



CONSULTANTS IN ENGINEERING,
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE &
PLANNING

LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement

Prepared for:
Wicklow County Council



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Abstract: Fehily Timoney and Company is pleased to submit this Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement for the Wicklow Local Authority Climate Action Plan to Wicklow for publication alongside the Plan. This Statement provided information on the decision in accordance with Article 16 of S.I. No. 435/2004 - European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (as amended).

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Wicklow County Council (WCC) have adopted the Wicklow Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) 2024 - 2029. This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement for the LACAP. This SEA Statement provides information on the following:

1. How Environmental Considerations were integrated into the LACAP.
2. How the SEA Environmental Report and consultation submissions and observations on it have been taken into account during the preparation of the LACAP
3. The reasons for choosing the LACAP as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered.
4. The measures decided concerning monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the LACAP.

The EPA in their Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statements and Monitoring (2023) succinctly summarize the role SEA Statement shave under the SEA process, as follows: *'SEA Statements have the potential to play a central role in summarising the effectiveness of the SEA process. They can capture how environmental considerations have shaped the plan/programme (e.g., through policy wordings, revisited zonings and other measures) and how the process has contributed to making the plan or programme more sustainable'*

1.2 Legislative Context

SEA is required under the EU Council Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (the SEA Directive)¹. The SEA Directive requires that an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The overarching objective of the 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....with a view to promoting sustainable development'*²

SEA is described within the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government's (2004) Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities on the Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) as the *'formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme'*.

¹ Transposing Irish Regulations: S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011). S.I. No. 436 of 2004 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011).

² Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment – Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2004)



Article 16 of S.I. No. 435/2004 - European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (as amended) requires that a competent authority provide information on the decision to approve a Plan that has been subject to SEA. Article 16(2)(b) requires that a statement is produced summarized, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme subject to SEA.



2. HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS WERE INTEGRATED INTO LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2024 - 2029

2.1 SEA Scoping

The first stage of the SEA process was to carry out SEA Screening to determine the requirement for SEA of the LACAP. It was determined the LACAP had the potential to give rise to likely significant environmental effects and therefore SEA is required for the Plan.

The second stage of the SEA process was carrying out SEA Scoping. The purpose of SEA Scoping is to establish the spatial and temporal scope of the SEA and a decision-making framework that can be used to evaluate impacts of the LACAP. A SEA Scoping Report was produced to document the scoping process. The SEA Scoping Report outlined information on the emerging LACAP, including the need for the LACAP, its temporal and geographical area and overall objectives. It facilitated scoping the Environmental Components and understanding the environmental issues to be considered under the SEA process.

A copy of this report was made available to the statutory Environmental Authorities. Environmental Authorities made scoping submissions on the SEA Scoping Report. The SEA Scoping Report was finalized in light of these submissions. The SEA Scoping Report, along with SEA scoping consultation submissions and consideration of these submissions by the SEA process, helped communicate and define the scope of the environmental issues which are to be dealt with by the SEA, the methods which will be used to address these issues, and the level of detail required to address these issues, as per the SEA Guidelines³. Summary detail on the scoping consultation submissions received from Environmental Authorities and how these were taken into account during the SEA process is presented in Table 2-1.

³ Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2004), Page 18: "It is recommended that at the end of the scoping procedure, the plan-making authority should prepare a brief scoping report of its conclusions as to what information is to be included in the environmental report, taking account of any recommendations from the environmental authorities."



