO THEME: Wild Oasis; SECONDARY THEME: Maritime & Military Might</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop international recognition for kayaking through establishing a Marine Blueway that incorporates the East Inishowen Sea Kayak Trail from Lifford to Moville (developed by the Lough Agency), and extend this trail around Malin Head and into Lough Swilly – with the potential of going to Letterkenny. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards extending the existing East Inishowen Sea Kayak Trail guide to include the route from Moville to Malin Head and the western side of the peninsula. Identify all access points, and assess suitability for launching a kayak or small craft. Identify suitable overnight stops and work with local stakeholders to identify sites for building bothies and areas where small-scale camping can occur. Explore the opportunity to develop an online Inishowen Blueway information tool for trip planning. This has the potential to be developed as a pilot for roll-out on a much larger scale. 				

<p>EXAMPLE: BC Marine Trails has established a series of west coast marine trails with an online interactive map planning tool. The map shows campsites, emergency pullouts, launch sites, day-use sites, and photographs. Members have additional tools, such as a ruler to measure distance between paddling locations, and a downloads tool that enables users to download GPS coordinates for campsites, access points and day use sites for use in either Google Earth (kml file) or in PS software/unit (GPX file). Each mapped coordinate has a series of notes suited to the needs of paddlers – which can relate to the nature of the swell, exposure to winds, availability of drinking water etc. Paddlers are actively involved in a marine trails stewardship programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Donegal County Council and select user groups and businesses to identify preferred locations for basic beach service facilities that would include showers and could be used on a shared basis by Blueway kayakers. Potential locations to review include Culdaff (would also service surfers), Malin Head, Bunagee, the area of Dunaff Head, Buncrana, and near Rockstown. 				
<p>SEA Commentary:</p> <p>The assessment of the Plan's Section 1 "Catalyst Projects" Actions against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental effects detailed under subsections 8.2 to 8.4; and • Assessments of the selected alternatives for the Plan provided at Section 7 of this report. <p>Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</p> <p>These actions will contribute towards positive environmental effects (see Table 8.3) including through:</p> <p>Sustainability, environmental awareness and protection e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1.6: "Develop a strategic and sustainable approach when working with coach tour operators." • Action 1.4: "[...] Develop an interpretive programme that focuses on the marine ecosystem, and include events that promote the ecological distinctiveness of the peninsula and the Fort Dunree area." • Action 1.7: "[...] explore opportunities to integrate Fort Dunree into any potential educational programming that is focused on the eco cultural heritage of the peninsula." <p>Reducing emissions by promoting sustainable and low-carbon modes of transport e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1.5: "Work with partners to develop safe active travel options, and public transportation particularly from Buncrana to Fort Dunree, that will assist in reducing car travel Consider." • Action 2.1: "[...] Develop the proposed one way shuttle service with a series of hop on, hop-off stops at sites of interest and business outlets to assist in dispersing the visitor and reducing vehicular traffic [...] Continue to assess the road network in relation to cycling opportunities [...]." • Action 3.5: "[...] encourage the improvement of cycling infrastructure within hub communities, particularly Buncrana and Carndonagh [...]" <p>Visitor management e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1.2: "Develop a comprehensive visitor management plan based on the funding proposal to support the longer term management of the visitor site." <p>The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the Inishowen Peninsula area. New built developments and increases in the number and dwell time of visitors would continue to be planned for, mitigated and consented through the existing statutory planning and consent framework. The mitigation of potential adverse effects arising (see Table 8.3) would also be contributed towards by additional Plan measures, including those relating to infrastructure capacity, visitor management and green infrastructure and ecosystem services. Any amendment to the Plan or integration of Plan provisions into other Plans, Programmes etc. would have to be subject to Screening for SEA and AA processes and full assessments as relevant.</p> <p>The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the Inishowen Peninsula area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the coast or estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The development of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities.</p> <p>The SEA process that has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan has brought about various changes to the emerging Plan through an iterative process. These measures are reproduced under Section 9 "Mitigation Measures" of this SEA Environmental Report. By integrating all SEA recommendations into the Plan, Fáilte Ireland is helping to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are avoided, reduced or offset; and • The beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in combination with the implementation of other provisions from the Plan and other plans, programmes, etc., are maximised. 				

8.5.3 Action Plan: Section 2 “Developing Hero Experiences”

<p>The Plan should be referred to for more detail than is produced below, including timeframes, leads and partners for each of the action.</p>	<p>Likely to Improve status of SEOs</p>	<p>Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated</p>	<p>Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated</p>	<p>No Likely interaction with status of SEOs</p>
 <p>DEVELOPING HERO EXPERIENCES</p> <p>1. PURPOSE OF ACTION</p> <p>The Inishowen Hillfort remains the most of interest for the County of Donegal and a site for local communities. The recent location provides a dramatic visual starting point for the revealing and many of its history and military might. A Conservation Management Plan was completed in September 2010 for the Office of Public Works and provides a clear set of actions that need to be undertaken to maintain the site's significance. A number of these actions already support the Destination and Experience Development Plan and should be regarded as a priority from the perspective of destination development. This Plan supports the implementation of the various site management actions. In particular, the following have been highlighted:</p> <p>2. MAJOR ACTION ITEMS (Review of Military Sites, INTERPRETIVE THEMES, INTERPRETIVE THEMES, INTERPRETIVE THEMES)</p> <p>2.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively to form a sustainable management and visitor experience stakeholder group to review contents of the visitor experience, including signage and interpretation requirements. Assess signage and interpretation requirements. Where signage and interpretation is required, ensure that it is both useful and sensitive to the setting. <p>2.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support storytelling and interpretation through new technologies with an emphasis on virtual and augmented reality that can bring the history of the site to life. Utilise the visitor in understanding the wider historical context and the role of the hillfort within different historical and professional eras. <p>2.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the location to enter the visitor to the parklands, to geography in relation to local people, local events, events and the landscape beyond. Through digital interpretation, highlight the connection between the three experiential themes. Work with the Glenties Hotel to leverage the interpretive value of the Hillfort's visibility and the role of the visitor in the overall experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to develop a trail from the Hillfort to Glenties of Aileach. The combination of a trail head and establishing the trail as part of a staging area for a guided tour service would create a strong connection between the two sites, and would provide an opportunity for the visitor to address the gap in local and local services at the site. Explore developing a shuttle trail bus service from the Glenties Hotel for visitors arriving by road to provide a more convenient way to reach the site. <p>6.5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the opportunity to develop a guided tour programme during the peak season. This will involve working with local tour guides to establish a bookable service and to offer enhanced packaged experiences. Tours could be scheduled on select days, or could be part of a wider programme of guided events in Inishowen. <p>6.6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners and stakeholders to carefully manage the use of the Grianán of Aileach for events. It has been a venue in the past, and should continue to be used in an appropriate manner for events that contribute to the significance of its story. Site and visitor management, and size of event will all play a critical role in the sustainable use of the hillfort for this form of activity, and will require establishing clear parameters. 	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		

1. INISHOWEN MARITIME MUSEUM AND PLANNING				
7	<p>The Inishowen Maritime Museum in Greenacree offers an important element of the overall maritime and military story and is ideally located to reveal the significance of the Foyle's side of the peninsula.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRIMARY HERO THEME: Maritime & Military Might; SECONDARY THEMES: Wild Oyst</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassess the narrative positioning of the Museum and continue to develop ways of delivering a compelling visitor experience that will give the Museum a stronger profile. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Continue discussions with the National Museum of Northern Ireland to secure the artefacts from La Trinidad Veterans for an extended loan, and develop a new display area to house the collection. ◦ Work with Fari Duran and David Reed to develop the virtual or augmented reality experience that will be a significant output from the EU LIFE project. The Maritime Museum experience will offer a maritime experience of Inishowen and will provide valuable context for La Trinidad Veterans exhibition. The virtual experience in the form of reconstructing the events of a city fallen from a World War I Atlantic convoy escort ship, will tie together many aspects of the maritime and military story through time, and will greatly assist the visitor in understanding how the happened, Spanish Armada and World War stories fit together. In addition, it will provide a unique opportunity to engage with the story of the ship wrecks through virtual and augmented reality. The experience will also tie to the Spanish Armada shipwreck in Grange, Co. Sligo and La Trinidad Co. Wick. 			
7.1				
7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve directional signage to the Museum and explore the potential to enhance the use of the space to the front of the building. This will assist in creating a stronger connection between the building and the harbour area. 			
7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build a strong partnership and association with the Tower Museum in Derry. The LIFE project will look at the story of emigration to the United States, Canada and Scotland, which will provide an opportunity to tie storytelling at the Maritime Museum and sites of emigration such as the T4 sculpture at Malinbeg. (The story of emigration will also be told in Keshbegal and will highlight the links between Arranmore and Boston Island Great Lakes, Chicago). 			
7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh the Museum website to strengthen its appeal and capacity to motivate visitation. 			
7.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the ongoing building of international partnerships that relate to the various Museum themes, including the Norwegian partnership and relations with the east coast of Canada. 			
7.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore further opportunities to utilise the Planetarium more effectively for a programme of events. The facility has the potential to support a range of initiatives identified in this Plan, including underwater filming of the marine wildlife and the Dark Skies proposal (Action 13). 			
8. INCH WILDELOW RESERVE				
8	<p>Inch Wildfowl Reserve has grown rapidly from a site with few visitors to an area that now attracts 120,000 visitors per annum. The site is owned by the Grianán Estate and managed by the NPWS. It attracts over 11,000 wintering geese and waders, in addition to the 4,000 wildfowl on the adjacent farm, and its popularity has increased substantially since the addition of the bird hides and the development of paths and the looped walkway – highlighting the growing interest in ecotourism experiences. This site is key to developing ecotourism as a niche sector in Inishowen, and strengthening the Wild Oyst theme.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRIMARY HERO THEME: Wild Oyst</p>			
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore options for developing additional visitor infrastructure – particularly toilets and the feasibility of providing café facilities. • Work with Donegal County Council to review site management implications that will arise if and when the proposed North West Greenway links into the site, and clearly define the level of co-responsibility that will need to be put in place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Review the scoping project that was previously carried out for a visitor centre and assess how visitor facilities can be improved to meet the new demand that will be generated by the Greenway. 			
8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Implement the recommendations arising from the environmental assessment of the Greenway's impact on the Reserve, including improving screening, and determining ways to prevent undue disturbance of wildlife. The potential for disturbance could arise from excessive cyclic circumnavigation of Inch Lake, and mitigating measures will need to be identified. ◦ Build on the learnings and data emerging from the EU TrailGazers project, to improve overall understanding of usage, visitor needs, and management implications. 			

<p>8.3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop visitor interpretation at Inch Wildfowl Reserve, keeping in mind the way in which the messaging will integrate with interpretation on the North West Greenway, and the wider marine environment. Interpretation should not only look at the ecological importance of the site, but also the story of nineteenth century land reclamation and the cultural heritage that dates back centuries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ This work will involve launching and maintaining the TrailGazer app. 				
<p>9</p>	<p>9. WOODLANDS IN WILD</p> <p>The Island is both a SPA and SAC and has significant international ecological value for a wide variety of habitats and species. The island is owned by the Commissioners of Irish Lights, and while it is relatively inaccessible and subject to permission for landing, a level of inappropriate visitor activity is occurring to the detriment of the island's ecology, with no management mechanisms in place to address the issue. A strategic approach to the longer-term management of the island is essential to maintain its environmental integrity and to benefit from the research opportunities that it offers.</p> <p>PRIMARY HERO THEME: Wild Oasis</p> <p>9.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the NPWS proposal to establish a long-term lease from Irish Lights with the intention of managing the site as a Nature Reserve. <p>9.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an integrated conservation and visitor management plan for Inishowen. 				
<p>10</p>	<p>10. HERITAGE ISLES – THE O'DONOVAN STORY</p> <p>The O'Donovan clan has allegedly descended from that of the fine Vikings. The stories of the clan are told all across Inishowen where they maintained sites for several centuries and stood proud for Eamon O'Donogherty became the last remaining Gaelic chieftain in all of Ireland. There are over 20 medieval castles and fortresses located around Inishowen that tell the stories of this great clan – stories that resonate particularly with the Diaspora and contribute significantly to the maritime and military themes.</p> <p>PRIMARY HERO THEME: Maritime and Military Might</p> <p>10.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a level of support for local initiatives that are seeking to create income and experiences relating to the O'Donovan castles and work towards raising the profile of these sites of history. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Review all related heritage sites that offer public access and assess each site in terms of potential restoration requirements, access, and other experience opportunities. Identify actions required and prioritise as funding becomes available. 				
<p>11</p>	<p>11. ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Inishowen has a small number of well qualified activity operators that offer excellent guided/supervised adventure activities, including climbing, coasteering, hiking, kayaking, paddle-boarding, surfing and sailing. However the market profiling of this sector is fragmented, and potential visitors with no knowledge of the area, will be relatively challenged to find a list of activities.</p> <p>PRIMARY HERO THEME: Wild Oasis</p> <p>11.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the profile of this sector through an enhanced and consolidated online presence that highlights the activities, qualified operators, and activity clubs. • Work with activity providers and organisations to actively support adventure events such as Crana Canoe Weekend and Climbfest, and explore ways of further leveraging the profile of these events. • Continue to work with the adventure sector to assess staffing and training needs and to assist with addressing these needs. <p>11.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the need for enhanced infrastructure and operators to service diving. The diving opportunities are technical rather than recreational, and there are no Inishowen-based operators. The demand is largely serviced by businesses that are based outside the peninsula. 				

<p>12. DARK SKIES</p> <p>Designation of areas within the peninsula as a Dark Sky Preserve will strengthen the significance of ecotourism and well-being in Inishowen. The Planetarium at the Maritime Museum is an important asset, and the ability to view the Aurora Borealis (under the right conditions) is of particular value to a Dark Sky offering.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">PRIMARY HERO THEME: Wild Oasis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Working Group of interested stakeholders to look at the concept of Dark Skies in Inishowen and the level of commitment to pursuing international accreditation <p>12.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Review the certification process, identify the Dark Skies area, indicate interest in the programme and category for designation, and request initial assessment of site eligibility from the International Dark Sky Association. If the proposal has merit, proceed with developing the application. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities to develop Dark Skies experiences and build into existing experience offerings. <p>12.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Work with qualified guides to develop Dark Skies experiences and partner with businesses that can add value to a night-time experience – which could include the add-on of a cultural experience such as poetry readings or storytelling. o Work with accommodation providers to explore ways of enhancing the experience through the introduction of new accommodation options – for example, glamping pods with see-through roof covering. 				
<p>13. MARINE CONSERVATION</p> <p>The Marine Reserve has great strategic significance with the biodiversity of the marine environment being protected through a range of EU marine programmes and various marine initiatives, the National Marine Parks and Wildlife Programme and the Sea Donegal project, and through the work of the National Seabird Survey Group. The work will contribute to the subsequent adoption of integrated Marine Protected Area and Marine Management plans to meet national, international commitments in protecting marine environments.</p> <p>13</p> <p>From the perspective of further enhancing the eco-cultural strengths of the Inishowen Peninsula are exploring the potential to build a stronger marine conservation experience, particularly around the great importance of these waters for seabirds. There is a need to support ongoing initiatives on appropriate land and marine designation and nature experience development.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">HERO THEME: Wild Oasis, Sustainable Future, Seaside Community Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support ongoing dialogue on marine biodiversity and how this can be promoted through strategic initiatives such as formal designation. To date, proposals have considered options such as a marine National Park, National Seabird Sanctuary or regular 'Wild Coast' and a new Marine Reserve. There is a need to explore National Park options, although there is growing interest in the development of such designations. Advancing this opportunity is likely to require a national assessment of suitable locations. <p>13.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Work with national, regional and local partners on the development of a regional marine reserve and subsequent plan including the comparative listing system. The plan should provide an overview of the potential for marine reserves, and lead to identify suitable sites of national, international and specific listing levels. Sites of these scales and levels are used in Section 12 and 13.1.1. o Explore ways of integrating the Marine and Seaside Hub themes into the coastal conservation offering. <p>13.2</p>				
<p>14. WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE</p> <p>The existing system of the Inishowen landscape are well integrated by design, providing a unique experience within the peninsula. The connectivity between different, coastal, and inland are increasingly working together to differentiate the peninsula as a place that offers visitors with the unique design that has formed over the years of cultural, historical, and natural heritage. It is important to leverage the growing interest in exploring these values. The underlying thread of wilderness with a further dimension that can be integrated or offered as a third dimension.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">HERO THEME: Wild Oasis</p> <p>14</p>				

<p>7. Support the Well-Being from Nature group and the exchange of knowledge between the international partners - West Ireland and the Well-being from Nature, as a good case and visitor-relevant well-being.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with stakeholders to raise the profile of this project and the value of strengthening the well-being position within the wider socio-cultural identity of Inishowen. This will involve working the emerging local group to becoming effective governance and partners. Encourage dialogue and dissemination of knowledge on the linkages between creativity, landscape, and well-being. Support on related existing community events such as the local food festival, and identify new opportunities to build on the well-being theme as an attraction for visitors. <p>8. Explore ways of integrating the spiritual themes and experiences with the concept of well-being. The story of Inishowen, the concept of landscape, the Lifford High Cross, and the historical themes can all be presented in the context of a wider offering and in a way that will increase visitor interest. This work at the FÁS/Ceannán and Lifford Project Centre can be tied into a future response that addresses additional elements, including the concept of public art/sculpture and the story of this island as depicted near Ballynahinch.</p> <p>9. In developing crime measures, ensure that there is a well-being focus that provides well-being experiences, such as trails, outdoor activities, and related programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight and reinforce the importance of sustainability as a core principle for developing Inishowen as a destination. Consider the importance of well-being and sustainability from multiple perspectives. <p>10. Assessment of the Plan's Section 2</p> <p>While the potential for an existing food offering, it generally falls short of the 'Food for Thought' destination with a few noteworthy exceptions. There is one notable exception in that product representation under 'Designated Food from Inishowen' by 'MAGUIR'S (2017) (2018), 2019 (2019)</p> <p>11. Bring together key stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The Plan does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent or contribute towards a framework for granting consent. The Plan is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and form the decision-making and consent-granting framework.</p> <p>12. Identify ways of developing and positioning the food offering that supports 'Our Well-being, Our Food, Our Health' - the focus of the International Day for Sustainable Tourism (2019). The result can be the concept of food & culture experiences that are linked to the local food offering, including landscape, infrastructure, and related programmes.</p> <p>13. Liaison to work with the local food offering to ensure the value-added impact.</p>				
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SEA Commentary:

The assessment of the Plan's Section 2 "Developing Hero Experiences" Actions against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:

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

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

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

Sustainability, environmental awareness and protection e.g.:

- Action 6.1: "Work collaboratively to form a **sustainable management** and visitor experience stakeholder group [...]"
- Action 6.6: "[...] Site and visitor management, and size of event will all play a critical role in the **sustainable use of the hillfort for this form of activity**, and will require **establishing clear parameters**."
- Action 8.1 "Continue to **explore options for developing additional visitor infrastructure** particularly toilets and the feasibility of providing café facilities."
- Action 8.2: "[...] **Implement the recommendations arising from the environmental assessment of the Greenway's impact on the Reserve**, including improving screening, and determining ways to prevent undue disturbance of wildlife [...]"
- Action 9.1: "[...] **Support the NPWS proposal** to establish a long term lease from Irish Lights **with the intention of managing the site as a Nature Reserve**."
- Action 9.2 "[...] **Develop an integrated conservation and visitor management plan** for Inishtrahull."
- Action 13.1 "**Support ongoing dialogue on marine biodiversity** and how this can be promoted through strategic initiatives such as formal designation [...] explore national and international opportunities **to strengthen educational tourism and the development of eco cultural programmes** [...]"
- Action 13.2: "Work with national, regional and local partners on the **development of a regional marine leisure and ecotourism plan** including the commercial fishing sector [...]"
- Action 14.4: "[...] Highlight and **reinforce the importance of sustainability as a core principle** for developing Inishowen as a destination [...]"