Table 2-1: Summary Detail on Scoping Consultation Submissions Received from Environmental Authorities

Environmental Authority	Summary on the Scoping Consultation Submission	How was this submission taken into account during the SEA?
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	An overview on how climate resilience could be promoted in agriculture setting was provided (e.g., maintaining a fodder reserve, measures to promote biodiversity and carbon sequestration, measures to improve soil structure and function). An overview on invasive species risk associated with climate change and the need for appropriate need to promote resilience was provided	The content of this submission served to inform the focus of the environmental assessment of agriculture related action defined in the LACAP. It informed the nature and focus of mitigation measures defined for related climate mitigation and adaptation action defined in the LACAP. A number of Environmental Governance principles defined in the LACAP specifically reflect the recommendations contained in this submission.
EPA	<p>An overview of the nature of climate change challenges was provided. The EPA acknowledged the nature, focus and goals of the emerging LACAP was made. It was advised the SEA should seek to maximize climate action co-benefits for air quality, human health, biodiversity, water quality and other interrelated areas (i.e. win-win solutions).</p> <p>Other measures advised on which were relevant to the SEA included: the need to consider the Plan influence on Greenhouse Gas (GHG emissions) the need to manage climate change influenced invasive species spread, the need to have regard to the receiving water quality and air quality environment during the plan-making process.</p> <p>In relation to the SEA specifically, commentary was provided on the approach to mitigation, and on how the plan should consider impacts on air and water quality, water resource, soils/geology, landscape and material assets.</p> <p>The EPA recommended integrating the environmental mitigation defined under the SEA into the Plan, and advised on other interrelated plans and programmes to consider during plan-making and SEA processes.</p>	<p>The recommendation to ensure climate action defined in the Plan created co-benefits underpinned the SEA process and the defined mitigation measures. Where relevant, mitigation measures ultimately defined serve to holistically maximize environmental benefits. The promotion of climate action co-benefits is embedded into the Environmental Governance Principle framework defined for the Plan.</p> <p>Appropriate regard was had to the need to consider the climate change influenced invasive species spread. This was considered when shaping defined climate action and also within the Environmental Governance principle framework defined under the Plan.</p> <p>The receiving water and air quality environmental were appropriately considered and evaluated during the SEA process, in light of the EPA's commentary on baseline water quality and air quality data and information.</p> <p>The nature, focus and level of mitigation measures defined in the SEA Environmental Report were informed by the EPA's commentary. All mitigation measures defined were integrated into the Plan itself. The wording of climate action defined in the Plan was shaped having regard to relevant environmental considerations. A set of Environmental Governance Principles were included in the Plan.</p>
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications	Background information on the Geological Survey of Ireland was provided initially in this submission. An overview of county level geoheritage and groundwater assets and databases was provided. Information was provided on geological, geotechnical, geothermal, natural resources, geochemistry and geophysical data sources	Appropriate regard was had to these baseline geological and hydrogeological data during the preparation of the SEA Environmental Report for the LACAP



Environmental Authority	Summary on the Scoping Consultation Submission	How was this submission taken into account during the SEA?
Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government	<p>The Department welcomed various approaches to the SEA for the LACAP e.g. various SEOs defined for Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna; the proposal to carefully examine the impacts of linear projects on biodiversity; the proposal to consider potential for invasive species spread).</p> <p>The Department advised on other biodiversity related plans, policies, objective and guidelines to consider during the plan-making process.</p> <p>The Department made recommendations in relation to wording and focus of a number of Biodiversity related SEOs (promoting better alignment with the National Biodiversity Action Plan).</p> <p>The Department recommended clarifying and confirming some baseline biodiversity related information contained in the Scoping Report during the production of the SEA Environmental Report.</p> <p>The Department advised on various other impact assessment related matters, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The potential impact linear infrastructure, including active travel and green infrastructure projects, may have on biodiversity and the water environment. - The potential impact of development or activities that may cause nitrogen deposition. - Utilizing Nature Based Solutions for the management of rainwater and surface water runoff. <p>The Department advised that monitoring indicators should be linked back to environmental effects and proposed mitigation measures. They stated that 'SEA monitoring should reflect the nature and level of detail of the LACAP. Monitoring of local-level plans should focus on both local issues (e.g. habitat loss) and particular aspects of larger scale problems that are relevant to the LACAP area'</p> <p>They advised the Plan should be Screened for AA and subject to full AA if necessary. They also recommended consulting AA related guidelines, as appropriate.</p>	<p>All relevant biodiversity related plans, policies, objectives and guidelines were considered during the carrying out of the SEA.</p> <p>Biodiversity related SEOs have been updated and shaped to reflect the observations of the Department. For example, SEO B5 has been reworded to the following text - 'No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration in response to the biodiversity emergency' - which is more measurable and defined and incorporates the idea of compensation for negative impacts to biodiversity which is sometimes unavoidable. Similarly, SEO B4 was updated to consider potential effects of the Plan on non-designated locally important sites (the indicators and targets for this SEO were also updated appropriately).</p> <p>Baseline biodiversity information was reviewed carefully, clarified and updated as necessary during the finalization of the SEA Environmental Report, having appropriate regard to the Department's commentary in relation to baseline data.</p> <p>All advice with respect to the potential impacts of the LACAP was considered during the environmental assessment process. The need to assess and mitigated the effects of infrastructure supported by the Plan was one aspect that underpinned the SEA. With the adoption of the proposed mitigation, including the Environmental Governance Principles, the LACAP does not support the carrying out of activity that would result in the nitrogen deposition. Climate action co-benefits including opportunities for utilizing nature based solutions in development projects were promoted through the environmental mitigation measures defined in the SEA and AA.</p> <p>The SEOs indicators and targets defined in the LACAP SEA Monitoring Programme were shaped to ensure they were appropriately reflective of potential environmental effects (positive and negative) that may arise in the local authority functional area due to the implementation of the Plan.</p> <p>The Plan was subject to AA Screening which determination full AA was required. Full AA was undertaken in parallel with the SEA (using an Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Approach). The suite of environmental mitigation measures defined for the Plan will also serve to prevent significant adverse effects on European sites.</p>



2.2 Environmental Assessment and Mitigation

Taking into account the scope detailed in the SEA Scoping Report which was produced for the initial draft version on the LACAP, the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the LACAP were identified, evaluated and described in a SEA Environmental Report.

This report defined mitigation measures to prevent adverse environmental effects due to the implementation of the LACAP. The following forms of mitigation have been adopted to ameliorate the negative environments of the LACAP and maximize potential positive effects of the plan:

- Mitigation through consideration of alternatives.
- Mitigation through integration of environmental considerations into the LACAP.
- Mitigation through consideration of development management standards/environmental protection objectives contained in the CDP.

2.2.1 Mitigation through consideration of alternatives

A number of alternatives were considered at an early stage in the process. The environmental effects of these alternatives were evaluated during the SEA process. Detail on how Plan alternatives and their environmental effects were considered during plan-making is provided in Section 3.

2.2.2 Mitigation through integration of environmental considerations into the LACAP

The plan making process was carried out in parallel with the SEA and AA processes. Regular communication and interaction took place between the environmental assessment team and the plan making team. Environmental considerations that came to light during the SEA and AA processes, including consultation processes, were regularly communicated to the plan making team during the plan making process. As necessary, environmental mitigation measures to ameliorate the potential negative environmental effects of implementing the LACAP were developed and then integrated into the LACAP. Much of the environmental mitigation was embedded in the plan early on in the process as a result of this. This process was carried out in an iterative manner to ensure optimal plan making and environmental outcomes. Environmental considerations were also integrated into the plan so as to facilitate maximizing identified positive environmental effects of the LACAP.

Mitigation measures were suggested that maximize the co-benefits of climate action for other environmental components such local air quality, human health, biodiversity, water quality and other interrelated areas (i.e., win-win solutions).

Additional text clarifying environmental protection related obligations and environmental enhancement opportunities has been attached to a variety of defined actions in the plan. This text has been shaped to ensure that environmental considerations are appropriately taken into account during plan implementation. This text has also been shaped to ensure plan implementation generates the minimum level of negative environmental effects and the maximum level of positive environmental effects. These text additions are presented in Table 2-2.