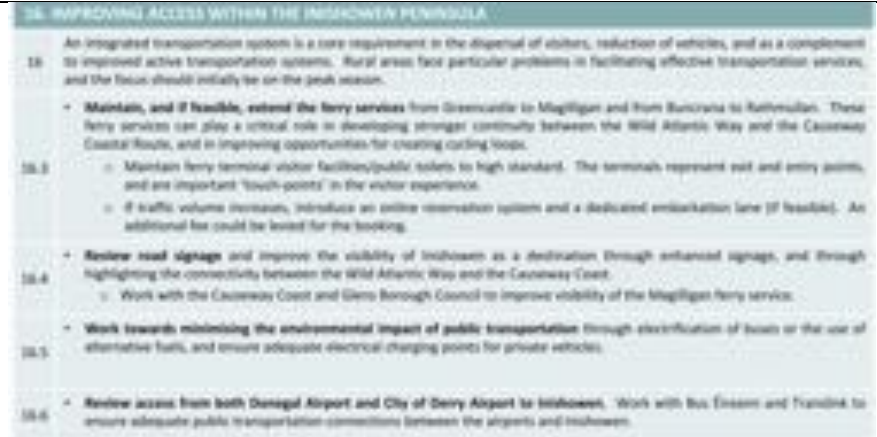
The actions will also contribute towards the promotion of new experiences – including those relating to land use activities and developments – and would be likely to contribute towards an increase in the number and dwell time of visitors (and associated potential adverse effects – see Table 8.3) to the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

The development of new and existing greenways, blueways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within the Inishowen Peninsula area and linking to other areas has the potential to contribute towards sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, presents a variety of potentially adverse environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas, for example along the estuaries or adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures referred to in Section 9 of this report. The development of green infrastructure can achieve synergies with regard to the provision of open space amenities, sustainable mobility, the sustainable management of water, the protection and management of biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage and the protection of protected landscape sensitivities. Action 8.2: “[Fáilte Ireland will] work with Donegal County Council to review site management implications that will arise if and when the proposed North West Greenway links into the site and clearly define the level of co-responsibility that will need to be put in place; review the scoping project that was previously carried out for a visitor centre and assess how visitor facilities can be improved to meet the new demand that will be generated by the Greenway; implement the recommendations arising from the environmental assessment of the Greenway’s impact on the Reserve, including improving screening, and determining ways to prevent undue disturbance of wildlife, the potential for disturbance could arise from excessive cyclist circumnavigation of Inch Lake, and mitigating measures will need to be identified; build on the learnings and data emerging from the EU TrailGazers project to improve overall understanding of usage, visitor needs, and management implications.”

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

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

8.5.4 Action Plan: Section 3 “Strengthening Supportive Infrastructure and Sense of Place”

<p>The Plan should be referred to for more detail than is produced below, including timeframes, leads and partners for each of the action.</p>	<p>Likely to Improve status of SEOs</p>	<p>Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated</p>	<p>Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated</p>	<p>No Likely interaction with status of SEOs</p>
	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		

17. IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE AND POLICY FOR MARINE TOURISM				
17	<p>Inishowen has excellent potential to develop a strong marine tourism offering and ecosystem experience – see Action 11. However, a significant constraint to developing marine tourism, is the limited national budget for developing and maintaining marine infrastructure and a national policy framework that does not sufficiently enable strategic development of the leisure marine sector. This Plan recognises the challenges of this policy context and seeks to establish a state of readiness should funding opportunities arise, while identifying priorities that can be addressed by stakeholders in the shorter term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Donegal County Council and the Loughs Agency in conducting an assessment of marine tourism opportunities, and in identifying the infrastructural projects required to improve the peninsula's positioning as an exit point to the whole North Atlantic and as a marine destination. Consolidate the findings in the proposed marine leisure and eco-tourism plan for the Inishowen Peninsula (see Action 11). Areas of consideration include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Undertake a specific assessment of current harbour and marina facilities for visiting yachts that will provide safe havens. – Assess harbours that have benefitted from new infrastructure such as quayside developments, and pier and breakwater improvements in locations such as Port Dunree, Dunagee, and Greencastle, and review the potential and management of these harbours for marine leisure tourism. This review should consider the commercial fishing versus leisure use of moorings and appropriate spatial delineation; the adequacy of facilities during storms; safety issues related to informal use of harbour waters for swimming, and parking requirements for visitors engaging in a marine experience all need to be evaluated further, with priorities identified for each harbour depending on identified strategic use. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signage and community/stakeholder education and dialogue are likely to be needed to establish and/or reinforce strategic priorities. ▪ Any assessment of infrastructure should take event opportunities into consideration. In this respect, Greencastle will be well located for events, including events that tie in with the Foyle Port Marina. 			
17.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the development of the harbour breakwater infrastructure at Greencastle, increase the harbour area and provide new berthage through the recently announced funding programme from the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine. This will give Greencastle a pre-eminent position as a safe haven for visiting yachts, and as the gateway to the North West. 			
17.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to advocate for a streamlined and timely approach to foreshore licensing and leasing through the proposed Maritime Area Regulatory Authority that will create a more favourable environment for investment in coastal infrastructure, and for maintaining and improving existing facilities. 			
17.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Advocate for fast licensing of select lease operations. The environmental is re-examining marine leaseholder opportunities within the significant reduction in the marine planning framework. The current system is based on a single and lengthy process of applying for a lease which offers the opportunity to consider long-term investment potential in key ports. The current system is likely to be replaced by a more streamlined and simplified process in some circumstances. The current system will require the development of a more streamlined and simplified process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There are challenging circumstances where the current system will be replaced by a more streamlined and simplified process. There is an opportunity to consider a streamlined process of lease development. 			
17.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continue to advocate for a streamlined and timely approach to foreshore licensing and leasing through the proposed Maritime Area Regulatory Authority that will create a more favourable environment for investment in coastal infrastructure, and for maintaining and improving existing facilities. 			
18. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
18	<p>Inishowen offers abundant opportunities for community engagement, with local groups and individuals and can be supported as part of a wider approach to community engagement. The current system is based on a single and lengthy process of applying for a lease which offers the opportunity to consider long-term investment potential in key ports. The current system is likely to be replaced by a more streamlined and simplified process in some circumstances. The current system will require the development of a more streamlined and simplified process.</p>			
18.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop the community engagement and dialogue to be undertaken in the development of the plan. It is recommended that a full range of all stakeholders be consulted during the development of the plan. This includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Members of community groups, including community associations and clubs. 			
18.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Where feasible, encourage a multi-stakeholder approach to plan development. Where appropriate, encourage and facilitate the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the development of the plan. This includes the following: 			
18.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop a local group dedicated to facilitating community consultation and dialogue with stakeholders during the development of the plan. Encourage the development of a local group to facilitate the development of the plan. This includes the following: 			
18.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop a local group dedicated to facilitating community consultation and dialogue with stakeholders during the development of the plan. Encourage the development of a local group to facilitate the development of the plan. This includes the following: 			

18.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Focus on developing clusters of trails where there is strong support. The work of the Sliabh Sneacht Community Centre in establishing the new centre as a focal point for telling local heritage stories and a base for outdoor activities (walking, hill walking/trekking, cycling, fishing, bird watching, boating and photography) is exemplary. The Centre offers toilets, showers and café facilities, and will become an important hub for outdoor activities. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the opportunity to use old bog roads in further trails development in the uplands. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Work with the Inishowen Uplands European Innovation Partnership and explore the opportunity to expand the Partnership initiative to include upland recreational access and trails development. 				
18.3	<p>EXAMPLE: The Wicklow Uplands Council oversees the Sustainable Uplands Agri-environment Scheme (SUAS) pilot project for the Wicklow/Dublin uplands (one of the EU EIP projects). The key objective is to develop practical and innovative solutions that will address the complex agricultural, environmental and socio-economic challenges associated with the land management of commonages and hill farms in the Wicklow/Dublin uplands. Maintaining recreational access is a key component of the project and will be developed further by integrating environmental management, farming, and related uses of the uplands into a single management plan. The Wicklow Uplands Council plays an important role in the management of upland recreation.</p>				
18.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a visitor-oriented searchable database of trails that classifies trails by surface and accessibility, degree of difficulty and length. Include the Slí na Sláinte walks. Ensure that the type of trail usage is clearly clarified for each trail system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Where feasible, encourage further participation in Sport Ireland’s national trail accreditation scheme. <p>EXAMPLE: Shuswap Trails in British Columbia (includes geo-referenced pdf maps).</p>				
18.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively to strengthen the enabling environment for trails and hill walking, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Advocate and support a national indemnity scheme to safeguard all stakeholder interests. o Advocate and support farm subsidies to facilitate the management of permissive trails. 				
18.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to assess the viability of developing a coastal trail that can be integrated into national efforts to create a Wild Atlantic Way coastal walking/hiking trail. Informal work has been completed in the past identifying various options that will circumnavigate land ownership issues and should be reviewed. 				
18.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the concept of developing a sustainable mountain bike park in an appropriate location. Work collaboratively to assess potential areas for trails development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If there is potential to advance the concept, undertake a feasibility study. 				
<p>18. PROMOTING INVESTMENT IN ACCOMMODATION</p>					
<p>Maintaining a range of quality accommodation options that meet the needs of the targeted market segments is essential to establishing a competitive destination. This includes working with operators to assist in ensuring stability of offerings and advising on market/product fit.</p>					
18.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the creation of conditions that will promote investment in developing and/or improving diverse categories of bed stock in the accommodation sector, while also encouraging new levels of innovation in accommodation delivery e.g. glamping and enhancement of quality. 				
18.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of hotel accommodation suitable for the education market. Inishowen has the potential to attract a range of overseas students from Europe and North America to study marine ecology, ecotourism, upland farming and related topics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Explore the feasibility of the concept of combining accommodation with a field study centre. The peninsula could benefit from developing research laboratory facilities as envisaged in the original 2000 concept document for the Main Road Ocean Centre, Marine Park and Broughshane Farming Area. With facilities in place, the potential to attract post graduate researchers to Inishowen will be significantly enhanced. 				
18.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully assess the findings of the forthcoming Donegal County Council study on caravans, camper van and camping in Donegal. Consideration needs to be given to the following in Inishowen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ensuring adequate provision of well managed facilities that meet the needs of this user group through attracting further private investment into this sector. o Reducing or eliminating wild camping and unmanaged free camping to minimise environmental impact, preserve the integrity of the Wild Atlantic Way, and to create alternative business opportunities for the private sector. This will require working with landowners to identify suitable locations for new camping sites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be a rationale for permitting wild camping in select locations – for example, coastal locations for hikers. This can still be managed through an online permitting system. 				

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

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

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

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

8.5.5 Action Plan: Section 4 “Building Industry Capacity and Supporting Services”

<p>The Plan should be referred to for more detail than is produced below, including timeframes, leads and partners for each of the action.</p>	<p>Likely to Improve status of SEOs</p>	<p>Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated</p>	<p>Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated</p>	<p>No Likely interaction with status of SEOs</p>
<p>7.2. DEVELOPING INDUSTRY CAPACITY AND PROMOTING QUALITY ASSURANCE</p> <p>22 Developing the Catalyst Projects and working towards establishing a stronger eco-cultural identity creates new opportunities for business development and for ensuring that the positioning of Inishowen Peninsula reflects its vision and underlying values. Differentiating Inishowen in this way and working with the business community will require a focus on business mentorship and training to ensure the delivery of quality experiences that stand out and highlight the unique attributes of Inishowen.</p> <p>• Create a business support programme for Inishowen that focuses on existing tourism businesses and potential new businesses, and reflects the commitment to implementing sustainable business practices. This will include deepening the general understanding of the region’s eco-cultural heritage, and working with stakeholders to assist in the development of innovative theme-based visitor experiences in line with this Plan. Core areas should include:</p> <p>22.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Understanding the underlying stories of Inishowen and the themes presented in this Plan o Creating saleable experiences, including the development of experiences that will extend the season (potentially through a membership programme) o Selling online and delivering to the international market – engaging businesses in adopting online booking systems and online distribution will strengthen the distribution of experiences o Yield management o Telling ‘your story’ online and offline o Contracting at trade fairs o Service excellence o Customer service o Market diversification 	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>	<p>B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 AC1 M1 M2 M3 CH1 CH2 L1</p>		

22.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a programme to strengthen the capacity to deliver guided services and immersive experiences in an authentic and safe manner. While Inishowen has a number of well qualified guides and activity operators, there is potential to expand the number of operators and to ensure that all meet minimum criteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Review existing training options and work with potential providers such as Letterkenny Institute of Technology to customise the content and to deliver within Inishowen. Where feasible, explore options for offering an accredited training programme. The Certificate in Regional Guiding delivered by LYIT would benefit from the integration of regional components on the bioscultural diversity of Inishowen. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the instructor and Leader Award programmes offered by Mountaineering Ireland for a range of outdoor activities including the Lowland Leader Award, and the Hill and Moorland Leader Award. ▪ Ensure that training programmes include building an understanding of Inishowen’s natural and cultural heritage. ▪ Explore opportunities to work with Leave No Trace Ireland to promote the importance of responsible environmental behaviour. ▪ Focus on promoting qualified activity operators. 			
22.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the specified needs of sectors that are diversifying into tourism, including the commercial fishing sector, the farming sector and the well-being sector. Individuals looking to diversify into tourism will benefit from an introductory overview of tourism and visitor expectations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Develop diversification mentorship training for the commercial fishing sector to provide guidance on diversifying into marine ecotourism. This should include working with boat operators to identify new opportunities to explore Inishowen from the ocean, and to highlight the maritime and military themes, and the biodiversity of the waters and the coastline. ◦ Expand existing agri-tourism support systems to look at new diversification opportunities arising from the strategic direction of this Plan. 			
<p>23. BUILDING THE ECO-CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE BASE AND STRENGTHENING THE ASSETS</p>				
23	<p>The vision of this Plan and the core emphasis on building recognition for the distinctive eco-cultural attributes of the region raises the need to strengthen awareness of what makes the Inishowen Peninsula and its surrounding marine environment distinctive as a place to live and as a place to visit. Through building a knowledge base, there will also be opportunities to identify initiatives that will strengthen the natural and cultural assets. Creating a better understanding of how nature, culture and place today are inextricably linked will assist in building a community of ambassadors, and will highlight the value of maintaining the integrity of Inishowen.</p> <p>Action 23 provides a starting point for discussing the implementation of this Action. It is anticipated that the following steps will require coordinating inputs from a wide range of stakeholder interests.</p>			
23.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a database of all community organisations with an active interest in protecting natural and cultural sites and in stimulating grass-roots guardianship. The process of bringing together existing initiatives will highlight the common direction that many communities are pursuing. 			
23.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate a process of participatory mapping. This involves engaging community members in compiling a map and database of local assets. This work can build on existing participatory processes such as the Inch Heritage project, and should include the various groups across the peninsula that have specific interests and are custodians of a substantial knowledge base. A process of this nature contributes to collective learning and identifies what local residents regard as special. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Explore the opportunity to develop a mapped database that identifies natural and cultural assets and has the potential to house related text, visual and audio materials. The mapping resources developed for this Plan provide a base for commencing this project. The EU Sustainable Heritage Areas: Partnerships for Ecotourism (SHARE) initiative has produced valuable insights and guidelines for this activity: Mapping and Managing Natural and Cultural Assets (2018) and includes a range of case-studies on approaches, tools and techniques, and the use of mapping to inform visitor and resource management. (In developing a map for visitors, not all content has to be visitor-facing). 			
23.2	<p>EXAMPLE: <i>The Culcagh to Cleenish – A Great Place.</i> This project highlights the rich heritage in south-west Fermanagh. The area is well known for the Culcagh Lakelands Global Geopark (formerly known as Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark) and the National Trust property at Florence Court House, with many other sites and attractions often overlooked. The project has created a memory map that identifies a range of natural and cultural sites, together with text, and audio and visual materials. Local community groups played a key role in collecting the materials.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: The Vjosa/Aoos River Ecomuseum has developed thematic routes and a virtual tour across a cross-border region of 3,540km². The Ecomuseum seeks to profile and protect the area’s natural and cultural heritage on both sides of the Greek-Albanian border and has developed a visually interactive map that allows the web visitor to engage in 360° degree views of the landscape across a wide selection of points on the map.</p>			

<p>23.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to explore and support initiatives that are designed to strengthen the conservation of the peninsula's intangible cultural heritage. This is particularly important in preserving traditional skills that are a key element of Inishowen's Coastal Story. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the significance of events such as the Inishowen Song Project, and position these projects within the context of conserving Inishowen's cultural biodiversity. Explore and encourage opportunities to maintain traditional skills that are an important element of the region's identity such as boat building and weaving, and tarack/Donovans boat building through working with community organisations such as the Men's Shed. <p>23.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to strengthen links with international partners to explore ways of promoting and preserving rural and maritime heritage. Recent initiatives include the Inishowen Maritime Museum's Norwegian partnership in traditional boat building, and the linkages with New Brunswick and Newfoundland associated with emigration from Mayo. Encourage ongoing citizen participation in programmes and projects that focus on the conservation of natural and bio-cultural diversity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local initiatives that have the potential to contribute to the regional emphasis on the bio-cultural distinctiveness of Inishowen, and could be highlighted through customised experiences for niche visitors include the work of the Inishowen Rivers Trust, the DOP's programme on bee keeping, and the activities of ECO-Care with its goal of conducting a bio-cultural diversity audit and preparing a Biodiversity Action Plan. Work with partners such as the Inishowen Maritime Museum and the Inishowen Basking Shark Study Group to build outreach programmes into the schools that focus on the peninsula's natural and bio-cultural diversity. Extend this work into ferry. <p>23.5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seize the potential of developing a regional/community-focused portal to promote the eco-cultural distinctiveness of the peninsula in a way that complements the traditional online marketing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate discussion and participation through social media and online forums. 				
<p>23. BUILDING THE ECO-CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE BASE AND STRENGTHENING THE ASSETS</p>				
<p>23.6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the research activities that are currently underway in Inishowen and support initiatives that are designed to build partnerships with Irish and overseas academic and research institutions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Inishowen Basking Shark Study Group to raise the profile of their research and community engagement activities. Informal linkages exist with a growing number of universities in Ireland, the UK, and in North America. Strengthening these relationships will be of value in building an international profile for Inishowen as a leader in marine ecology and shark research. Promote awareness of the research that is being facilitated through the COMPASS Project, the MarPAMM project and the Sea Mentor project. <p>23.7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Inishowen Uplands European Innovation Partnership project which is a new initiative that is looking at sustainable farming practices in the uplands. Twenty-five farmers are participating in a range of sustainable measures designed to enhance productivity while lowering carbon emissions and improving biodiversity and water quality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the farmers to attract visitors to the demonstration farms. Develop a customised extended stay itinerary that looks at other aspects of sustainability and ecotourism on the peninsula, and highlights the linkages between agriculture and the wider community. Continue to explore the opportunity to re-visit the uplands through this project. 				
<p>24. PROMOTING THEMATIC EVENTS</p>				
<p>24</p> <p>Building a coordinated programme of events that support the three experiential themes will enrich the destination experience and will strengthen various sectors. Currently events range from being highly successful with a strong international appeal, such as the Clonmany Festival, to being small bespoke events with significant market potential but a concerning lack of presence in the market place. Raising the profile of the latter, and working as a region to develop the events sector will improve the viability of many community initiatives and will strengthen the role of these events in attracting extended lengths of stay.</p> <p>24.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively to develop a programme and regional calendar of events and experiences that includes existing events and new experiences. The sustainability of these events is dependent on creating a highly visible and dynamic regional calendar of events that is well promoted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the cultural heritage sector, identify all existing and recently hosted events and group experiences, including those no longer currently offered. There is a diverse range of events that highlight the cultural identity of Inishowen including the various heritage events (e.g. the Colgan Heritage Weekend, the McClinchey Summer School, and the West Inishowen Heritage and History Society events); themed events (e.g. The Amazing Grace Festival, the May the Fourth Festival); and music/performance events, literary events, and community festivals. 				
<p>24. PROMOTING THEMATIC EVENTS</p>				
<p>24.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the viability of continuing to host the various events and identify key constraints. If feasible, evaluate the option of hosting smaller events on a rotational basis, thereby reducing strain on volunteers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the opportunity to host smaller bespoke events around the peninsula, such as themed literary or song evenings. <p>EXAMPLE: Meadowlark Nature Festival in the South Okanagan, British Columbia is a 5-day series of bookable events around the region encompassing guided hiking, cycling, canoeing, bird watching, and photography events, together with heritage tours, night sky viewings, art walks, film screenings, writing sessions and Indigenous story-telling. Events on sustainable buildings and landscapes, climate resilience and ecosystems management add an additional dimension, and the programme generally sells out well in advance.</p>				

<p>24.2 • Create regular dialogue/networking events that are used to brainstorm new ideas, inform participants of planned or proposed events, and identify options to build on existing initiatives. (This could be conducted under the scope of the proposed Inishowen Eco-Cultural Partnership). The focus should be on discussing ways of strengthening a more regional approach to developing and promoting events.</p> <p>24.3 • Work collaboratively to strengthen the arts and artists sector through establishing a 'Meet the Maker' trail event. This could be on specified days to ensure that all businesses and studios are open, and would benefit from a sense of critical mass.</p> <p>24.4 • Work with Donegal County Council to develop a schedule of small craft markets (similar in concept to farmers markets) in a rotating range of locations such as Bunratty pier/waterfront, or the area in front of the Inishowen Maritime Museum.</p> <p>24.5 • Review each theme on an ongoing basis to determine how special events can animate the theme and raise the profile of each USP (unique selling proposition). For example, adventure events such as Coira Canoe Weekend and Clombest, play an important role in raising the visibility of Inishowen as a destination for outdoor land and water based adventures.</p>				
<p>25. UTILISING TECHNOLOGY TO ENRICH AND JOIN UP HERO EXPERIENCES</p>				
<p>25 • Technology has significant potential to animate the experiential themes, particularly Maritime and Military Might. The planning process identified examples where technology has taken existing assets and reimagined them entirely into a new experience capable of attracting new markets. Liberation Route Europe is an example of this approach.</p> <p>25.1 • Work with partners to determine how technology can encourage visitor dispersion and strengthen existing experiences. This will become particularly relevant as the North West Greenway is developed and visitors are looking for 'slow' discoveries.</p>				
<p>26. ENHANCING VISITOR AWARENESS OF HERO EXPERIENCES IN INISHOWEN</p>				
<p>26 Working collaboratively and aligning all promotional communications with this Plan will be important in building an identity around the three themes and in elevating the HERO experiences to domestic and international markets.</p>				
<p>26.1 • Work with Fáilte Ireland to profile key HERO experiences on the Discover Ireland platform and ensure that the positioning of the Inishowen Peninsula on this platform is in line with this Plan. Highlight the types of experiences that will differentiate the region and encourage increased visitation and interest.</p>				
<p>26.2 • Work collaboratively with partners on both sides of the border to highlight the connectivity between the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Explore new opportunities to develop cross-border coastal packages and highlight positioning of Inishowen as a base to explore Derry, and the Causeway Coast – creating circular tours via the Foyle Bridge and/or the Magilligan Ferry service. 				
<p>26.3 • Work with marketing partners and local stakeholders to ensure that messaging and visual material relating to Inishowen are aligned with the Wild Atlantic Way and the direction of this Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Continue to develop an accessible image library to support marketing initiatives. Ensure that the search criteria enhances usage and that the images support the experiential themes. 				
<p>26.4 • Work with the industry to host familiarisation visits to various sites and attractions as part of networking in the off-season.</p>				
<p>27. IMPLEMENTATION</p>				
<p>27 Failte Ireland will facilitate the formation of an Implementation Group with representatives from key agencies and tourism groups with a direct role in implementation. (Progress on implementing the Plan will be further accelerated through the establishment and evolution of the Inishowen Eco-Cultural Partnership (Action 23)).</p>				
<p>27.1 • Set up an inclusive stakeholder Implementation Group with independent co-chairs.</p>				
<p>27.2 • Develop annual work plans with actions, timelines and clearly identified outputs, and work with local government and national or local agencies to promote implementation of projects that fall within their remit.</p>				

SEA Commentary:

The assessment of the Plan's Section 4 "Building Industry Capacity and Supporting Services" Actions against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs B1, B2, B3, PHH1, S1, W1, W2, W3, AC1, M1, M2, M3, CH1, CH2 and L1) is consistent with the:

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

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

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

Sustainability, environmental awareness and protection e.g.:

- Action 21.1: "Support the establishment of an Inishowen Eco Cultural Partnership [...] strengthen the group's leadership capacity and role in **sustaining the eco-cultural heritage** as a basis for regional identity and **sustainable tourism**."
- Action 22.2: "Ensure that training programmes include **building an understanding of Inishowen's natural and cultural heritage** [...] Explore opportunities to work with Leave No Trace Ireland **to promote the importance of responsible environmental behaviour** [...]."
- Action 23.1: "Develop a database of all community organisations with an **active interest in protecting natural and cultural sites** and in stimulating grass roots guardianship [...]."
- Action 23.3: "Continue to explore and support initiatives that are designed to **strengthen the conservation of the peninsula's intangible cultural heritage** [...]."
- Action 23.3: "[...] explore ways of **promoting and preserving rural and maritime heritage** [...]."
- Action 23.4: "Encourage ongoing citizen participation in programmes and projects that **focus on the conservation of natural and biocultural diversity** [...]."

Seasonality e.g.:

- Action 26.4: "Work with the industry to host familiarisation visits to various sites and attractions as part of networking in **the off season**."
- Action 22.1: "Deepening the general **understanding of the region's eco cultural heritage** [...] development of experiences that will **extend the season** [...]."

Visitor management e.g.:

- Action 25.1: "Work with partners to determine how technology can **encourage visitor dispersion** [...]."

Reducing emissions by promoting sustainable and low-carbon modes of transport e.g.:

- Action 23.7: "Promote the Inishowen Uplands European Innovation Partnership project which is a new initiative that is looking at **sustainable farming practices** in the uplands [...] a range of **sustainable measures** designed to enhance productivity while **lowering carbon emissions and improving biodiversity and water quality** [...] Develop a customised extended stay itinerary that looks at other aspects of **sustainability and ecotourism on the peninsula** [...]."

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

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

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

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

Section 9 Mitigation Measures

9.1 Introduction

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

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

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

Mitigation was achieved through the following:

- Establishing the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework¹²⁸; and
- Integrating Requirements for Environmental Compliance into the Plan¹²⁹.

9.2 Establishing the status of the Plan and its interrelationship with the Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework¹³⁰

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

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

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

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction up to 2040. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSE for the Northern and Western Region (that includes the area to which the Plan relates) sets out objectives relating tourism development, that have been subject to environmental assessment, including those relating to: enhancing provision of tourism and leisure amenity; promoting tourism activity; developing a road network and public transport services, facilitating improved visitor access and longer dwell times; developing walking and cycling trails, opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes; and facilitating appropriate tourism development, including that relating to greenways, blueways and peatlands. The RSE provides a framework for the review of existing, assessed lower-tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans, which already include various provisions relating to land use, tourism and infrastructure. Such reviews will also be subject to environmental assessments.

¹²⁸ This framework includes various environmental requirements.

¹²⁹ These requirements include those that have arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

¹³⁰ This framework includes various environmental requirements.

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

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



Figure 9.1 Statutory Decision-Making and Consent-Granting Framework, Inishowen Peninsula DEDP and Environmental Assessment Requirements

9.3 Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the Plan¹³¹

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

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

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance¹³² with measures relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

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

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

- Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- Statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (e.g. Development Plans, such as the existing Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied and Seven Strategic Towns Local Area Plan 2018-2024) that have undergone environmental assessment, as appropriate, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management¹³³; and
- The Climate Action Plan 2021 and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions)¹³⁴.

Infrastructure Capacity¹³⁵

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

Visitor Management¹³⁶

Those receiving funding shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including

¹³¹ These requirements include those that have arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

¹³² Demonstration of compliance may be supported by monitoring undertaken by the beneficiary.

¹³³ For more information please refer to Appendix II of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

¹³⁴ For more information please refer to Section 4.10 and/or Appendix II of this report or the website of the relevant public authority.

¹³⁵ This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

¹³⁶ This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. This will include the preparation of Visitor Management Plans, including for Catalyst Projects, where relevant.

Extensive research by Fáilte Ireland has shown improved environmental outcomes (including improved attainment of conservation objectives) in areas with visitor management strategies. Where available, this research will continue to be used as part of a feedback loop to inform ongoing review of Fáilte Ireland activities, including within the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP area.

Visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.

Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services¹³⁷

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

Climate Change

Various provisions relating to climate change have been integrated into the Plan, compliance with which will need to be demonstrated by those seeking or maintaining funding from Fáilte Ireland. Such measures include those relating to:

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

These measures have been integrated into the Plan under **FI Strategic Pillar 'Reducing Carbon Footprint'**, including:

- *Action 1.5: "Work with partners to develop **safe active travel options, and public transportation** particularly from Buncrana to Fort Dunree, **that will assist in reducing car travel.**"*
- *Action 2.1: "[...] Develop the proposed one-way shuttle service with a series of hop on, hop-off stops at sites of interest and business outlets **to assist in dispersing the visitor and reducing vehicular traffic** [...] Continue to assess the road network in relation to **cycling opportunities** [...]"*
- *Action 3.5: "[...] **encourage the improvement of cycling infrastructure** within hub communities, particularly Buncrana and Carndonagh [...]"*
- *Action 16.5: "[...] **Work towards minimising the environmental impact of public transportation through electrification of buses or the use of alternative fuels, and ensure adequate electrical charging points for private vehicles** [...]"*
- *Action 23.7: "Promote the Inishowen Uplands European Innovation Partnership project which is a new initiative that is looking at **sustainable farming practices** in the uplands [...] a range of **sustainable measures** designed to enhance productivity while **lowering carbon emissions and improving biodiversity and water quality** [...] Develop a customised extended stay itinerary that looks at other aspects of **sustainability and ecotourism on the peninsula** [...]"*

¹³⁷ This requirement has arisen through the SEA and/or AA processes.

Section 10 Monitoring Measures

10.1 Introduction

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

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

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

10.2 Indicators and Targets

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

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

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

10.3 Sources

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

Other existing monitoring sources will be used, including:

- Information gathered through existing Fáilte Ireland environmental monitoring programmes (and any subsequent replacements), including the Monitoring Programme for the Wild Atlantic Way, a sub-programme of which will be extended to/reported on for the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP area in order to monitor any effects of visitors (see Section 4.6.3);
- Sources maintained by Donegal County Council (such as those arising from the SEA of land use plans) and the relevant authorities e.g. the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Central Statistics Office; and
- Lower-tier environmental assessment and decision making – including a review of project approvals granted and associated documents – will also be utilised as a part of the Monitoring Programme.

10.4 Reporting and Responsibility

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

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

Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources

Environmental Component	Indicators	Targets	Source and (where available) Frequency
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive	B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under National and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan ¹³⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) Government report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years) Government National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years) Consultations with the NPWS CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years) Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from the Plan	B2: No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from the Plan	
	B3i: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan B3ii: Number of significant impacts on the protection of listed species	B3i: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from the Plan B3ii: No significant impacts on the protection of listed species resulting from the Plan	
Population and Human Health	PHH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency	PHH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) Consultations with the HSE and EPA Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
Soil	S1: Artificial surfaces land cover extent	S1: Contribute towards the target of the National Planning Framework's SEA (2018) to "Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 Lower tier environmental assessment and decision-making by local authorities SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years) Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
Water	W1i: 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) W1ii: Mandatory and Guide values as set by the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008)	W1i: No deterioration in the status of any surface water or adverse effect upon the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the Plan W1ii: No deterioration in the value of bathing waters or adverse effect upon the ability of any bathing water to achieve Mandatory values and, where possible, Guide values as a result of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual) SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
	W2: Interactions with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC resulting from development adhering to the Plan	W2: Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC, subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD	

¹³⁸ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) No alternative solution available; (b) Imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the programme to proceed; and (c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

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Environmental Component	Indicators	Targets	Source and (where available) Frequency
	W3: Compliance of relevant lower tier assessments and decision-making with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines	W3: For lower tier assessments and decision making to comply with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines	
Air and Climatic Factors	AC1: Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation have been integrated into the Plan	C1: To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
Material Assets	M1: Number of instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity is unavailable	M1: No instances whereby additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas in the Plan area where adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity that does not present a danger to human health are unavailable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision-making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Consultations with the partners such as the EPA, Irish Water and/or Donegal County Council • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
	M2: Number of significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure	M2: No significant adverse effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure	
	M3: Preparation and implementation of construction and environmental management plans	M3: For construction and environmental management plans to be prepared and implemented for relevant projects	
Cultural Heritage	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH1: No unauthorised adverse effects on archaeological heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes
	CH2: Percentage of entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan	CH2: No unauthorised adverse effects on architectural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan	
Landscape	L1: Number of unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	L1: No unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in the Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation demonstrating compliance with "Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management" – see Section 9 • Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities • SEA Monitoring Programme reports for the land use plans of relevant local authorities (as required, monitoring reports published on various timescales and frequencies) • Input from any other existing or replacement Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes

Appendix I SEA Determination



Appendix II Relationship with Legislation and Other Plans and Programmes

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
European Level			
SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. Provide for a high level of protection of the environment by carrying out an environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out an environmental assessment for plans or programmes referred to in Articles 2 to 4 of the Directive. Prepare an environmental report which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme and reasonable alternatives that consider the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme. Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission. Consult the other Member States where the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have transboundary environmental effects. Inform relevant authorities and stakeholders on the decision to implement the plan or programme. Issue a statement to include requirements detailed in Article 9 of the Directive. Monitor and mitigate significant environmental effects identified by the assessment. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires the assessment of the environmental effects of public and private projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. Aims to assess and implement avoidance or mitigation measures to eliminate environmental effects, before consent is given of projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects. Those projects are defined in Article 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All projects listed in Annex I are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require an EIA. For projects listed in Annex II, a "screening procedure" is required to determine the effects of projects on the basis of thresholds/criteria or a case-by-case examination. This should take into account Annex III. The environmental impact assessment shall identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in the light of each individual case and in accordance with Articles 4 to 12, the direct and indirect effects of a project on the following factors: human beings, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, climate and the landscape, material assets and the cultural heritage, the interaction between each factor. Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission before a decision is made. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Maintain or restore to favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of community interest. Promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose and protect sites of importance to habitats, plant and animal species. Establish a network of European sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, to enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. Carry out comprehensive assessment of habitat types and species present. Establish a system of strict protection for the animal species and plant species listed in Annex IV. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state including their eggs, nests and habitats. Protect, manage and control these species and comply with regulations relating to their exploitation. The species included in Annex I shall be the subject of special conservation measures concerning their habitat in order to ensure their survival and reproduction in their area of distribution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Annex 1. Preserve, maintain and establish biotopes and habitats to include the creation of protected areas (Special Protection Areas). Ensure the upkeep and management in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats inside and outside the protected zones, re-establish destroyed biotopes and creation of biotopes. Measures for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I is required as regards their breeding, moulting and wintering areas and staging posts along their migration routes. The protection of wetlands and particularly wetlands of international importance. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and - preventing further such pollution. 	<p>Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is designed to prevent pollution of surface waters and groundwater from agricultural sources and to protect and improve water quality. Ireland's third NAP came into operation in 2014. Each Member State's NAP must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a limit on the amount of livestock manure applied to the land each year set periods when land spreading is prohibited due to risk set capacity levels for the storage of livestock manure 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and