Several environmental governance principles were established to ensure plan implementation generates the minimum level of negative environmental effects and the maximum level of positive environmental effects. These environmental governance principles shall underpin and guide plan implementation and shall apply to and be integrated into all actions/activities which result due to the implementation of the plan. These principles are defined in Table 2-3. The principles were incorporated into the plan itself.



These environmental mitigation measures were integrated into the LACAP and will prevent negative effects and maximize positive effects associated with the LACAP.

Table 2-2: Proposed Environmental Mitigation Measures - Additional text included in Plan actions relating to environmental protection related obligations and environmental enhancement opportunities

LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
11 GL	Screen Local Area Plans and future Development Plans for climate resilience ensuring they consider compact development, biodiversity resilience, active travel and sustainable economic development.	Attach the following text to the action: 'and consider associated climate action co-benefits and environmental protection requirements.'
12 GL	Accreditation to the International Standard for Energy Management ISO 50001 by 2024 to deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual plan • register of opportunities • 3-year cycle • energy review Including monitoring and reporting to SEAI.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having appropriate regard to protected structure conservation requirements.'
1 BET	Prioritise decarbonisation of Significant Energy Usage buildings within the Local Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four leisure centres • County Buildings • Bray Fire Station 	Reword to the following: Prioritise decarbonisation of Significant Energy Usage buildings within the Local Authority, having appropriate regard to protected structure conservation requirements and protected species associated with such buildings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four leisure centres • County Buildings • Bray Fire Station
4 BET	Phase out installation of heating systems that use Fossil Fuels in any new dwellings or buildings or major renovation projects by 2025.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity; and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures, during any works.'
5 BET	Implement and promote the National Retrofitting Housing Programme for Wicklow housing stock, achieving a BER of B2 or cost optimal level equivalent. A minimum of 700 housing units to be refurbished. Provide a minimum of 750 newly constructed housing units to a Building Energy Rating (BER) of A2 or in compliance with relevant guidelines within the lifetime of the Climate Action Plan	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity; and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures, during any retrofitting works.'



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
6 BET	Provide a minimum of 750 newly constructed housing units to an A2 BER rating or in compliance with TCG Part L within the lifetime of the Climate Action Plan.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as receiving water environment, local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity.'
7 BET	Develop a pilot to promote adaptive reuse of historic structures - using exemplar retrofitting projects.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations, and the need to not negatively impinge on any protected species that may be present in such buildings and European sites.'
8 BET	Complete the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Programme following guidance in the Public Lighting Retrofitting Guidance Document and reviewing the existing public lighting levels including the use of lower Colour Temperature in National Park areas and areas with recorded bat populations.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard for the impact the spectrum of light used will have on protected nocturnal species such as bats.'
9 BET	Develop and implement an EV charging strategy that ensures geographic spread and access in areas without opportunity for homeowners to charge on their own properties. Revise and update EV Strategy in 3 years.	Reword to the following: Develop and implement an EV charging strategy that ensures geographic spread and access in areas without opportunity for homeowners to charge on their own properties, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality. Revise and update EV Strategy in 3 years.
10 BET	Install EV Charge points within Local Authority Housing developments i.e., Part L and Development Plan compliance as a minimum.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, and local air quality.'
11 BET	Deliver the development of a high-quality cycling and pedestrian network through Active Travel measures in urban areas and connecting communities.	Attach the following text to the action: 'Ensure supported active travel development is carried out in a manner that has due regard to environmental sensitivities such as biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology.'
12 BET	Increase the number of schools involved in Safer Routes to Schools.	Attach the following text to the action: 'ensuring any ancillary development has due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality.'
13 BET	Strengthen towns and villages through enhancement of green infrastructure measures and/or sustainable transport linkages.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard for environmental sensitivities such as biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology.'
14 BET	Complete Local Area Transport Plans for Greystones and Arklow and progress plans for other communities.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst ensuring such plans have due regard to opportunities for promoting climate action co-benefits and planning and environmental protection considerations.'
16 BET	Facilitate the planning and delivery of the Dart Plus Scheme.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst advocating and exerting influence to ensure the scheme and any associated development and activities promote climate action co-benefits and do not contravene relevant environmental protection criteria or cause significant negative environmental effects.'



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
18 BET	Implement measures to increase modal shift from private cars by visitors to the county using public transport, Looped tourism bus services, E-mobility infrastructure, Regulation of parking, Glendalough masterplan.	Attach the following text to the action: 'Ensure supported development is carried out in a manner that has due regard to environmental sensitivities such as Biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology.'
19 BET	Complete an inventory of the existing Fleet and develop a Fleet management policy to achieve a target of 51% reduction in emissions, which includes the procurement of the fleet and an objective to decarbonize the existing fleet.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst ensuring energy/fuel used to power local authority alternative vehicles is sustainably sourced, and appropriate end-of-life management practices are in place for Electric Vehicles.'
21 BET	Procure only zero emission vehicles unless the vehicle is exempt under EC Regs SI381 of 2021.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst ensuring appropriate end-of-life management practices are in place for zero emission vehicles.'
22 BET	Convert the existing Fleet to a low carbon fuel source where feasible such as Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil (HVO).	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst ensuring energy/fuel used to power local authority alternative vehicles is sustainably sourced.'
24 BET	Standardise the management of drainage systems within the council including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the regular maintenance of regional and local roads drainage systems (Annual Programme) the recording and mapping of the areas impacted by weather events (Climate Change events) including the implementation of technology such as the Weather Impact REGISTER (WIRE) App to capture impacts, response and costs (including ecosystem services/natural capital costs). Mapping the location of attenuation tanks and drainage systems an Arc GIS. 	Reword the action to the following: 'Standardise the management of drainage systems within the council including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the regular maintenance of regional and local roads drainage systems (Annual Programme), having due regard to the need to promote nature-based solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems, and environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology. the recording and mapping of the areas impacted by weather events (Climate Change events) including the implementation of technology such as the Weather Impact REGISTER (WIRE) App to capture impacts, response and costs (including ecosystem services/natural capital costs). Mapping the location of attenuation tanks and drainage systems an Arc GIS.'
25 BET	Deliver climate adaptation works on the infrastructure through the Climate Change Adaption & Resilience Works and Drainage funding programs.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to the need to promote nature-based solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems, and environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.'
1 NEGI	Engage with neighbouring Local Authorities and other relevant organisations (including Irish Rail) on coastal erosion.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst advocating and exerting influence to ensure supported coastal erosion works and development promote climate action co-benefits and do not contravene relevant environmental protection criteria or cause significant negative environmental effects.'



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
3 NEGI	Implement the OPW Flood Risk Management Guidelines and ensure that all relevant developments consider climate resilience and demonstrate that they integrate Nature Based SUDS and Nature Based solutions to address surface water management.	Attach the following text to the action: Ensure due regard is given to environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.
7 NEGI	Support and facilitate LAWPRO projects improving water quality within the county catchments. Example scheme: Avonmore Waters of Life Project.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to the maintenance and improvement of water quality in line with the aims of the Water Framework Directive.'
9 NEGI	Deliver the following Flood Relief Schemes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arklow Flood Relief Scheme • Avoca Flood Relief Scheme • Baltinglass Flood Relief Scheme 	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to the need to promote nature-based solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems, and environmental sensitivities at these locations, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology, visual amenity and recreation and amenity value.'
10 NEGI	Engage with the OPW in order to review and progress a number of various climate adaption schemes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blessington Flood Relief Scheme • Greystones & Environs Flood Relief Scheme • Wicklow & Ashford Flood Relief Scheme • facilitate the hydraulic modelling of the Bray Flood Relief Scheme • facilitate the OPW to conduct a review of the PFRA with regard to flood risk arising from floods on surface water infrastructure such as Culverts. 	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to the need to promote nature-based solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems, and environmental sensitivities at these locations, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology, visual amenity and recreation and amenity value.'
12 NEGI	Undertake an audit of Council owned land for suitability for micro-woodlands/biodiversity by end-2025 and to set targets for planting/management with suitable vegetation. Incorporate three pilot Woodlands on Public lands schemes in Bray, Wicklow & Grange Con.	Reword this action to the following: 'Undertake an audit of Council owned land for suitability for micro-woodlands/biodiversity by end-2025 and to set targets for planting/management with suitable vegetation. Incorporate three pilot Native Woodlands on Public lands schemes in Bray, Wicklow & Grange Con.'
15 NEGI	Review and update the Wicklow Heritage Plan to record, conserve, and raise awareness of all aspects of built, natural and cultural heritage.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to the need to appropriately protect, conserve and enhance important habitats and species and European sites, and support the maintenance and improvement of water quality in line with the aims of the Water Framework Directive.'
17 NEGI	Review and update the Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan to protect and enhance local biodiversity, including climate-relevant measures.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to the need to appropriately protect, conserve and enhance important habitats and species and European sites, and support the maintenance and improvement of water quality in line with the aims of the Water Framework Directive. This plan shall be developed by a competent ecology team, and shall have due regard to the need to appropriately manage these habitats.'