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Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
EU Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive (2008/1/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this Directive is to achieve integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from the activities listed in Annex I. It lays down measures designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions in the air, water and land from the abovementioned activities, including measures concerning waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole, without prejudice to Directive 85/337/EEC and other relevant Community provisions. 	<p>The IPPC Directive is based on several principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an integrated approach best available techniques, flexibility; and public participation 	<p>their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p> <p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU Plant Protection (products) Directive 2009/127/EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Directive aims at reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment by introducing different targets, tools and measures such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or National Action Plans (NAPs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Framework Directive applies to pesticides which are plant protection products. Regarding pesticide application equipment already in professional use, the Framework Directive introduces requirements for the inspection and maintenance to be carried out on such equipment. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU Renewables Directive (2009/28/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Renewable Energy Directive establishes an overall policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU. It requires the EU to fulfil at least 20% of its total energy needs with renewables by 2020 – to be achieved through the attainment of individual national targets. All EU countries must also ensure that at least 10% of their transport fuels come from renewable sources by 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Directive promotes cooperation amongst EU countries (and with countries outside the EU) to help them meet their renewable energy targets. The Directive specifies national renewable energy targets for each country, taking into account its starting point and overall potential for renewables. EU countries set out how they plan to meet these targets and the general course of their renewable energy policy in national renewable energy action plans. Progress towards national targets is measured every two years when EU countries publish national renewable energy progress reports. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Indirect Land Use Change Directive (2012/0288(COD))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 3(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (3) requires Member States to ensure that the share of energy from renewable energy sources in all forms of transport in 2020 is at least 10 % of their final energy consumption. The blending of biofuels is one of the methods available for Member States to meet this target, and is expected to be the main contributor. Other methods available to meet the target are the reduction of energy consumption, which is imperative because a mandatory percentage target for energy from renewable sources is likely to become increasingly difficult to achieve sustainably if the overall demand for energy for transport continues to rise, and the use of electricity from renewable energy sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit the contribution that conventional biofuels (with a risk of ILUC emissions) make towards attainment of the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive; Improve the greenhouse gas performance of biofuel production processes (reducing associated emissions) by raising the greenhouse gas saving threshold for new installations subject to protecting installations already in operation on 1st July 2014; Encourage a greater market penetration of advanced (low-ILUC) biofuels by allowing such fuels to contribute more to the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive than conventional biofuels; Improve the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by obliging Member States and fuel suppliers to report the estimated indirect land-use change emissions of biofuels. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (2014/94/EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Directive establishes a common framework of measures for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Union in order to minimise dependence on oil and to mitigate the environmental impact of transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Directive sets out minimum requirements for the building-up of alternative fuels infrastructure, including recharging points for electric vehicles and refuelling points for natural gas (LNG and CNG) and hydrogen, to be implemented by means of Member States' national policy frameworks, as well as common technical specifications for such recharging and refuelling points, and user information requirements. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a set of binding measures to help the EU reach its 20% energy efficiency target by 2020. Under the Directive, all EU countries are required to use energy more efficiently at all stages of the energy chain, from production to final consumption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy distributors or retail energy sales companies have to achieve 1.5% energy savings per year through the implementation of energy efficiency measures EU countries can opt to achieve the same level of savings through other means, such as improving the efficiency of heating systems, installing double glazed windows or insulating roofs The public sector in EU countries should purchase energy-efficient buildings, products and services 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every year, governments in EU countries must carry out energy efficient renovations on at least 3% (by floor area) of the buildings they own and occupy • Energy consumers should be empowered to better manage consumption. This includes easy and free access to data on consumption through individual metering • National incentives for SMEs to undergo energy audits • Large companies will make audits of their energy consumption to help them identify ways to reduce it • Monitoring efficiency levels in new energy generation capacities. 	<p>– in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>EU Seveso Directive (2012/18/EU)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Directive lays down rules for the prevention of major accidents which involve dangerous substances, and the limitation of their consequences for human health and the environment, with a view to ensuring a high level of protection throughout the Union in a consistent and effective manner. 	<p>The Seveso Directive is well integrated with other EU policies, thus avoiding double regulation or other administrative burden. This includes the following related policy areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals; • The Union's Civil Protection Mechanism; • The Security Union Agenda including CBRN-E and Protection of critical infrastructure; • Policy on environmental liability and on the protection of the environment through criminal law; • Safety of offshore oil and gas operations. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>European Union Biodiversity Strategy for 2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to put Europe's biodiversity on the path to recovery by 2030. • Aims to build resilience to future threats such as the impacts of climate change, forest fires, food insecurity, disease outbreaks and protecting wildlife and fighting illegal wildlife trade. 	<p>The Strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at sea; • Launching an EU nature restoration plan; • Introducing measures to enable the necessary transformative stage; and • Introducing measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>EU Green Infrastructure Strategy</p>	<p>Aims to create a robust enabling framework in order to promote and facilitate Green Infrastructure (GI) projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting GI in the main EU policy areas. • Supporting EU-level GI projects. • Improving access to finance for GI projects. • Improving information and promoting innovation. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>UN Kyoto Protocol (2nd Kyoto Period), the Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II), Paris climate conference (COP21) 2015 (Paris Agreement)</p>	<p>The UN Kyoto Protocol set of policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II) aims to identify and develop all the necessary elements of an EU strategy to implement the Kyoto Protocol.</p> <p>At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal. The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kyoto Protocol is implemented through the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II). • EU member states implement measures to improve on or compliment the specified measures and policies arising from the ECCP. • Under COP21, governments agreed to come together every 5 years to set more ambitious targets as required by science; report to each other and the public on how well they are doing to implement their targets; track progress towards the long-term goal through a robust transparency and accountability system. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>EU 2020 Climate and Energy Package</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Binding legislation which aims to ensure the European Union meets its climate and energy targets for 2020. • Aims to achieve a 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels. • Aims to raise the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%. • Achieve a 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency. 	<p>Four pieces of complementary legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) to include a cap on emission allowances in addition to existing system of national caps. • Member States have agreed national targets for non-EU ETS emissions from countries outside the EU. • Meet the national renewable energy targets of 16% for Ireland by 2020. • Preparing a legal framework for technologies in carbon capture and storage. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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EU 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030 that has been agreed by European countries. Targets include a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels, at least a 27% share of renewable energy consumption and at least 27% energy savings compared with the business-as-usual scenario. 	<p>To meet the targets, the European Commission has proposed the following policies for 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reformed EU emissions trading scheme (ETS). New indicators for the competitiveness and security of the energy system, such as price differences with major trading partners, diversification of supply, and interconnection capacity between EU countries. First ideas for a new governance system based on national plans for competitive, secure, and sustainable energy. These plans will follow a common EU approach. They will ensure stronger investor certainty, greater transparency, enhanced policy coherence and improved coordination across the EU. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>The Clean Air for Europe Directive (2008/50/EC) (EU Air Framework Directive)</p> <p>Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CAFE Directive merges existing legislation into a single directive (except for the fourth daughter directive). Sets new air quality objectives for PM_{2.5} (fine particles) including the limit value and exposure-related objectives. Accounts for the possibility to discount natural sources of pollution when assessing compliance against limit values. Allows the possibility for time extensions of three years (PM₁₀) or up to five years (NO₂, benzene) for complying with limit values, based on conditions and the assessment by the European Commission. The Fourth Daughter Directive lists pollutants, target values and monitoring requirements for the following: arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole. Aims to assess the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria. Obtains information on ambient air quality in order to help combat air pollution and nuisance and to monitor long-term trends and improvements resulting from national and community measures. Ensures that such information on ambient air quality is made available to the public. Aims to maintain air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases. Aims to promote increased cooperation between the Member States in reducing air pollution. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)	<p>The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction from the source.</p>	<p>The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw up strategic noise maps for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels; Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise. <p>The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks Reduce adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess all water courses and coast lines at risk from flooding through Flood Risk Assessment Prepare flood hazard maps and flood risk maps outlining the extent or potential of flooding and assets and humans at risk in these areas at the River Basin District level (Article 3(2) (b)) and areas covered by Article 5(1) and Article 13(1) (b) in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3. Implement flood risk management plans and take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce flood risk for the areas covered by the Articles listed above. Inform the public and allow the public to participate in planning process. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a framework for the protection of water bodies to include inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater and their dependent wildlife and habitats. Preserve and prevent the deterioration of water status and where necessary improve and maintain the "good status" of water bodies. Promote sustainable water usage. The Water Framework Directive repealed the following Directives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Drinking Water Abstraction Directive Sampling Drinking Water Directive Exchange of Information on Quality of Surface Freshwater Directive Shellfish Directive Freshwater Fish Directive Groundwater (Dangerous Substances) Directive Dangerous Substances Directive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect, enhance and restore all water bodies and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Directive. Achieve "good status" for all waters. Manage water bodies based on identifying and establishing river basins districts. Involve the public and streamline legislation. Prepare and implement a River Basin Management Plan for each river basin districts identified and a Register of Protected Areas. Establish a programme of monitoring for surface water status, groundwater status and protected areas. Recover costs for water services. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect, control and conserve groundwater. Prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater. Implements measures to prevent and control groundwater pollution, including criteria for assessing good groundwater chemical status and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet minimum groundwater standards listed in Annex 1 of Directive. Meet threshold values adopted by national legislation for the pollutants, groups of pollutants and indicators of pollution which have been identified as 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see</p>

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	<p>criteria for the identification of significant and sustained upward trends and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals.</p>	<p>contributing to the characterisation of bodies or groups of bodies of groundwater as being at risk, also taking into account Part B of Annex II.</p>	<p>Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and maintain the quality of water intended for human consumption. • Protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set values applicable to water intended for human consumption for the parameters set out in Annex I. • Set values for additional parameters not included in Annex I, where the protection of human health within national territory or part of it so requires. The values set should, as a minimum, satisfy the requirements of Article 4(1) (a). • Implement all measures necessary to ensure that regular monitoring of the quality of water intended for human consumption is carried out, in order to check that the water available to consumers meets the requirements of this Directive and in particular the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5. • Ensure that any failure to meet the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5 is immediately investigated in order to identify the cause. • Ensure that the necessary remedial action is taken as soon as possible to restore its quality and shall give priority to their enforcement action. • Undertake remedial action to restore the quality of the water where necessary to protect human health. • Notify consumers when remedial action is being undertaken except where the competent authorities consider the non-compliance with the parametric value to be trivial. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban wastewater and the treatment and discharge of wastewater from certain industrial sectors. • The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of wastewater discharges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban wastewater entering collecting systems shall before discharge, be subject to secondary treatment. • Annex II requires the designation of areas sensitive to eutrophication which receive water discharges. • Establishes minimum requirements for urban wastewater collection and treatment systems in specified agglomerations to include special requirements for sensitive areas and certain industrial sectors. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) as amended by Directive 2006/21/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC and Directive 2013/30/EU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a framework of environmental liability based on the 'polluter-pays' principle, to prevent and remedy environmental damage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates to environmental damage caused by any of the occupational activities listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities; damage to protected species and natural habitats caused by any occupational activities other than those listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities, whenever the operator has been at fault or negligent. • Where environmental damage has not yet occurred but there is an imminent threat of such damage occurring, the operator shall, without delay, take the necessary preventive measures. • Where environmental damage has occurred the operator shall, without delay, inform the competent authority of all relevant aspects of the situation and take all practicable steps to immediately control, contain, remove or otherwise manage the relevant contaminants and/or any other damage factors in order to limit or to prevent further environmental damage and adverse effects on human health or further impairment of services and the necessary remedial measures, in accordance with Article 7. • The operator shall bear the costs for the preventive and remedial actions taken pursuant to this Directive. • The competent authority shall be entitled to initiate cost recovery proceedings against the operator. • The operator may be required to provide financial security guarantees to ensure their responsibilities under the directive are met. • The Environmental Liability Directive has been amended through a number of Directives that are not of significant relevance to the SEA for the Guidelines. Implementation of the Environmental Liability Directive is contributed towards by a Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) 'Making the Environmental Liability Directive more fit for purpose' that is updated annually to changing developments, growing knowledge and new needs. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta 1992)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The aim of this (revised) Convention is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study. 	<p>The Valletta Convention makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It also deals with public access, in particular to archaeological sites, and educational actions to be undertaken to develop public awareness of the value of the archaeological heritage. It also constitutes an institutional framework for pan-European co-operation on the archaeological heritage, entailing a systematic exchange of experience and experts among the various States.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Convention of the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada 1995)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reinforcement and promotion of policies for protecting and enhancing the heritage within the territories of the parties. The affirmation of European solidarity with regard to the protection of the heritage and the fostering of practical co-operation between states and regions. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time. A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage. Emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal. Take the necessary steps to apply the provisions of this Convention concerning the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society. Greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European Landscape Convention 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The developments in agriculture, forestry, industrial and mineral production techniques, together with the practices followed in town and country planning, transport, networks, tourism and recreation, and at a more general level, changes in the world economy, have in many cases accelerated the transformation of landscapes. The Convention expresses a concern to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment. It aims to respond to the public's wish to enjoy high quality landscapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote protection, management and planning of landscapes. Organise European co-operation on landscape issues. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
The Seventh Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the European Community (2013-2020)	<p>It identifies three key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing 	<p>Four so called "enablers" will help Europe deliver on these objectives (goals):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better implementation of legislation. Better information by improving the knowledge base. More and wiser investment for environment and climate policy. Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies. <p>Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make the Union's cities more sustainable. To help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats)	<p>The convention has three main aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats to promote cooperation between states to give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species including endangered and vulnerable migratory species 	<p>The Parties under the convention recognise the intrinsic value of nature, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations, they also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to ensure the conservation of nature in their countries, paying particular attention to planning and development policies and pollution control. Look at implementing the Bern Convention in central Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. Take account of the potential impact on natural heritage by other policies. Promote education and information of the public, ensuring the need to conserve species is understood and acted upon. Develop an extensive number of species action plans, codes of conducts, and guidelines, at their own initiative or in co-operation with other organisations. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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Bali Road Map (2007)	<p>The overall goals of the project are twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase national capacity to co-ordinate ministerial views, participate in the UNFCCC process, and negotiate positions within the timeframe of the Bali Action Plan; and To assess investment and financial flows to address climate change for up to three key sectors and/or economic activities. 	<p>The Bali Action Plan is centred on four main building Blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mitigation adaptation technology financing 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Cancun Agreements (2010)	<p>Set of decisions taken at the COP 16 Conference in Cancun in 2010 which addresses a series of key issues in the fight against climate change. Cancun Agreements' main objectives cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation Transparency of actions Technology Finance Adaptation Forests Capacity building 	<p>Among the most prominent agreements is the establishment of a Green Climate Fund to transfer money from the developed to developing world to tackle the impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Doha Climate Gateway (2012)	<p>Set of decisions taken at the COP 18 meeting in Doha in 2012 which pave the way for a new agreement in Paris in 2015.</p>	<p>The following actions were committed to by governments at this conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set out a timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015 (to come into effect in 2020); Complete the work under Bali Action Plan and to focus on new completing new targets; Strengthen the aim to cut greenhouse gases and help vulnerable countries to adapt; Amend Kyoto Protocol to include a new commitment period for cutting down the greenhouse gases emissions; and Provide the financial and technology support and new institutions to allow clean energy investment and sustainable growth in developing countries. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU Common Agricultural Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve agricultural productivity, so that consumers have a stable supply of affordable food; and To ensure that EU farmers can make a reasonable living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring viable food production that will contribute to feeding the world's population, which is expected to rise considerably in the future; Climate change and sustainable management of natural resources; Looking after the countryside across the EU and keeping the rural economy alive. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU REACH Regulation (EC 1907/2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to improve the protection of human health and the environment through the better and earlier identification of the intrinsic properties of chemical substances. 	<p>The aims are achieved by applying REACH, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation; and Restriction of chemicals. <p>REACH also aims to enhance innovation and competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Stockholm Convention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibit and/or eliminate the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A to the Convention Restrict the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B to the Convention Reduce or eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C to the Convention Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To target additional POPs Other provisions of the Convention relate to the development of implementation plans, information exchange, public information, awareness and education, research, development and monitoring, technical assistance, financial resources and mechanisms, reporting, effectiveness evaluation and non-compliance 	of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Ramsar Convention	The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".	Under the "three pillars" of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards the wise use of all their wetlands; Designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and ensure their effective management; Cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
OSPAR Convention	The mission of OSPAR is to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health in the North-East Atlantic by preventing and eliminating pollution; by protecting the marine environment from the adverse effects of human activities; and by contributing to the sustainable use of the seas.	OSPAR's work is organised under six strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity and Ecosystem Strategy Eutrophication Strategy Hazardous Substances Strategy Offshore Industry Strategy Radioactive Substances Strategy Strategy for the Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme These six strategies fit together to underpin the ecosystem approach. For each strategy a programme of work is designed and implemented annually.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European 2020 Strategy for Growth	Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion. 	In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed; 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D; the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right); the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree; 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
UK Marine Policy Statement and the Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieving a sustainable marine economy Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society Living within environmental limits Promoting good governance Using sound science responsibly <p>UK Marine Policy Statement and the Draft Marine Plan for Northern provide the policy framework for both planning and marine licensing authorities in making their decisions.</p>	The MPS will facilitate and support the formulation of Marine Plans, ensuring that marine resources are used in a sustainable way in line with the high-level marine objectives and thereby: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote sustainable economic development; Enable the UK's move towards a low-carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects; Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and heritage assets; and Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Marine (Northern Ireland) Act 2013	Aims to provide for marine plans in relation to the Northern Ireland inshore region; to provide for marine conservation zones in that region; to make further provision in relation to marine licensing for certain electricity works in that region; and for connected purposes.	The Marine Act sets out a new framework for Northern Ireland's seas based on: a system of marine planning that will balance conservation, energy and resource needs; improved management for marine nature conservation and the streamlining of marine licensing for some electricity projects. The main provisions of the Act are outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marine Planning Nature Conservation Marine Licensing 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Northern Ireland)	Spatial strategy for the future development of Northern Ireland. Strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide public and private sectors.	Aims to provide long-term policy direction with a strategic spatial perspective.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NI Regional Landscape Character Assessment	In recognising the importance of sustaining local identity, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has commissioned Landscape Character Assessments of Northern Ireland from environmental consultants, which resulted in the identification of distinct character areas within Northern Ireland.	The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment provides a strategic overview of the landscape in Northern Ireland and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NI Regional Seascape Character Assessment	The aim of this study is to provide a strategic understanding of different areas of regional seascape character along the entire Northern Ireland coast, complementing similar assessments undertaken elsewhere in the UK. This will contribute to the aims of the European Landscape Convention through promoting the protection, management and planning of the seascape, and to support the European cooperation in landscape issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and map the different regional seascape character areas. Describe the key features and characteristics of each seascape character area. Relate the description of each seascape character area to its neighbouring terrestrial landscape character areas (as described in the NI Landscape Character Assessment, 2000) and take account of boundaries identified in relation to neighbouring seascape areas for the British and Irish coastline.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European 2020 Strategy for Growth	Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion. 	In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed; 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D; the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right); the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree; 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section Error! Reference source not found.) may arise. Implementation of the Strategy needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Parliament resolutions, including: The European Green Deal (EGD) 2020	The deal sets out how to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, boosting the economy, improving people's quality of life, caring for nature and leaving no one behind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It sets out a roadmap with actions to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, restore biodiversity and cut pollution. It outlines investments required, financing tools available and explains how to ensure a just and inclusive transition. In order to meet the goal to become climate neutral by 2050 as part of the European Green Deal, the European Union (EU) Commission proposed on 4th March 2020 to bring about the first European Climate Law and legally bind the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section Error! Reference source not found.) may arise. Implementation of the Strategy needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU (2020) Biodiversity Strategy	A long-term plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems across the European Union.	The Strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at sea, building upon existing Natura 2000 areas, with strict protection for areas of very high biodiversity and climate value. An EU Nature Restoration Plan - a series of concrete commitments and actions to restore degraded ecosystems across the EU by 2030, and manage them sustainably, addressing the key drivers of biodiversity loss. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section Error! Reference source not found.) may arise. Implementation of the Strategy needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A set of measures to enable the necessary transformative change: setting in motion a new, strengthened governance framework to ensure better implementation and track progress, improving knowledge, financing and investments and better respecting nature in public and business decision-making. Measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge, demonstrating that the EU is ready to lead by example towards the successful adoption of an ambitious global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity. 	plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU (2018) Clean Air Policy Package	Aims to substantially reduce air pollution across the EU.	The proposed strategy sets out objectives for reducing the health and environmental impacts of air pollution by 2030, and contains legislative proposals to implement stricter standards for emissions and air pollution.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section Error! Reference source not found.) may arise. Implementation of the Strategy needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Leaders Pledge for Nature 2020	Political leaders (including Taoiseach Michael Martin) participating in the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity in September 2020, representing 75 countries from all regions and the European Union, have committed to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030.	<p>As part of the UN Decade of Action to achieve sustainable development, the leaders commit to achieve the vision of Living in Harmony with Nature by 2050 by undertaking ten actions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting biodiversity, climate, and the environment at the heart of COVID-19 recovery strategies and investments as well as national and international development and cooperation; Developing and implementing an ambitious and transformational post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Kunming, China, as a key instrument to reach the SDGs; Raising ambition and aligning domestic climate policies with the Paris Agreement on climate change, with enhanced nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and long-term strategies consistent with the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement, and the objective of net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by mid-century, and strengthen climate resilience of economies and ecosystems; and <p>Mainstream biodiversity into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral policies at all levels, including in food production, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, energy, tourism, infrastructure and extractive industries, and trade and supply chains, as well as into key international agreements and processes.</p>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section Error! Reference source not found.) may arise. Implementation of the Strategy needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Level			
Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan (2021-2030)	<p>The National Planning Framework is the Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between.</p> <p>As part of Project Ireland 2040 the National Development Plan sets out the Government’s over-arching investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030. It is an ambitious plan that balances the significant demand for public investment across all sectors and regions of Ireland with a major focus on improving the delivery of infrastructure projects to ensure speed of delivery and value for money.</p>	<p>The National Planning Framework published alongside the National Development Plan yields ten National Strategic Outcomes as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Compact Growth Enhanced Regional Accessibility Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities Sustainable Mobility A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills High-Quality International Connectivity Enhanced Amenity and Heritage Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland [in preparation]	<p>The high-level strategic framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network.</p> <p>This new framework is the Department of Transport’s contribution to Project Ireland 2040, Government’s long-term strategy for accommodating population growth in a sustainable manner and making Ireland a better country for all of its people. It has been developed to ensure that our transport sectoral strategy is underpinned by and supports the achievement of the spatial objectives and National Strategic Objectives set out in the National Planning Framework.</p>	The draft framework establishes high-level investment priorities to efficiently and effectively address key transport challenges identified by the background analysis and to ensure that transport investment is aligned with and supports Government’s overarching spatial and climate change objectives, as articulated in the National Planning Framework and Climate Action Plan.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)	The core principal objectives of this Act are to amend the Planning Acts of 2000 – 2009 with specific regard given to supporting economic renewal and sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development, with certain exceptions, is subject to development control under the Planning Acts and the local authorities grant or refuse planning permission for development, including ones within protected areas. • There are, however, a range of exemptions from the planning system. Use of land for agriculture, peat extraction and afforestation, subject to certain thresholds, is generally exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission. • Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for a range of classes and large scale projects. • Under planning legislation, Development Plans must include mandatory objectives for the conservation of the natural heritage and for the conservation of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed. There are also discretionary powers to set objectives for the conservation of a variety of other elements of the natural heritage. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Climate Action Plan 2021	The Climate Action Plan 2021 provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting us on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021.	The Plan lists the actions needed to deliver on our climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy. It will be updated annually, including in 2022, to ensure alignment with Ireland’s legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Marine Planning Development Management Bill (General Scheme), 2019	The Bill seeks to establish in law a completely new regime for the maritime area which will replace existing State and development consent regimes and streamline arrangements on the basis of a single consent principle.	One of the aims is to establish a legal basis for An Bord Pleanála and coastal local authorities to consent to development in the maritime area, while retaining existing foreshore and planning permission provisions for aquaculture and sea fisheries related development. It will also provide for a single environmental impact assessment (EIA) and a single appropriate assessment (AA), where applicable.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011	The purpose of these Regulations is to transpose into Irish law Directive 2001/42/EC of 27 June 2001 (O.J. No. L 197, 21 July 2001) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment – commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regulations cover plans and programmes in all of the sectors listed in article 3(2) of the Directive except land-use planning. • These Regulations also amend certain provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide the statutory basis for the transposition of the Directive in respect of land-use planning. • Transposition in respect of the land-use planning sector is contained in the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004). 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011, as amended)	These Regulations provide a new for the implementation in Ireland of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on habitats and protection of wild fauna and flora (as amended) and for the implementation of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of wild birds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They provide, among other things, for: the appointment and functions of authorized officers; identification, classification and other procedures relative to the designation of Community sites. • The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the CJEU against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Waste Management Act 1996, as amended	To make provision in relation to the prevention, management and control of waste; to give effect to provisions of certain acts adopted by institutions of the European communities in respect of those matters; to amend the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, and to repeal certain enactments and to provide for related matters.	The Waste Management Act contains a number of key legal obligations, including requirements for waste management planning, waste collection and movement, the authorisation of waste facilities, measures to reduce the production of waste and/or promote its recovery.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards