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
20 NEGI	Develop a hedgerow plan for the county with actions to map, protect and develop hedgerows.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to hedgerow area conservation requirements and the need to avoid habitat fragmentation.'
21 NEGI	Develop an integrated programme to address Invasive Alien Species through education and with recording and eradication programmes in the public realm.	Attach the following text to the action: 'This programme shall be developed by a competent ecology team, and shall have due regard to the need to appropriately manage and prevent the spread of invasive species.'
23 NEGI	Pilot a biodiversity inclusive design for a social housing estate considering the following elements within the design: green roofs, green walls, wetland & pond NBSuDS, green car parking, nest boxes in facades, grasslands, and wildlife friendly shrubs and trees in open space.	Attach the following text to the action: 'ensuring development have due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality and cultural heritage.'
24 NEGI	Assist local community stakeholders engaging in peatland rewetting, woodland creation and nature restoration to access funding to undertaker projects in upland areas.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst advocating and exerting influence to ensure such projects are designed and implemented in a manner that accords with relevant environmental protection requirements.'
26 NEGI	Develop a hill and forest fire management response and prevention strategy, including protocols for responding to fires, enforcement, awareness campaigns of the impact of fires and systems to measure the extent and economic costs of fires.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having appropriate regard to the need to support the achievement of conservation objectives and protect and enhance important habitats or the qualifying interests of any protected sites.'
29 NEGI	Build climate resilience and improve the energy performance of architectural and archaeological heritage in public and private ownership through schemes such as the BHIS,HSF, HTI, IWTN and Community Monument Fund.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, protected species associated with such buildings, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations.'
12 CRT	Incorporate Climate Action into all plans under the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Development Fund Urban Regeneration and Development Fund Town and Village Renewal Scheme CLÁR Scheme 	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European Sites and biodiversity related sensitivities, sensitive human receptors and the need appropriately protected and conserve cultural heritage features.'
14 CRT	Promote tree planting by providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an annual tree planting grant for communities and schools trees to communities during National Tree Week 	"Promote native tree planting by providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an annual native tree planting grant for communities and schools native trees to communities during National Tree Week"
22 CRT	Assess five existing large local authority housing schemes for public transport links and active travel access.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites, biodiversity and water and air quality.'



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
3 SRM	Support the Implement of the National Plan for a Circular Economy.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst ensuring all supported initiatives accord with the provision of the Waste Management Act and do not lead to adverse environmental impacts or nuisance.'
5 SRM	Promote uptake of energy performance measures in business and agricultural sectors through the promotion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEAI programmes and Energy Audits, • Support Scheme for renewable heat, • Micro and small scale renewable generation, • Anaerobic digestion, • Energy efficient and heating control technology 	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst advocating and exerting influence to ensure supported renewable energy development does not contravene relevant environmental protection criteria or cause significant negative environmental effects.'
7 SRM	Develop a renewables hub at the Wicklow Campus in Clermont to support development of the sector in County Wicklow.	Attach the following text to the action: 'while ensuring that the businesses and projects supported accord with relevant planning and environmental protection criteria.'
9 SRM	Identify and implement Rural Development Fund initiatives that deliver on a transition towards a climate neutral rural economy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Transport, • Working hubs, • Town and Village regeneration • Nature Based solutions • Digital initiatives • Green Economy • Bio economy 	Attach the following text to the action: 'having appropriate regard to planning and environmental protection requirements, environmental sensitivities such as European Sites, biodiversity and opportunities for promoting climate action co-benefits and interconnectivity.'
12 SRM	Liaise with Signpost, ACRES, TAMS and Farming for Nature Schemes to support climate action in the agricultural sector. Help to promote farms to become demonstration farmers and highlight the work being done in Wicklow to decarbonize agriculture and manage land using best practice for sustainability.	Reword this action to the following: Liaise with Signpost and ACRES Schemes to support climate action in the agricultural sector. Help to promote farms to become demonstration farmers and highlight the work being done in Wicklow to decarbonize agriculture and manage land using best practice for sustainability, development planning and environmental protection and enhancement.
14 SRM	Examine the potential of the former landfill sites of Ballymurtagh (Avoca) and Rampere (Baltinglass) for the development of green energy uses.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to planning and environmental protection considerations.'
20 SRM	Upgrading of Council Owned Buildings to include for Nature Based SuDS and Water Demand.	Attach the following text to the action: Ensure all SuDS related construction works are designed and implemented in a manner that does not result in the occurrence of significant adverse environmental effects.



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
DZ		
3 ADZ BE&T	Complete a Local Transport Plan taking the following into account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the 10-minute town concept Active Travel Permeability Public Transport Requirements Shared Services Mobility Hub Active travel bridges 	Attach the following text to the action: 'Ensure any required development is planned in a manner that has due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, local air quality, biodiversity, European sites and cultural heritage.'
5 ADZ BE&T	Implement the Retrofitting Housing Programme for existing housing stock achieving a BER of B2 or cost optimal level equivalent. Provide newly constructed housing units to an A2 BER rating or in compliance with relevant guidelines within the lifetime of the Climate Action Plan. Create awareness of works undertaken and their benefits to encourage retrofitting in private housing stock.	Reword this action to the following: 'Implement the Retrofitting Housing Programme for existing housing stock achieving a BER of B2 or in compliance with TCG Part L, having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations. Create awareness of works undertaken and their benefits to encourage retrofitting in private housing stock.'
6 ADZ BE&T	Provide newly constructed housing units to an A2 BER rating or in compliance with TCG Part L within the lifetime of the Climate Action Plan.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as visual amenity and quality, local human receptors, Biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology, and amenity value.'
7 ADZ BE&T	Undertake a retrofit of the Coral Leisure Centre pool and sports hall.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites, biodiversity, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations.'
8 ADZ BE&T	Undertake a retrofit of the Civic Amenity Site and install solar pv panels under the small scale generation scheme.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites, biodiversity, the need to control and mitigate potential glint and glare impacts, and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations.'
9 ADZ BE&T	Investigate district heating opportunities from the planned Data Centre.	Attach the following text to the action: 'ensuring appropriate regard is had to planning and environmental protection considerations.'
10 ADZ BE&T	Within the Arklow Municipal District increase the number of EV's and convert the existing fleet to a low carbon fuel source.	Attach the following text to the action: 'whilst ensuring energy/fuel used to power local authority alternative vehicles is sustainably sourced, and appropriate end-of-life management practices are in place for Electric Vehicles.'
12 ADZ BE&T	Develop a pilot to promote adaptive reuse of historic structures.	Attach the following text to the action: 'having due regard to the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations, and the need to not negatively impinge on any protected species that may be present in such buildings and European sites.'