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European Communities Environmental Objectives (FPM) Regulations 2009 (S.I 296 of 2009)	The purpose of these Regulations is to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for freshwater pearl mussels	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set environmental quality objectives for the habitats of the freshwater pearl mussel populations named in the First Schedule to these Regulations that are within the boundaries of a site notified in a candidate list of European sites, or designated as a Special Area of Conservation, under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94/1997). Require the production of sub-basin management plans with programmes of measures to achieve these objectives. Set out the duties of public authorities in respect of the sub-basin management plans and programmes of measure 	<p>– in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p> <p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I 9 of 2010), as amended (S.I. No. 366 of 2016)	To amend the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) to make further provision to implement Commission Directive 2014/80/EU of 20 June 2014 amending Annex II to Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration.	<p>The substances and threshold values set out in Schedule 5 to S.I. No. 9 of 2010 have been reviewed and amended where necessary, based on existing monitoring information and international guidelines on appropriate threshold values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part A of Schedule 6 has been amended to include changes to the rules governing the determination of background levels for the purposes of establishing threshold values for groundwater pollutants and indicators of pollution. Part B of Schedule 6 has been amended to include nitrites and phosphorus (total) / phosphates among the minimum list of pollutants and their indicators which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must consider when establishing threshold values Part C of Schedule 6 amends the information to be provided to the Minister by the EPA with regard to the pollutants and their indicators for which threshold values have been established 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 31 of 2014)	These Regulations, which give effect to Irelands 3rd Nitrates Action Programme, provide statutory support for good agricultural practice to protect waters against pollution from agricultural sources	<p>The Regulations include measures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periods when land application of fertilisers is prohibited Limits on the land application of fertilisers Storage requirements for livestock manure; and Monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures in terms of agricultural practice and impact on water quality. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 (and Amendment Bill 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Act to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy. The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2021 seeks to amend the principle Act of 2015 (outlined below) by reinforcing Ireland's transition to Net Zero and achieve its commitment to a climate neutral economy by no later than 2050. It establishes a legally binding framework with clear targets and commitments set in law, and ensure the necessary structures and processes are embedded on a statutory basis to ensure Ireland achieves its national, EU and international climate goals and obligations in the near and long term. 	<p>When considering a plan or framework, for approval, the Government shall endeavour to achieve the national transition objective within the period to which the objective relates and shall, in endeavouring to achieve that objective, ensure that such objective is achieved by the implementation of measures that are cost effective and shall, for that purpose, have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ultimate objective specified in Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change done at New York on 9 May 1992 and any mitigation commitment entered into by the European Union in response or otherwise in relation to that objective, The policy of the Government on climate change, Climate justice, Any existing obligation of the State under the law of the European Union or any international agreement referred to in section 2; and The most recent national greenhouse gas emissions inventory and projection of future greenhouse gas emissions, prepared by the Agency. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan (2018 – 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020 is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Plan provides a 'SDG Matrix' which identifies the responsible Government Departments for each of the 169 targets. It also includes a 'SDG Policy Map' indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets. 	<p>The Plan identifies four strategic priorities to guide implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness: raise public awareness of the SDGs; Participation: provide stakeholders opportunities to engage and contribute to follow-up and review processes, and further develop national implementation of the Goals; Support: encourage and support efforts of communities and organisations to contribute towards meeting the SDGs, and foster public participation; and Policy alignment: develop alignment of national policy with the SDGs and identify opportunities for policy coherence. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan (2016-2021)	€27 billion multi-annual Exchequer Capital Investment Plan, which is supported by a programme of capital investment in the wider State sector, and which over the period 2016 to 2021 will help to lay the foundations for continued growth in Ireland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Capital Plan reflects the Government's commitment to supporting strong and sustainable economic growth and raising welfare and living standards for all. It includes allocations for new projects across a number of key areas and funding to ensure that the present stock of national infrastructure is refreshed and maintained. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Aquaculture Acts 1997 to 2006 : (Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 1(3)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997 (23/1997) Fisheries and Foreshore (Amendment) Act 1998 (54/1998), ss. 2, 3 and 4 Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2001 (40/2001) Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 101 	The Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division ensures the efficient and effective management of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities.	The Strategic Objectives of the Aquaculture & Foreshore Management Division are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to develop and manage an efficient and effective regulatory framework in respect of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; to secure a fair financial return from the State's foreshore estate in the context of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; to progressively reduce arrears in the clearing of licence applications. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Foreshore Acts 1933 to 2011	The Foreshore Acts require that a lease or licence must be obtained from the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government for the carrying out of works or placing structures or material on, or for the occupation of or removal of material from, State-owned foreshore, which represents the greater part of the foreshore. Construction of permanent structures on privately owned foreshore also required the prior permission of the Minister under the Foreshore Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments on the foreshore require planning permission in addition to a Foreshore Lease/Licence/Permission. All Foreshore Leases, Licences and Permissions are without prejudice to the powers of the local planning authority. Applicants should, therefore, consult initially with the local planning authority regarding their proposal. In the case of developments on foreshore for, by or on behalf of a Local Authority where an EIS is required, applications should be made to An Bord Pleanála under Part XV, Planning and Development Act 2000. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF)	The NMPF details how marine activities will interact with each other in an ocean space that is under increasing spatial pressure, ensuring the sustainable use of Ireland's marine resources to 2040. The NMPF has been prepared with an ecosystem-based approach and informed by best available knowledge.	The National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) brings together all marine-based human activities for the first time, outlining the Government's vision, objectives and marine planning policies for each marine activity. The NMPF is intended as the marine equivalent to the National Planning Framework. This approach will enable the Government to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> set a clear direction for managing our seas clarify objectives and priorities direct decision makers, users and stakeholders towards strategic, planned, and efficient use of our marine resources 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea-Fisheries) Regulations 2013 (S.I. 290 of 2013)	These regulations have been drafted to implement the responsibilities of the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine in relation to sea fisheries in Natura 2000 sites, in accordance with the Habitats and Birds Directives as transposed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 3 provides for the submission of a Fisheries Natura Plan in relation to planned fisheries; Regulation 4 provides for a screening of a Fisheries Natura Plan to determine whether or not an appropriate assessment is required; Regulation 5 provides for an appropriate assessment of a Fisheries Natura Plan and also provides for public and statutory consultation; Regulation 6 provides for the Minister to make a determination to adopt a Fisheries Natura Plan. The Minister may amend, withdraw or revoke a plan; Regulation 7 provides for publication of the adopted Fisheries Natura Plan; Regulation 8 provides for a Risk Assessment of unplanned fisheries and also provides for public and statutory consultation on the assessment; Regulation 9 provides for the issue of a Natura Declaration to prohibit, restrict including restricting by permit, control, etc. of sea fishing activities; Regulation 10 provides for Natura Permits to be issued where required by Natura Declarations; and Regulations 11 to 31 deal with functions of authorised officers and related matters, offences, etc. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Seafood Operational Programme (20104-2020)	The Operational Programme (OP) supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in Ireland aims at achieving key national development priorities along with the EU's "Europe 2020" objectives. The OP supports the general reform of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the development of its Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) in Ireland.	The OP is organised around the following priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Union Priority 1 (UP1): €67 million (28% of the total allocation) aim at assuring the sustainable development of fishing activities, while protecting the marine environment 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan

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	<p>The OP strategy is designed around the Irish national priorities in the agri-food sector: 'Act Smart' by encouraging knowledge and innovation, 'Think Green' through a responsible and sustainable use of resources, 'Achieve Growth' in order to maintain and create jobs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union Priority 2 (UP2): €30 million (12% of the total allocation) will support the Irish National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture that aims at boosting the competitiveness of the aquaculture sector. • Union Priority 3 (UP3): €84.8 million (35.4% of the total allocation) will go towards compliance with CFP rules regarding control and data collection. • Union Priority 4 (UP4): €12 million (5% of the total allocation) will support local development initiatives — a substantial, eleven-fold increase compared to the 2007-2013 funding period. • Union Priority 5 (UP5): €33 million (13.8% of the total allocation) will go towards creating scale in the Irish marketing and processing sectors, starting from the base of very small-scale businesses. • Union Priority 6 (UP6): €10.6 million (4% of the total allocation) will be used on measures to improve the knowledge on the state of the marine environment and the level of protection of marine areas 	<p>needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth: An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland 2012</p>	<p>Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth is an Integrated Marine Plan (IMP), setting out a roadmap for the Government's vision, high-level goals and integrated actions across policy, governance and business to enable our marine potential to be realised. Implementation of this Plan will see Ireland evolve an integrated system of policy and programme planning for our marine affairs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable economic growth of marine/ maritime sectors; • Increase the contribution to the national GDP; • Deliver a business friendly yet robust governance, policy and planning framework; • Protect and conserve our rich marine biodiversity and ecosystems; • Manage our living and non-living resources in harmony with the ecosystem; • Implement and comply with environmental legislation; • Building on our maritime heritage, strengthen our maritime identity; • Increase our awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits; and • Engagement and participation by all. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Ireland's National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010 (Irish Government submission to the European Commission)</p>	<p>The National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) sets out the Government's strategic approach and concrete measures to deliver on Ireland's 16% target under Directive 2009/28/EC.</p>	<p>The NREAP sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Strategy for Renewable Energy (2012-2020)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government's overarching strategic objective is to make renewable energy an increasingly significant component of Ireland's energy supply by 2020, so that at a minimum it will achieve its legally binding 2020 target in the most cost efficient manner for consumers. • Of critical importance is the role which the renewable energy sector plays in job creation and economic activity as part of the Government's action plan for jobs. 	<p>This document sets out five strategic goals, reflecting the key dimensions of the renewable energy challenge to 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing on and offshore wind, • Building a sustainable bioenergy sector, • Fostering R&D in renewables such as wave & tidal, • Growing sustainable transport; and • Building out robust and efficient networks. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>National Climate Mitigation Plan 2017</p>	<p>The Plan represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the deep decarbonisation required in Ireland by mid-century in line with the Government's policy objectives.</p>	<p>The National Mitigation Plan focuses on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Action Policy Framework • Decarbonising Electricity Generation • Decarbonising the Built Environment • Decarbonising Transport • An Approach to Carbon Neutrality for Agriculture, Forest and Land Use Sectors 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (2014)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Policy Position provides a high-level policy direction for the adoption and implementation by Government of plans to enable the State to move to a low carbon economy by 2050. • Statutory authority for the plans is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. 	<p>National climate policy in Ireland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the threat of climate change for humanity; • Anticipates and supports mobilisation of a comprehensive international response to climate change, and global transition to a low-carbon future; • Recognises the challenges and opportunities of the broad transition agenda for society; and 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards</p>

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National Clean Air Strategy [in preparation]	The Clean Air Strategy will provide the strategic policy framework necessary to identify and promote integrated measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner air while delivering on wider national objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a National Strategy will provide a policy framework by which Ireland can develop the necessary policies and measures to comply with new and emerging EU legislation. • The Strategy should also help tackle climate change. • The Strategy will consider a wider range of national policies that are relevant to clean air policy such as transport, energy, home heating and agriculture. • In any discussion relating to clean air policy, the issue of people's health is paramount and this will be a strong theme of the Strategy. 	<p>– in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p> <p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Eirgrid's Grid25 Strategy and associated Grid25 Implementation Programme 2011 - 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eirgrid's mission is to develop, maintain and operate a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system for Ireland. • <i>"Our vision is of a grid developed to match future needs, so it can safely and reliably carry power all over the country to the major towns and cities and onwards to every home, farm and business where the electricity is consumed and so it can meet the needs of consumers and generators in a sustainable way."</i> 	Grid25, EirGrid's roadmap to uprate the electricity transmission grid by 2025, continues to be implemented so as to increase the capacity of the grid, to satisfy future demand, and to help Ireland meet its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable energy by 2020.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objective of this Strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenways users. • It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over the next 10 years with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Strategic Greenway network of national and regional routes, with a number of high-capacity flagship routes that can be extended and/or link with local Greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure; • Greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to Ireland and are regularly used by overseas visitors, domestic visitors and locals thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity; • Greenways that provide a substantially segregated off-road experience linking places of interest, recreation and leisure in areas with beautiful scenery of different types with plenty to see and do; and • Greenways that provide opportunities for the development of local businesses and economies, and • Greenways that are developed with all relevant stakeholders in line with an agreed code of practice. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Water Resources Plan [in preparation]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NWRP is a plan on how to provide a safe, secure and reliable water supply to customers for the next 25 years, without causing adverse impact on the environment. • The objective of the NWRP is to set out how we intend to maintain the supply and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term whilst minimising the impact on the environment. <p>The preparation of the NWRP has been divided into two phases, the combination of which will become the final NWRP. The NWRP Framework Plan (Phase 1) has now been adopted. Phase 2 of the NWRP (four Regional Water Resources Plans), currently in preparation, will address the needs across the 535 individual water supplies and identify the solutions to address these needs.</p>	<p>The key objectives of the plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify areas where there are current and future potential water supply shortfalls, taking into account normal and extreme weather conditions • Assess the current and future water demand from homes, businesses, farms, and industry • Consider the impacts of climate change on Ireland's water resources • Develop a drought plan advising measures to be taken before and during drought events • Develop a plan detailing how we deal with the material that is produced as a result of treating drinking water • Identify, develop and assess options to help meet potential shortfalls in water supplies • Assess the water resources available at a national level including lakes, rivers and groundwater 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development (2014-2020)	Vision: <i>"Aquaculture in RC is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable, with a developed infrastructure, strong human potentials and an organized market. The consumption of aquaculture products is equal or above EU average, while the technological development of the sector is among the best in the EU."</i>	<p>General development and growth objectives of marine and freshwater aquaculture (2014 – 2020):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the social, business and administrative environment for aquaculture development • Increase in the total production to 24,050 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability • Improvement of the perception and increase in the national consumption of National products 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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<p>Aquaculture Acts 1997 to 2006 (Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006), s. 1(3)) Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997 (23/1997) Fisheries and Foreshore (Amendment) Act 1998 (54/1998), ss. 2, 3 and 4 Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2001 (40/2001) Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (8/2006)</p>	<p>The Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division ensures the efficient and effective management of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities.</p>	<p>The Strategic Objectives of the Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to develop and manage an efficient and effective regulatory framework in respect of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; to secure a fair financial return from the State's foreshore estate in the context of Aquaculture licensing and Foreshore licensing in respect of Aquaculture and Sea Fishery related activities; <p>to progressively reduce arrears in the clearing of licence applications.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section Error! Reference source not found.) may arise. Implementation of the Strategy needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Construction 2020, A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction 2020 sets out a package of measures agreed by the Government and is aimed at stimulating activity in the building industry. The Strategy aims both to increase the capacity of the sector to create and maintain jobs, and to deliver a sustainable sector, operating at an appropriate level. It seeks to learn the lessons of the past and to ensure that the right structures and mechanisms are in place so that they are not repeated. 	<p>This Strategy therefore addresses issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic approach to the provision of housing, based on real and measured needs, with mechanisms in place to detect and act when things are going wrong; Continuing improvement of the planning process, striking the right balance between current and future requirements; The availability of financing for viable and worthwhile projects; Access to mortgage finance on reasonable and sustainable terms; Ensuring we have the tools we need to monitor and regulate the sector in a way that underpins public confidence and worker safety; Ensuring a fit for purpose sector supported by a highly skilled workforce achieving high quality and standards; and Ensuring opportunities are provided to unemployed former construction workers to contribute to the recovery of the sector. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall aim of this Strategy is to ensure that economy and society in Ireland can develop to their full potential within a well-protected environment, without compromising the quality of that environment, and with responsibility towards present and future generations and the wider international community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategy addresses all areas of Government policy, and of economic and societal activity, which impact on the environment. It seeks to re-orientate policies as necessary to ensure that the strong growth Ireland enjoys and seeks to maintain will be environmentally sustainable. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 and National Landscape Character Assessment (pending preparation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Landscape Strategy will be used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing the landscape while positively managing its change. It will provide a high-level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape by way of supporting actions. Landscape Strategy Vision: <i>"Our landscape reflects and embodies our cultural values and our shared natural heritage and contributes to the well-being of our society, environment and economy. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning."</i> 	<p>The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into the approach to sustainable development; Establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape; Provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of the landscape; Ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (EPA) 2014-2020 and new Draft National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2021-2027</p>	<p>This Plan sets out the priorities to be pursued over the next six years and beyond to improve the management of hazardous waste, taking into account the progress made since the previous plan and the waste policy and legislative changes that have occurred since the previous plan was published.</p> <p>Section 26 of the Waste Management Act 1996 as amended, sets out the overarching objectives for the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. In this context, the following objectives are included as priorities for the revised Plan period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste by industry and society generally; To maximise the collection of hazardous waste with a view to reducing the environmental and health impacts of any unregulated waste; To strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export; 	<p>The Environmental Protection Agency has a statutory responsibility to prepare National Hazardous Waste Management Plans. The National Hazardous Waste Management Plan for the period 2014-2020 was the third such national plan and had 27 recommendations with the following objectives: to prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste; to maximise the collection of hazardous waste; to strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export; and to minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management.</p> <p>The Environmental Protection Agency has prepared a revised National Hazardous Waste Management Plan for the period 2021 to 2027 (currently at draft stage).</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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Ministerial Guidelines such as Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and Flood Risk Management Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management. <p>The Department produces a range of guidelines designed to help planning authorities, An Bord Pleanála, developers and the general public and cover a wide range of issues amongst others, architectural heritage, child care facilities, landscape, quarries and residential density.</p>	<p>The Minister issues statutory guidelines under Section 28 of the Act which planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are obliged to have regard to in the performance of their planning functions.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
HSE Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025	<p>The vision is: <i>"A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility."</i></p>	<p>These four goals are interlinked, interdependent and mutually supportive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Our Sustainable Future: A framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012	<p>A medium to long term framework for advancing sustainable development and the green economy in Ireland. It identifies spatial planning as a key challenge for sustainable development and sets a series of measures to address these challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets out the challenges facing us and how we might address them in making sure that quality of life and general wellbeing can be improved and sustained in the decades to come. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020 (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines a policy for how a sustainable travel and transport system can be achieved. Sets out five key goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce overall travel demand. To maximise the efficiency of the transport network. To reduce reliance on fossil fuels. To reduce transport emissions. To improve accessibility to transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Others lower level aims include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce distance travelled by private car and encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in areas of employment and to encourage people to live in close proximity to places of employment ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Investing in our Future: A Strategic Framework for Investment in Land Transport (SFILT) – Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	<p>SFILT sets out a set of priorities to guide the allocation of the State's investment to best develop and manage Ireland's land transport network over the coming decades.</p>	<p>The three priorities stated in SFILT are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority 1: Achieve steady state maintenance (meaning that the maintenance and renewal of the existing transport system is at a sufficient level to maintain the system in an adequate condition); and Priority 2: Address urban congestion; and Priority 3: Maximise the value of the road network. <p>In delivering on the steady state maintenance objective set out in SFILT, the Plan includes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned replacement programme for the bus fleet operated under Public Service Obligation ("PSO") contracts; Tram refurbishment and asset renewal in the case of light rail; and To the extent within the Authority' remit, support for the operation of the existing rail network within the GDA. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework 2007 – 2020 (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> White paper setting out a framework for delivering a sustainable energy future in Ireland. Outlines strategic Goals for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security of Supply Sustainability of Energy 	<p>The underpinning Strategic Goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that electricity supply consistently meets demand Ensuring the physical security and reliability of gas supplies to Ireland Enhancing the diversity of fuels used for power generation 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Competitiveness of Energy Supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering electricity and gas to homes and businesses over efficient, reliable and secure networks • Creating a stable attractive environment for hydrocarbon exploration and production • Being prepared for energy supply disruptions 	needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2018 and forthcoming regional, local and sectoral adaptation plans (including marine)	NAF specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities in their administrative areas in order to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation under this Framework should seek to minimise costs and maximise the opportunities arising from climate change. • Adaptation actions range from building adaptive capacity (e.g., increasing awareness, sharing information and targeted training) through to policy and finance-based actions. • Adaptation actions must be risk based, informed by existing vulnerabilities of our society and systems and an understanding of projected climate change. • Adaptation actions taken to increase climate resilience must also consider impacts on other sectors and levels of governance 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Governments White Paper 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future' (2015 – 2030)	The White Paper sets out a vision and a framework to guide Irish energy policy between now and 2030. A complete energy policy update informed by the vision to transform Ireland into a low carbon society and economy by 2050.	2030 will represent a significant milestone, meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced GHG emissions from the energy sector by between 80% and 95% • Ensuring that secure supplies of competitive and affordable energy remain available to citizens and businesses. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Renewable Energy Action Plan (2010)	Sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.	Including Ireland's 16% target of gross final consumption to come from renewables by 2020.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland (2009 – 2020)	This is the second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan reviews the original 90 actions outlined in the first Plan and updates/renews/removes them as appropriate. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Wildlife Act of 1976 Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000	The act provides protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides protection for certain species, their habitats and important ecosystems • Give statutory protection to NHAs • Enhances wildlife species and their habitats • Includes more species for protection 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Actions for Biodiversity (2017-2021) Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan	Sets out strategic objectives, targets and actions to conserve and restore Ireland's biodiversity and to prevent and reduce the loss of biodiversity in Ireland and globally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To mainstream biodiversity in the decision-making process across all sectors. • To substantially strengthen the knowledge base for conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity. • To increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystems services. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside. To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the marine environment. To expand and improve on the management of protected areas and legally protected species. To substantially strengthen the effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services. 	<p>needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Broadband Plan (2012)	Sets out the strategy to deliver high speed broadband throughout Ireland.	<p>The Plan sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear statement of Government policy on the delivery of High-Speed Broadband. Specific targets for the delivery and rollout of high-speed broadband and the speeds to be delivered. The strategy and interventions that will underpin the successful implementation of these targets. A series of specific complementary measures to promote implementation of Government policy in this area. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets out comprehensive mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning process. Ensures flood risk is a key consideration in preparing land use plans and in the assessment of planning applications. Implementation of the Guidelines is through actions at national, regional, local authority and site-specific levels. Planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are required to have regard to the Guidelines in carrying out their functions under the Planning Acts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding. Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface water run-off. Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains. Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth. Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders. Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management. <p>The 2009 Flood Risk Management Guidelines were amended by Circular PL 2/2014 (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government) that provides advice on the use of OPW flood mapping in assessing planning applications and clarifies some advice from the 2009 Guidelines.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 722 of 2003)</p> <p>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 350 of 2014)</p> <p>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface waters) Regulations of 2009 (SI 272 of 2009)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transpose the Water Framework Directive into legislation. Outlines the general duty of public authorities in relation to water. Identifies the competent authorities in charge of water policy (amended to Irish Water in 2013) and gives EPA and the CER the authority to regulate and supervise their actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements River basin districts and characterisation of RBDs and River Basin Management Plans. Requires the public to be informed and consulted on the Plan and for progress reports to be published on RBDs. Implements a Register of protected areas, Classification systems and Monitoring programmes for water bodies. Allows the competent authority to recover the cost of damage/destruction of status of water body. Outlines environmental objectives and programme of measures and environmental quality standards for priority substances. Outlines criteria for assessment of groundwater. Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for surface water bodies. Outlines surface water quality standards. Establishes threshold values for the classification and protection of surface waters against pollution and deterioration in quality. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations of 2010 (SI 9 of 2010)	Transpose the requirements of the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC into Irish Legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for groundwater bodies of groundwater against pollution and deterioration in quality. Sets groundwater quality standards. Outlines threshold values for the classification and protection of groundwater. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Water Pollution Acts 1977 to 1990	The Water Pollution Acts allow Local Authorities the authority regulate and supervise actions relating to water in their division.	<p>The Water Pollution Acts enable local authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prosecute for water pollution offences. Attach appropriate pollution control conditions in the licensing of effluent discharges from industry, etc., made to waters. Issue notices ("section 12 notices") to farmers, etc., specifying measures to be taken within a prescribed period to prevent water pollution. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issue notices requiring a person to cease the pollution of waters and requiring the mitigation or remedying of any effects of the pollution in the manner and within the period specified in such notices; • Seek court orders, including High Court injunctions, to prevent, terminate, mitigate or remedy pollution/its effects. • Prepare water quality management plans for any waters in or adjoining their functional areas. 	and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<p>Water Services Act 2007</p> <p>Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012</p> <p>Water Services Act (No. 2) 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the water services infrastructure. • Outlines the responsibilities involved in delivering and managing water services. • Identifies the authority in charge of provision of water and wastewater supply. • Irish Water was given the responsibility of the provision of water and wastewater services in the amendment act during 2013, therefore these services are no longer the responsibility of the 34 Local Authorities in Ireland. 	<p>Key strategic objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring Irish Water delivers infrastructural projects that meet key public health, environmental and economic objectives in the water services sector. • Ensuring the provision of adequate water and sewerage services in the gateways and hubs listed in the National Spatial Strategy, and in other locations where services need to be enhanced. • Ensuring good quality drinking water is available to all consumers of public and group water supplies, in compliance with national and EU drinking water standards • Ensuring the provision of the remaining infrastructure needed to provide secondary wastewater treatment, for compliance with the requirements of the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<p>Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan (2014-2016)</p>	This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term.	<p>Six strategic objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet Customer Expectations. • Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply. • Provide Effective Management of Wastewater. • Protect and Enhance the Environment. • Support Social and Economic Growth. • Invest in the Future. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<p>Raised Bog SAC Management Plan and Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Areas</p>	Aims to meet nature conservation obligations while having regard to national and local economic, social and cultural needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the implications of management choices for water levels, quantity and quality are fully explored, understood and factored into policy making and land use planning. • Review the current raised bog NHA network in terms of its contribution to the national conservation objective for raised bog habitats and determine the most suitable sites to replace the losses of active raised bog habitat and high bog areas within the SAC network and to enhance the national network of NHAs. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<p>Agri-vision 2015 Action Plan</p>	Outlines the vision for agricultural industry to improve competitiveness and response to market demand while respecting and enhancing the environment	not applicable	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<p>Agri-Food Strategy 2030</p>	<p>This 10-year Strategy sets out four high-level "Missions" to be achieved in order to develop such a system in Ireland:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Climate Smart, Environmentally Sustainable Agri-Food Sector 2. Viable and Resilient Primary Producers with Enhanced Wellbeing 3. Food that is Safe, Nutritious and Appealing, Trusted and Valued at Home and Abroad 4. An Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Sector, driven by Technology and Talent 	Each of the Missions has a set of Goals which are underpinned by a series of Actions.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
<p>Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agri-environmental funding schemes aimed at rural development for the environmental enhancement and protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish best practice farming methods and production methods in order to protect landscapes and maximise conservation. • Protect biodiversity, endangered species of flora and fauna and wildlife habitats. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with

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Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS) Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GLAS is the new replacement for REPS and AEOS which are both expiring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure food is produced with the highest regard to the environment. Implement nutrient management plans and grassland management plans. Protect and maintain water bodies, wetlands and cultural heritage. 	others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Rural Development Programme	The National Rural Development Programme, prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, sets out a national programme based on the EU framework for rural development and prioritises improving the competitiveness of agriculture, improving the environment and improving the quality of life in rural areas	At a more detailed level, the programme also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports structural change at farm level including training young farmers and encouraging early retirement, support for restructuring, development and innovation; Aims to improve the environment, biodiversity and the amenity value of the countryside by support for land management through funds such as Natura 2000 payments etc.; and Aims to improve quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity through the implementation of local development strategies such as non-agricultural activities 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Forestry Programme (2014-2020)	Represents Ireland’s proposals for 100% State aid funding for a new Forestry Programme for the period 2014 – 2020.	Measures include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afforestation and Creation of Woodland NeighbourWood Scheme Forest Roads Reconstitution Scheme Woodland Improvement Scheme 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 3rd Cycle [in preparation]	This draft River Basin Management Plan sets out the measures that are necessary to protect and restore water quality in Ireland. The overall aim of the plan is to ensure that our natural waters are sustainably managed and that freshwater resources are protected so as to maintain and improve Ireland’s water environment.	The River Basin Management Plan sets out the measures necessary to protect and improve the quality of Ireland’s waters. These plans are prepared in 6-year cycles, during which a programme of measures must be implemented so as to achieve water quality objectives. Good water quality contributes to protecting human health by improving the quality of drinking water sources and bathing waters. UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 6 ‘ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all’ have been integrated into the measures and the governance arrangements for the proposed River Basin Management Plan.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Peatlands Strategy (2015-2025)	This Strategy aims to provide a long-term framework within which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution to the well-being of this and future generations.	Objectives of the Strategy include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give direction to Ireland’s approach to peatland management. To apply to all peatlands, including peat soils. To ensure that the relevant State authorities and state owned companies that influence such decisions contribute to meeting cross-cutting objectives and obligations in their policies and actions. To ensure that Ireland’s peatlands are sustainably managed so that their benefits can be enjoyed responsibly. To inform appropriate regulatory systems to facilitate good decision making in support of responsible use 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Flood Risk Management Plans arising from National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme	The national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme commenced in Ireland in 2011 and is being overseen by the Office of Public Works. The CFRAM Programme is intended to deliver on core components of the National Flood Policy, adopted in 2004, and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive.	CFRAM Studies have been undertaken for all River Basin Districts. The studies are focusing on areas known to have experienced flooding in the past and areas that may be subject to flooding in the future either due to development pressures or climate change. Flood Risk and Hazard mapping, including Flood Extent Mapping, was finalised in 2017. The final outputs from the studies are the CFRAM Plans, finalised in 2018. The Plans define the current and future flood risk in the River Basin Districts and set out how this risk can be managed.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Draft National Bioenergy Plan 2014 - 2020	The Draft Bioenergy Plan sets out a vision as follows:	Three high level goals, of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development are identified:	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan,

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	Bioenergy resources contributing to economic development and sustainable growth, generating jobs for citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To harness the market opportunities presented by bioenergy in order to achieve economic development, growth and jobs. To increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing bioenergy. To ensure that bioenergy developments do not adversely impact the environment and its living and non-living resources. 	programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCA) 2016	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTAS) 2017- 2030	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFV forecasts Electricity targets Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets Hydrogen targets Biofuels targets LPG targets Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025	The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan is an island-wide attempt to reverse declines in pollinating insects in order to ensure the sustainability of our food, avoid additional economic impacts on agriculture, and protect the health of the environment. The main objectives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making farmland, public land and private land in Ireland pollinator friendly; Raising awareness of pollinators and how to protect them; Managed pollinators – supporting beekeepers and growers; Expanding our knowledge of pollinators and pollination service; and Collecting evidence to track change and measure success. 	This voluntary Plan identified 81 actions, shared out between over 100 governmental and non-governmental organisations. A large focus of the Plan is to identify actions to improve the quality and amount of flower-rich habitat. Actions range from creating pollinator highways along our transport routes, to supporting pollinators on farmland, in gardens, businesses, and on public land.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)	Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten-year plan for the agri-food sector. It underlines the sector's unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.	Food Wise 2025 identifies ambitious and challenging growth projections for the industry over the next ten years including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% increase in exports to €19 billion. 70% increase in value added to €13 billion. 60% increase in primary production to €10 billion. The creation of 23,000 additional jobs all along the supply chain from producer level to high end value added product development. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines objectives and actions aimed at developing a strong cycle network in Ireland Sets out 19 specific objectives, and details the 109 actions, aimed at ensuring that a cycling culture is developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets a target where 10% of all journeys will be made by bike by 2020 Proposes the planning, infrastructure, communication, education and stakeholder participations measures required to implement the initiative 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport represents the first step in communicating our longer-term national vision for decarbonising transport by 2050, the cornerstone of which is our ambition that by 2030 all new cars and vans sold in Ireland will be zero-emissions capable. By 2030 it is envisaged that the movement in Ireland to electrically-fuelled cars and commuter rail will be well underway, with natural gas and biofuels developing as major alternatives in the freight and bus sectors. 	<p>This policy set out to achieve five key goals in transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce overall travel demand Maximise the efficiency of the transport network Reduce reliance on fossil fuels Reduce transport emissions Improve accessibility to transport <p>These goals remain the cornerstone of transport policy and are fully aligned to the objectives of this National Policy Framework.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021	<p>The Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021 sets out actions that the Tourism Leadership Group has identified as priorities to be progressed until 2021 in order to maintain sustainable growth in overseas tourism revenue and employment. Each action involves specific tourism stakeholders, both in the public and private sectors, all of whom we expect to proactively work towards the completion of actions within the specified timeframe.</p>	<p>The Plan contains 27 actions focusing on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Context Marketing Ireland as a Visitor Destination Enhancing the Visitor Experience Research in the Irish Tourism Sector Supporting Local Communities in Tourism Wider Government Policy International Context Co-ordination Structures 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Tourism Policy Statement: People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025	<p>The main goal of this policy statement is to have a vibrant, attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country; is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; helps promote a positive image of Ireland overseas, and is a sector in which people want to work.</p>	<p>The Tourism Policy Statement sets three headline targets to be achieved by 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseas tourism revenue of €5 billion per year net of inflation excluding carrier receipts; 250,000 people employed in tourism; and 10 million overseas visitors to Ireland per year. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Tourism Development and Innovation – A Strategy for Investment 2016-2022, (Fáilte Ireland, 2016)	<p>This strategy sets out the framework and mechanism for the delivery of investment to cities, towns, villages, communities and businesses across the country. It identifies priorities to support innovation in the sector to retain and grow the country's competitiveness in the marketplace. Its ultimate aim is to strengthen the appeal of Ireland for international visitors.</p>	<p>The objectives of the Tourism Development and Innovation Strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To successfully and consistently deliver a world class visitor experience; To support a tourism sector that is profitable and achieves sustainable levels of growth and delivers jobs; To facilitate communities to play an enhanced role in developing tourism in their locality, thereby strengthening and enriching local communities; and <p>To recognise, value and enhance Ireland's natural environment as the cornerstone of Irish tourism.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland	<p>The high-level strategic framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network. This new framework is the Department of Transport's contribution to Project Ireland 2040, Government's long-term strategy for accommodating population growth in a sustainable manner and making Ireland a better country for all of its people. It has been developed to ensure that our transport sectoral strategy is underpinned by and supports the achievement of the spatial objectives and National Strategic Objectives set out in the National Planning Framework.</p>	<p>The framework establishes high-level investment priorities to efficiently and effectively address key transport challenges identified by the background analysis and to ensure that transport investment is aligned with and supports Government's overarching spatial and climate change objectives, as articulated in the National Planning Framework and Climate Action Plan.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Strategy needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Regional/ County/Local Level			
Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032	<p>The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework.</p>	<p>The Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy includes provisions for its 10 constituent local authorities: Donegal County Council; Galway County Council; Galway City Council; Sligo County Council; Leitrim County Council; Cavan County Council; Monaghan County Council; Mayo County council; and Roscommon County Council.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and</p>

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Integrated Implementation Plan 2019-2024	The priorities in the Integrated Infrastructure Plan align with the objectives and priorities set out in the Greater Dublin Transport Strategy 2016-2035, focused on improving public and sustainable transport. While the bulk of the Plan relates solely to the Greater Dublin Area, certain areas such as public transport services and activities related to small public service vehicles are dealt with on a national basis.	The Implementation Plan identifies investment proposals for a number of areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus; • Light Rail; • Heavy Rail; • Integration Measures and Sustainable Transport Investment; • Integrated Service Plan; and • Integration and Accessibility. 	their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs	Management planning for nature conservation sites has a number of aims. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and evaluate the features of interest for a site • To set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest • To describe the site and its management • To identify issues (both positive and negative) that might influence the site • To set out appropriate strategies/management actions to achieve the objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs (i.e. sites within the Natura 2000 network) have to be set for the habitats and species for which the sites are selected. • These objectives are used when carrying out appropriate assessments for plans and projects that might impact on these sites. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Groundwater Protection Schemes	A Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidelines for the planning and licensing authorities in carrying out their functions, and a framework to assist in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.	A Groundwater Protection Scheme aims to maintain the quantity and quality of groundwater, and in some cases improve it, by applying a risk assessment-based approach to groundwater protection and sustainable development.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP)	The overarching vision for each LECP is: <i>“to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities”</i>	The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Land Use Plans, including Development Plans in force within the area to which the Plan relates: such as Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied) and Seven Strategic Towns LAP 2018-2024, and in adjoining planning authorities in Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline planning objectives for land use development (including transport objectives). • Strategic framework for planning and sustainable development including those set out in National Planning Framework and Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies. • Set out the policies and proposals to guide development in the specific Local Authority area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify future infrastructure, development and zoning required. • Protect and enhances amenities and environment. • Guide planning authority in assessing proposals. • Aim to guide development in the area and the amount of nature of the planned development. • Aim to promote sustainable development. • Provide for economic development and protect natural environmental, heritage. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Green Infrastructure Plans/Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes the maintenance and improvement of green infrastructure in an area. • Aims to protect and enhance biodiversity and habitats. 	not applicable	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and

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Landscape Character Assessments, including those prepared by Donegal County Council and Local Authorities in adjoining counties and in Northern Ireland	Characterises the geographical dimension of the landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the quality, value, sensitivity and capacity of the landscape area. Guide strategies and guidelines for the future development of the landscape. 	<p>their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p> <p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Connacht-Ulster Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021	The plan gives effect to national and EU waste policy, and address waste prevention and management (including generation, collection and treatment) over the period 2015-2021.	To manage wastes in a safe and compliant manner, a clear strategy, policies and actions are required.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Donegal County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023	The Noise Action Plans are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, Statutory Instrument 140 of 2006. These Regulations give effect to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. This Directive sets out a process for managing environmental noise in a consistent manner across the EU and the Noise Regulations set out the approach to meeting the requirements of the Directive in Ireland.	The purpose of this Action Plan is to endeavour to manage the existing noise environment and protect the future noise environment within the action planning area. Management of the existing noise environment may be achieved by prioritising areas for which further assessment and possible noise mitigation may be required. Protection of the future noise environment may be achieved by acoustical planning, which further incorporates noise into the planning process via measures such as land-use planning, development planning, sound insulation measures, traffic planning and control of environmental noise sources.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Donegal County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024	Climate Change Adaptation Strategies represent a proactive step by Local Authorities in the process of adaptation planning to build resilience and respond effectively to the threats posed by climate change.	<p>The Climate Change Adaptation Strategies takes on the role as the primary instrument at local level to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure a proper comprehension of the key risks and vulnerabilities of climate change; Bring forward the implementation of climate resilient actions in a planned and proactive manner; and Ensure that climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into all plans and policies and integrated into all operations and functions of County Council. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Fáilte Ireland plans, strategies etc. relating to the Wild Atlantic Way or other brands or initiatives, including the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme	Fáilte Ireland’s work includes preparing various plans and strategies for the Wild Atlantic Way and other brands and initiatives. These plans are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment. The vision for the Wild Atlantic Way brand is: To create a world class, sustainable and unmissable experience brand that engages and energises the visitor so that they become powerful advocates and leaves them wanting to return for more.	<p>Some of Fáilte Ireland’s plans and strategies include various projects relating to land use and infrastructural development, including those relating to development of land on land and the carrying out of land use activities. Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence.</p> <p>The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.</p>	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Any other plans and projects, or associated proposals	Various other plans and projects which are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment	Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence. The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 7.3) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and

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			their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Appendix III Fáilte Ireland published documents referenced in the DEDP/SEA Environmental Report

Contents of this Appendix:

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



WILD ATLANTIC WAY

SLÍ FHIÁIN AN ATLANTAIGH

Site Maintenance Guidelines

*for launching the
Wild Atlantic Way*



Fáilte Ireland

National Tourism Development Authority

the **paulhogarth** company



BRADY SHIPMAN MARTIN



INTRODUCTION

The *Wild Atlantic Way* will be the longest coastal driving attraction in the world, inviting greater tourism numbers to the west coast of Ireland from overseas tourist markets to explore this unique and varied, but wild landscape and seascape.

The Vision for the *Wild Atlantic Way* is to build on the existing international reputation of the West Coast of Ireland, and to develop an all encompassing World Class tourism product that will invite visitors to experience the unique wild and natural seascape and landscape of the Atlantic Coast.

It will be at once wild, natural, vibrant and authentic; unspoilt, intriguing, exciting and memorable. It will showcase the wild landscapes and seascapes, and the heritage and history of the places along it.

What does it look like?

The *Wild Atlantic Way* is a route along the Atlantic coast from Kinsale in County Cork to the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal, and will be fully developed over a period of 10 years.

Along the **Route** there are **159 Discovery Points**, large and small, each chosen for their potential to offer visitors an authentic and intimate experience of the natural and wild landscape and seascape. The majority of these Discovery Points are alongside or accesses by rural roads, with others being located within village and harbour settings. Additionally, there are **22 Embarkation Points** to island Discovery Points.

Each Discovery Point already has a parking facility in the form of a lay-by or car park, and these will serve as the **Arrival Points** for each site. A number of these Discovery Points will be further enhanced to improve the quality of the visitor experience, subject to compliance with the relevant environmental and habitats regulations.

At this stage, we want the help of the Local Authorities to prepare the Arrival Points to the Discovery Points for the launch of the Wild Atlantic Way in 2014.

This document provides guidelines as to the works that may be required to meet a minimum standard of presentation of these sites. The Guidelines also include an Ecological Method Statement which sets out the ecological standards and procedures which must be complied with by the Local Authorities in implementing any works.

In relation to the further development of the *Discovery Points*, a Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Appropriate Assessment are currently being undertaken of the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme and the findings of these assessments will determine the scope, extent and nature of future works, if any.

These Guidelines, therefore, relate only to the parking facilities at the *Discovery Points*.



OVERVIEW

The parking facilities are the **Arrival Points** for vehicles and provide pedestrian access for visitors to the *Wild Atlantic Way* site markers, and in the longer term, to the *Discovery Points*.

In some cases, the parking facility will incorporate the *Discovery Point*, either because there is no access from it into the surrounding landscape for a variety of reasons, or that it is considered that the best view of the surrounding landscape and seascape is to be had from the parking facility.

Parking facilities are not authentic landscape elements, however, it is important that they are well presented and do not compromise visitor experience of the natural landscape or seascape attraction.

By virtue of their remote and unsheltered locations, many are highly exposed to the excesses of wind and rain, and have endured damage to surfaces, boundaries and facilities - in some cases giving rise to a sense of dereliction. **Poor presentation and dereliction** will undermine visitor experience of the sites.

The purpose of this document is to assist Local Authorities in identifying appropriate repair works that **will enhance the presentation** and visitor experience of parking facilities. Included as part of these guidelines is an Ecological Method Statement. All remedial works undertaken by Local Authorities should comply with these Guidelines and the Ecological Method Statement.

All parking facilities should be effective, visually discreet, and compatible with their natural context.



SITE APPROACH AND ENTRANCE

The extent of what is considered the Site Approach will be determined by the particular characteristics and context of each site.

- In the case of lay-bys, the approach will probably only include the section of road alongside it and any defined entrance.
- For small car parks at the end of cul-de-sacs or along very minor roads, the approach may include some or all of the minor road linking to the main route, as well as any defined entrance.
- Car parks adjacent to settlements, beaches and harbours vary considerably in size, and may incorporate and service other facilities or attractions. In such cases, it may be appropriate that the approach be limited to the part of the car park where the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker is to be located.

Typical maintenance works may include:

- Repair of broken road surfaces;
- Repair of rutted road edges;
- Cutting roadside grass verges;
- Trimming of hedgerows;
- Weeding and removal of inappropriate species and dead planting;
- De-cluttering and removal of excessive or obsolete signage;
- Repairing or removing broken or inappropriate entrance structures including height restrictions;
- Removal or tidying up of derelict or abandoned equipment in adjoining fields or areas.



PARKING SURFACES

The site car parks, by virtue of their exposed locations, are prone to physical damage by high volumes of drainage, high winds and temperature change, giving rise to broken and uneven surfaces, potholes and surface drainage problems.

Parking surfaces should be **continuous, reasonably firm and durable, be free of tripping hazards**, incorporating free flowing drainage, and should also be **visually compatible** with the surrounding context.

Surface materials will typically include tar and chip or compacted stone for rural sites, whereas village and harbour sites might include bitumen macadam, tar and chip, and possibly concrete.

Hot rolled asphalt incorporating drainage channels, gullies, painted line markings, concrete edgings etc are not generally appropriate, but may be required at specific sites where higher volumes of visitors are anticipated.

Issues to Consider

- General:** Tidy up sites by removing **debris and gravel piles**, and repairing broken elements.
- Drainage:** Examine the effectiveness of the site drainage, by considering site levels and gradients, the source and direction of cross flows, and the optimum outlet routes. Determine free **flowing discreet drainage system** that will assist in ensuring the integrity of the parking surface and edges.
- Surfaces:** Repair any broken surfaces, potholes, sudden level changes or broken or rutted edges that may give rise to tripping and difficulties for buggies and wheelchair users. Use materials that are consistent with the local road, existing car park or surrounding landscape context as appropriate.
- Vegetation:** Grass and other vegetation can break through compact surfaces after a number of years. In some cases this might be considered part of the **character**; for others, it might be considered **derelict**. An assessment of what is appropriate must be made, and such vegetation either left alone, or the surface renewed to eliminate it. If renewing surfaces, the specification should consider the likelihood of vegetation re-establishing itself.

In general, **do not introduce urban traffic solutions** such as highly finished tarmac, paint marking, bollards, kerbs, barriers or traffic signage in areas that are distinctly rural and natural in appearance.



SITE BOUNDARIES

Boundaries for parking facilities vary significantly, and typically in rural settings include earth mounds, sod and stone banks, hedgerows, post and wire fencing etc., that are consistent with the wider landscape setting. In some cases, they may also include examples of local craftsmanship, such as dry stone walls.

Rural boundaries have an **inherent rugged and almost natural appearance**. Undulating lines, off-plumb fence posts, and weathered appearances are perfectly acceptable authentic elements of the landscape.

Repair and maintenance works for improved presentation may require:

- Earth mounds:** Any broken or eroded parts should be repaired to match the original.
- Sod and Stone banks:** Reinststate any damaged sections and remove overgrown or dead planting, or any inappropriate species;
- Hedgerows:** In general, annual trimming to maintain vistas should be undertaken outside bird nesting season, ideally in autumn to allow recovery in advance of the tourism season.
- Dry stone walls:** Repair any broken or fallen sections to match the original
- Post & wire fence:** Replace and missing or broken posts or sections of wire
- Sand dunes:** Natural features with marram grass should not need maintenance.

Inappropriate boundaries might include bollards (concrete, steel, painted timber), boulders, chain link fencing, painted timber fences, crash barriers, and walls made from blockwork, modular materials or concrete.

Where inappropriate boundary treatments are present they should be removed and replaced with an alternative that is consistent with the surrounding landscape context. If vehicular constraints are necessary for safety or for restricting access, consider solutions derived from typical appropriate boundaries.



SIGNAGE

Sites should be free of all unnecessary clutter, so as not to detract from the setting and visitor experience. Excesses of signage, for direction, safety, information, interpretation and other purposes needs to be rationalised and simplified.

In many instances, typical actions required that may include:

- Removal of abandoned or derelict signage and signage infrastructure;
- Removal of any urban or otherwise inappropriate signage structures;
- Removal of all commercial advertising;
- Repair and repainting of signage infrastructure.

Local Authorities, in consultation with Fáilte Ireland and other relevant bodies, should seek to remove other tourism and interpretive signage, and if appropriate and necessary, to seek to incorporate other information in conjunction with the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker.

The *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker will incorporate interpretation signage, the content for which will be agreed by means of a separate consultative process.

The objective is that upon arrival, the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker should be readily visible, not confused amongst other signage, and be close to the point of interaction (or departure to) the natural and wild experience identified with each site.



SITE FURNITURE

Where site furniture is provided, it is important that it is appropriate to the natural landscape setting, and well maintained so as to enhance visitor experience of the site.

Actions required may include:

- Removal, replacement or repair of any furniture that is broken or appears derelict;
- Removal of any urban style seating or other site furniture that detracts from the authenticity of the site;
- Removal of any makeshift site furniture such as picnic tables and seating made of block, brick or concrete structures;
- Removal of bins comprising re-used oil barrels and other containers, moulded plastic, and urban council type bins.

Picnic tables and seating should generally be understated, robust and well maintained. Easy access is important, including the approach route and base installation.

Bins, where provided, should be convenient without being prominent, and should generally be of naturally bleaching timber construction. Consideration should be given where possible to the provision of dual bins for rubbish and recycling.

Particular attention should be given to the most appropriate location for the *Wild Atlantic Way* site marker. It should be obvious at the point of arrival by car, and also at the point of leaving the car park behind and proceeding by foot to the natural setting, and in time, to the Discovery Point.

Local Communities, themselves part of the *Wild Atlantic Way* experience, may have implemented community projects and in some cases, memorial plaques. It is important that the Local Authority identifies such interventions and their origins, and undertakes any improvement works in a manner that engages with such community participation.



SITE FACILITIES

The majority of sites do not typically incorporate extensive visitor facilities. Toilet facilities are provided at many of the village, beach and harbour locations, either on a permanent or seasonal basis. In addition, some of the parking facilities double as the location for community recycling facilities.

Actions required:

Toilet Blocks

Ensure toilet blocks in use are properly presented and maintained, internally and externally, so as not to undermine visitor experience;

Some sites incorporate disused and derelict toilet blocks. Where there is a demand, these should be refurbished and well presented. Otherwise, derelict toilet facilities should be demolished and their sites reinstated.

Temporary Toilets

Portaloos, whether temporary or permanent, are substantially below any international or local visitor expectation and should be removed.

Where there is a demand for toilet facilities, consideration should be given to the provision of proper facilities.

In exceptional circumstances, if temporary facilities are provided, they should always be fully screened by timber panelling and hedgerows.

Recycling:

Consider possible alternative sites

Ensure they are located out of sight of visitors;

Provide screening, perhaps using timber panels and hedgerow surrounds





SITE LIGHTING

The majority of sites are distinctly rural in character with the exception of those located in villages and harbours. In this regard, sites should have no lighting provided as frequently, the dusk, dawn or night time experience of the seascape and skyline is part of the experience.

Inappropriate lighting installations should be removed.

In village, harbour or promenade locations, lighting may be a reasonable expectation and appropriate. Local Authorities should ensure that such fittings and illumination levels are suitable to the location. Bollard lighting might be considered a good alternative, perhaps in conjunction with lamp standards, to provide suitable wayfinding lighting without compromising the village or harbour character.

SOFT LANDSCAPING

In general, vegetation at sites in the form of indigenous hedgerows, shrubs, grass, marram grass and seasonal flowers is entirely appropriate.

Any vegetation that is dead, not indigenous, or inconsistent with the local landscape context, should be removed and replaced as appropriate in order to reinforce the authenticity of sites.

SUSTAINABILITY

The authenticity of the wild and natural environments being showcased along the *Wild Atlantic Way* is an essential part of the experience. In this regard, sites should be maintained and repaired in a sustainable manner, using, as appropriate, locally sourced materials and indigenous planting, as well as management techniques that are environmentally responsible. Particular regard should be given to safeguarding ecological characteristics, including flora and fauna, and the protection of the natural environments.





MAINTENANCE & SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

All sites that are brought up to an acceptable standard will be awarded a *Wild Atlantic Way* site markers and an interpretative panel, both of which will be placed in a suitable location at the Arrival Point. The high quality presentation of the sites however, will be an ongoing requirement, in order to maximise visitor experience and match expectations.

Fáilte Ireland will require a Service Level Agreement for each site with the relevant Local Authority.

This will serve as a contract between Fáilte Ireland and the Local Authority to ensure that investment in the sites now will continue to be effective for the *Wild Atlantic Way*.

What will the Service Level Agreement include?

Following the identification and agreement of the scope of works required for each site at this stage, a site specific Service Level Agreement will also be prepared. In essence, the Service Level Agreement will seek to ensure that maintenance and improvement works undertaken in the short term are kept at an acceptable standard by the Local Authority into the future.

Typically, they are likely to include:

- Periodic reporting on site condition, including photographs
- Defined management regimes and programmes
- Sites to be kept clean and tidy
- Bins to be emptied and any loose rubbish picked up
- Vegetation to have scheduled seasonal management plans
- Signage is kept clear and well presented, and unauthorised signage or advertisements removed
- Any painted structures should be re-painted as required to maintain good presentation
- Toilet facilities, where provided, are kept clean and stocked with necessary supplies
- Lighting, if appropriate, is maintained in full working order
- Site furniture is kept in good condition
- Parking surfaces to be maintained in good order
- Items that are broken, including by vandalism, are repaired quickly
- Graffiti is removed

Local Authorities will be required to commit to allocating appropriate resources to ensure that the appropriate standard is maintained.



ECOLOGICAL METHOD STATEMENT

1.1 Introduction

All projects must be undertaken in accordance with the Wild Atlantic Way candidate Discovery Points Remedial Works Guidelines, including this Ecological Method Statement, and in accordance with the requirements of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

The purpose of the Ecological Method Statement is to identify what ecological control methods need to be specified to avoid adverse ecological effects arising from remedial works. All projects must comply with all planning, local authority and other statutory requirements both during and after the construction phase of the Project.

Remedial works are proposed at a number of sites. The works vary in scale and are specific to the individual sites and incorporate a combination of the proposed works outlined on Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Proposed Works for Wild Atlantic Way candidate Discovery Points

Proposed works
Extend surfacing in car park
Enlargement of car park/lay-by
Provision of footpath
Provision of site amenities e.g. toilet block, painting, seating
Provide Wild Atlantic Way site marker
Lay-by reshaping
Removal/replacement of bollards
Extension of timber boardwalks to create access locations within car park to boardwalks
Proposed Management Activities
Road repairs (e.g. pot holes)
Repair stone walls, fencing, concrete posts, and furniture
Repair surfacing in car park
Removal of vegetation, tree and hedgerow cutting
Repair and maintain verge around car park and along access road
Rationalise existing information signage, removal of existing barriers, general tidy up of area
Undertake maintenance of grassed amenity areas
Maintenance of site amenities e.g. toilet block, painting, seating
Repair works to paths, slipways, kerbs, steps, etc. due to storm damage
Reinstate rock armour
Drainage clearance works

The locations of these sites are often within areas of high ecological sensitivity and therefore it will be necessary to consider the potential effects of such works on the natural environment. Depending on the site and the specific complexities, the works could potentially give rise to the following adverse ecological effects:

- Habitat loss and disturbance
- Disturbance of species
- Introduction and spread of invasive alien species.
- Increased runoff of silt and pollutants to surrounding aquatic ecosystems, which could impact on aquatic habitats and species

1.2 Ecological Control Measures

A number of Ecological Control Measures are to be integrated into the design of each site. The Ecological Control Measures have been detailed and tailored by giving due consideration to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the scale of works proposed. Particular measures (see Table 1.2 below) are listed against each type of works being proposed for each site. It will be necessary for the Local Authority to specify that, when planning works at individual sites, the measures are adhered to and appropriately incorporated into the construction approach. Site specific detail on how these measures will be incorporated into the construction design will vary depending on the characteristics of each site and will need to be considered prior to the commencement of construction.

Table 1.2 Ecological Control Measures

No.	Description of wording to be included in Works Specification
G1	<p>All rubbish, debris and other waste material shall be segregated to prevent contamination, stored appropriately and covered where required. Removal of waste materials from site shall be undertaken by an approved contractor for treatment/disposal.</p> <p>Hazardous waste material shall be stored separately from other inert waste materials and kept covered in an appropriate area/container(s) to ensure that the material does not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network materials. The hazardous waste materials shall be removed from site by an approved contractor for treatment at a licenced facility - as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works.</p> <p>Particular care shall be taken in the removal of stockpiles of material such as gravel and chippings. (Such stockpiles are frequently sources of non-native invasive plants, such as Japanese knotweed). Disposal of contaminated material may require transport to an approved, licensed facility.</p>
G2	<p>All rubbish, debris and other waste material shall be removed in such a manner as to ensure that none of the material is contaminated and/or released inadvertently to watercourses and other sensitive ecological habitats.</p>
G3	<p>Prior to removal, all vegetation shall be checked by the Ecological Clerk of Works to ensure that it is free of non-native invasive species, such as Japanese knotweed. Should any such species be encountered, the area shall be treated as directed by expert advice on the management of invasive species.</p>
G4	<p>Works involving the removal or clearing of vegetation that would have any impacts on nesting birds shall be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (i.e. outside the period 1st March to 31st August).</p> <p>In addition, the possible presence of roosting bats shall be considered prior to the undertaking any works that may disturb the roosts. Any further safeguards shall be included and provided for subject to the supervision of the Ecological Clerk of Works</p>
G5	<p>Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be stored on-site in a secure, dry and contained area and isolated from drainage connections to any existing surface water drainage network</p>

No.	Description of wording to be included in Works Specification
G6	Should they be required, all hazardous substances, such as fuels, oils, cement and concrete products, shall be used in a manner that ensures that contamination of other materials does not occur and that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network
G7	Where possible, machinery shall only operate from existing parking or built surfaces, and shall not enter any sensitive or designated ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G8	All resurfacing works shall be undertaken within the existing or formerly paved areas
G9	All resurfacing and other minor construction or demolition works (including removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables) should be undertaken in a manner that ensures that no materials can inadvertently enter any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat, and in a manner that ensures there are no impacts on fauna such as birds and bats – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G10	Prior to use, resurfacing materials, including hardcore and sub-surface fill material will be stored in a manner that ensures that they do not inadvertently enter any existing surface water drainage network, or any sensitive ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G11	All timber to be used in works shall be sustainably sourced
G12	<p>Works to define boundary edges shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat on the natural environment – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works and shall consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed low earth bunds shall be placed within the existing parking or built surface areas. <input type="checkbox"/> All material used, including rock, soil, seed and sods shall be sustainably sourced and appropriate to the setting
G13	Removal and consolidation of existing features, such as signage, litter bins, picnic tables shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any watercourse or sensitive ecological habitat.
G14	Works to provide a natural surface to bare areas shall be undertaken in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on the natural environment. All material used, including soil, seed and sods shall be sustainably sourced and appropriate to the setting.
G15	Where possible, site markers shall be placed within existing hard standing areas and installed in a manner that ensures that there are no impacts on any sensitive or designated ecological habitat – as directed by the Ecological Clerk of Works
G17	An Ecological Clerk of Works shall be retained to advise on and monitor works associated with construction, demolition, resurfacing and/or drainage

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1.3 Advisory Measures

Advisory Measures, in addition to the requirements to comply with all planning, local authority and other statutory requirements both during and after the construction phase of the Project are detailed in Table 1.3 below.

Table 1.3 Advisory Measures

No.	Description
<p>1. Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network</p>	<p>Contribute as appropriate towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Ramsar Sites, Salmonid Waters and Wicklow National Park.</p> <p>The protection of natural heritage and biodiversity, including European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network, will be supported in accordance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)¹, the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)², the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)³, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC). • National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976⁴, the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008⁵ and the Flora Protection Order 1999. • National policy guidelines, including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010. • Catchment and water resource management Plans. • Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: and Ireland’s National Biodiversity Plan; • Ireland’s Environment 2012 (EPA, 2012), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report’s goals and challenges.

¹ Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive.

² Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur)

³ Including protected species and natural habitats

⁴ Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

⁵ Including protected species and natural habitats

No.	Description
<p>2. Appropriate Assessment</p>	<p>All projects will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence and an Appropriate Assessment report to the relevant level of detail, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or 2. The project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or 3. The project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000. <p>The methodology followed by the Appropriate Assessment should follow, as relevant and appropriate, that outlined in DEHLG (2009) <i>Appropriate Assessment of Plans & Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities</i>.</p>

No.	Description
3. AA and Exemptions	<p>Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42). A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application to An Bord Pleanála is required.</p> <p>If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought⁶. If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.</p> <p>Developments or works by other groups or individuals may require planning permission or, if not, may require Ministerial consent in European sites. Local authorities are likely to be responsible for deciding whether there are restrictions on exemptions in the case of exempted development by a group or individual.</p>
4. Environmental Control Measures	<p>A number of Environmental Control Measures have been integrated into the design of each site. The Measures have been detailed and tailored by giving due consideration to the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the scale of works proposed. These measures should be taken into account by any Appropriate Assessments and are part of the design and are not mitigation.</p>
5. Protection of Natura 2000 Sites	<p>No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects⁷).</p>
6. Coastal Focus	<p>Works undertaken in coastal areas will be in accordance with best practice and support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats. Protect, enhance and conserve the beaches from inappropriate development. Facilitate and Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone.</p>
7. Biodiversity and Ecological Networks	<p>Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p>

⁶ As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.

⁷ Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

- a) no alternative solution available,
- b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and
- c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

No.	Description
8. Waters	Protect the water resources, including rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, coastal waters and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU <i>Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC)</i> , the <i>European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended)</i> , the <i>North Western International</i> , the <i>Western</i> , the <i>Shannon International</i> and the <i>South Western River Basin Management Plans 2009-2015</i> (or any such plans that may supersede same) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same).
9. Non-Designated Sites	Recognise that nature conservation is not just confined to designated sites and acknowledge the need to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve biological diversity.
10. Non-native invasive species	Support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.
11. Environmental Assessment	Ensure, as appropriate, that plans, programmes and projects comply with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) - and relevant transposing Regulations.
12. Cumulative/In-combination effects	Any new development that could interact with projects for remedial works would have to comply with the provisions contained in relevant land use and other sectorial plans e.g. Development Plans, River Basin Management Plans. These provisions have been subject to and informed by Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment which have considered in-combination effects. With respect to events (such as a vehicle collision) that are not reasonably foreseeable, contingency plans and procedures are already in place at various levels e.g. emergency plans, local response arrangements. As part of the wider Wild Atlantic Way project, environmental monitoring is being coordinated at a number of levels – this includes monitoring related to habitats.
13. Works to be carried out at candidate Discovery Points and potential impacts	The methodology for the incorporation of environmental control measures will require consideration at project level for each site to account for individual complexities with regards to the sensitivities and layout of the individual site.



WILD ATLANTIC WAY

SLÍ FHIÁIN AN ATLANTAIGH

Appendix 6

'Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others'

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The SEA which has been undertaken for the Operational Programme, the findings of which have been informed by the Appropriate Assessment (AA) and are presented in an SEA Environmental Report which accompanies Operational Programme, has resulted in the integration of this Appendix into the Operational Programme in order to facilitate environmental protection and sustainable development at lower levels of decision making.

This appendix includes various provisions with which local authorities and others will demonstrate compliance at lower levels of decision making in order to get funding. These decision making processes will include project level Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and AA as appropriate.

Proposals for development must be screened for the need to undertake AA as per the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5, Section 42).

A local authority is unlikely to carry out an AA of their own development as the competent authority in such instances is likely to be An Bord Pleanála. A local authority must screen proposed developments for AA to determine whether a Section 177AE application to An Bord Pleanála is required.

If proposals are screened out then planning exemptions are not lost. If a Stage 2 AA is required then planning exemptions are lost and planning permission must be sought¹. If a local authority is applying for the permission and Stage 2 AA is required, then the application must go to An Bord Pleanála.

Developments or works by other groups or individuals may require planning permission or, if not, may require Ministerial consent in European sites. Local authorities are likely to be responsible for deciding whether there are restrictions on exemptions in the case of exempted development by a group or individual.

¹ As per Part I, Section 4 (4) of the Planning Act 2000 as amended states that [Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (i), (ia) and (l) of subsection (1) and any regulations under subsection (2)]: development shall not be exempted development if an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment of the development is required.

Topic ²	Requirement ³
All	<p>Regulatory framework for environmental protection and management</p> <p>Local authorities and others shall cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. Local authorities and others will demonstrate, as appropriate, that plans, programmes and projects comply with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) – and relevant transposing Regulations.</p>
All	<p>Information to be considered by local authorities and others at lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment</p> <p>Lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment by local authorities and others, as relevant, should consider the sensitivities identified in Section 4 of the SEA Environmental Report, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •! Candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas; •! Features of the landscape that provide linkages/connectivity to designated sites (e.g. watercourses, areas of semi-natural habitat such as linear woodlands etc) •! Salmonid Waters; •! Shellfish Waters; •! Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; •! Nature Reserves; •! Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas; •! Areas likely to contain a habitat listed in annex 1 of the Habitats Directive; •! Entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and Zones of Archaeological Potential; •! Entries to the Record of Protected Structures; •! Un-designated sites of importance to wintering or breeding bird species of conservation concern; •! Architectural Conservation Areas; and •! Relevant landscape designations.
All	<p>Construction and Environmental Management Plan</p> <p>Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMPs) shall be prepared in advance of the construction of larger projects and implemented throughout. Such plans shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures indicated in this Appendix to the Operational Programme and any lower tier Environmental Impact Statement or Appropriate Assessment. CEMPs typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. location of the sites and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse, b. location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities, c. details of site security fencing and hoardings, d. details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction, e. details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage, f. measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network, g. measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris, h. alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public right of way during the course of site development works, i. details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels, j. containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater, k. disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil, l. a water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains, m. details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan. n. if peat is encountered - a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan. o. measures adopted during construction to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed). p. appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases.
All	<p>Maintenance Plan</p> <p>Lower tier assessments should examine the need for Maintenance Plans informed by environmental considerations to be prepared and implemented.</p>
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	<p>Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network</p> <p>Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of designated ecological sites including candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); UNESCO World Heritage and UNESCO Biosphere sites; Ramsar Sites; Salmonid Waters; Shellfish Waters; Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; Flora Protection Order sites; Wildlife Sites (including Nature Reserves); Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas; Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs); Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979) ; and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).</p>

² The SEA Directive identifies a number of environmental topics which must be considered in the assessments being undertaken for plans and programmes. These topics are listed in this column and comprise biodiversity and flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape.

³ The provisions listed under this column are the requirements which the local authorities and others will have to comply with in order to get funding.

	<p>Local authorities and others shall demonstrate compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including the following and any updated/superseding documents):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •! EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)⁴, the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)⁵, the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)⁶, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC). •! National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976⁷, the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008⁸ and the Flora Protection Order 1999. •! National policy guidelines (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same), including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010. •! Catchment and water resource management Plans, including River Basin District Management Plans 2009-2015 (including any superseding versions of same). •! Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: Ireland's 2nd National Biodiversity Plan (including any superseding version of same). •! Ireland's Environment 2014 (EPA, 2014, including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.
	<p>Appropriate Assessment</p> <p>All projects and plans arising from this programme will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.! The Plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or 2.! The Plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or 3.! The Plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.
	<p>Protection of Natura 2000 Sites</p> <p>No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this programme (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects⁹).</p>
	<p>NPWS & Integrated Management Plans</p> <p>Regarding, integrated management plans, Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for Special Area of Conservation involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans. The NPWS's current priority is to identify site specific conservation objectives; management plans may be considered after this is done.</p> <p>Where Integrated Management Plans are being prepared for all Natura sites (or parts thereof), Fáilte Ireland and local authorities shall engage with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Operational Programme and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations and with special regard to local communities.</p>

⁴ Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur). Note that the NPWS provide sensitive areas mapping for Freshwater Pearl Mussels which are listed under Annex II of the Directive.

⁵ Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur).

⁶ Including protected species and natural habitats.

⁷ Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

⁸ Including protected species and natural habitats.

⁹ Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

a) no alternative solution available,

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

c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

	<p>Coastal Zone Management Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that works will be undertaken in accordance with best practice and local authorities and others shall, as appropriate: support measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats; and facilitate an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and projection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone.</p> <p>Biodiversity and Ecological Networks Local authorities and others shall demonstrate, as appropriate, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>Protection of Riparian Zone and Waterbodies and Watercourses Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that waterbodies and watercourses are protected from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in riverine, wetland and coastal areas, as appropriate.</p> <p>Non-Designated Sites Local authorities and others shall demonstrate the appropriate protection of non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve the biological diversity.</p> <p>Non-native invasive species Local authorities and others shall support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water.</p>
Population and human health	<p>Human Health Local authorities and others shall assess proposals for development in terms of, inter alia, potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, local authorities and others shall ensure the introduction of mitigation measures in order to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level.</p>
Soil	<p>Soil Protection and Contamination Local authorities and others shall ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.</p> <p>Areas of geological interest Local authorities and others shall demonstrate protection and maintenance of the character, integrity and conservation value of features or areas of geological interest.</p>
Water	<p>Water Framework Directive and associated legislation Local authorities and others shall contribute towards, as appropriate, the protection of existing and potential water resources, and their use by humans and wildlife, including rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, coastal waters and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009), the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same). Local authorities and others shall support the application and implementation of a catchment planning and management approach to development and conservation, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage System techniques for new development.</p> <p>River Basin Management Plan Local authorities and others shall support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the various River Basin Management Plans 2009 – 2015, and associated Programmes of Measures, or any such plans that may supersede same during the lifetime of the Operational Programme, as well as relevant recommendations contained in the Water Quality in Ireland 2007 – 2009 (EPA, 2011, and any updated/superseding document). Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that proposals for development would not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands and coastal waters. Also local authorities and others shall have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 which provides guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>Bathing Water Local authorities and others shall contribute towards the achievement of the requirements of the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008) and EU Mandatory Values, as a minimum, and EU Guide Values, where possible.</p> <p>Flood Risk Management Guidelines Local authorities and others shall support, as appropriate, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC), the Flood Risk Regulations (SI No. 122 of 2010), the DEHLG/OPW publication <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines</i> (2009) (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same) and relevant outputs of the Catchment and Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS).</p> <p>Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) Local authorities and others shall ensure that new development is adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems as appropriate.</p>
Air and Climatic	<p>Infrastructure for Walking, Cycling and Water-based activities Local Authorities and others shall work with Fáilte Ireland, the National Trails Office, Coillte, the</p>

Factors	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking, cycling and water-based activities along the Wild Atlantic Way.
Material Assets	<p>Construction Waste Local authorities and others shall demonstrate that all waste arising during construction phase will be managed and disposed of in a way that ensures the provisions of the Waste Management Acts and regulations and Regional Waste Management Plans. Construction Waste Management Plans will be implemented by local authorities and others to minimise waste and ensure correct handling and disposal of construction waste streams in accordance with the Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment, July 2006.</p>
	<p>Waste Creation Local authorities and others shall support the minimisation of waste creation and promote a practice of reduce, reuse and recycle where possible.</p>
	<p>Waste Disposal Local authorities and others shall safeguard the environment by seeking to ensure that residual waste is disposed of appropriately.</p>
	<p>Irish Water Local authorities and others shall co-operate with and support, as relevant and appropriate, Irish Water in its new role as the lead authority for water services.</p>
Cultural Heritage	<p>Archaeological Heritage Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and sympathetic enhancement of archaeological heritage, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act, 1930 (as amended).</p>
	<p>Protection of Archaeological Sites Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of archaeological sites and monuments and their settings, archaeological objects and underwater archaeological sites that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, in the ownership/guardianship of the State, or that are subject of Preservation Orders or have been registered in the Register of Historic Monuments. Contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of archaeological sites, which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.</p>
	<p>Consultation Local authorities and others shall consult with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to proposed developments adjoining archaeological sites.</p>
	<p>Underwater Archaeological Sites Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and preservation of underwater archaeological sites in riverine, intertidal and sub-tidal locations.</p>
	<p>Architectural Heritage Local authorities and others shall help to ensure the appropriate protection of architectural heritage by complying, as appropriate, with the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to architectural heritage and the policy guidance contained in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 (and any updated/superseding document).</p>
Landscape	<p>Landscape Designations Local authorities and others shall contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of county and local level landscape designations from incompatible developments. Proposals for development that have the potential to significantly adversely impact upon these designations shall be accompanied by an assessment of the potential landscape character and visual impacts of the proposed development - demonstrating that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation. Such assessments should be prepared having regard to the relevant aspects of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013 Landscape Institute).</p>
	<p>Coastal Areas and Seascapes Local authorities and others shall protect the character and visual potential of the coast and conserve the character and quality of seascapes.</p>