LACAP Action Reference	LACAP Action	Mitigation Measure
13 ADZ BE&T	Increase the number of schools involved in Safer Routes to Schools.	Attach the following text to the action: 'ensuring any ancillary development have due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites and local air quality.'
16 ADZ NE&GI	Map and identify green infrastructure opportunities in the town to support the development of NBSuDS improving climate resilience.	Attach the following text to the action: 'while ensuring projects have due regard to environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.'
17 ADZ NE&GI	Promote rainwater harvesting, green roofs, green walls and water demand reducing projects.	Attach the following text to the action: 'while ensuring projects have appropriate regard to local environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity European sites and cultural heritage considerations.'
21 ADZ CR&T	Promote greater uptake of solar PV in the town through promoting the micro generation and the small-scale generation scheme.	Attach the following text to the action: 'where it is confirmed through a glint and glare assessment that any solar development will not have any potential glint and glare impact on sensitive receptors, or otherwise, where it is confirmed that any solar development constitutes exempted development under the Planning and Development Regulations by virtue of its size or location outside a Solar Safeguarding Zone.'
22 ADZ S&RM	Promote development of the circular economy including waste minimisation, repair, reuse, upcycling and sharing through the Arklow Amenity Site and the Arklow Library, highlighting the role of social enterprises locally.	Attach the following text to the action: 'ensuring supported development and activities accord with the Waste Management Act, as necessary, and do not cause negative environmental effects or nuisance.'
23 ADZ S&RM	Investigate opportunity for carbon storage or hydrogen production from renewable electricity generated.	Reword this action to the following: 'Investigate opportunity for carbon storage or green hydrogen production from renewable electricity generated, having appropriate regard to planning and environmental constraints and considerations.'
24 ADZ S&RM	Investigate opportunity to develop anaerobic digestion in Arklow, identifying potential feed stock.	Investigate opportunity to develop anaerobic digestion at an appropriate location in the vicinity of Arklow, identifying potential feed stock, whilst ensuring: 1. Appropriate regard is given to planning and environmental protection constraints and considerations during any future the development planning process; 2. Such potential development does not cause unintended, significant, negative environmental effects in the area; and, 3. Such a potential facility operates in accordance with the provisions of the Waste Management Act.



Table 2-3: Proposed Environmental Mitigation Measures - Environmental Governance Principles included in the plan

Promote climate action projects that support and maximise environmental co-benefits, such as biodiversity protection and enhancement; improved air, water or soil quality; or enhanced recreation, amenity and cultural heritage value, to ensure win-win benefits are gained.
Support or facilitate climate action related projects and initiatives which seek to make improvements in soil structure, management and health by increasing soil organic carbon - which will create the environmental co-benefits of improving flood resilience by enhancing water holding capacity of soils and increasing the level of GHG sequestration associated with land use functions.
Ensure all development underpinned or supported by climate action is planned and implemented in a manner that appropriately considers the potential for environmental co-benefits, potential environmental impacts and environmental protection requirements. No climate action related development project that is likely to have a significant negative effect on the receiving environment shall be supported.
Flood defence projects or related maintenance works supported by plan actions shall be carried out in a manner that promotes climate action-biodiversity related co-benefits, and shall have due regard for the protection and enhancement of rare, protected or important habitats and species.
Ensure climate action related projects are carried out in a manner that promotes climate action-cultural heritage co-benefits, and do not result in unauthorised physical damage to cultural, archaeological or architectural features, or unauthorised or inappropriate alteration of the context of sensitive cultural heritage features.
Ensure climate action related projects are carried out in a manner that promotes climate action water quality co-benefits, and align with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive and relevant River Basin Management Plan.
Promote climate action projects that support protected trees, hedgerows and other habitats such as wetlands, floodzones which contribute to green infrastructure.
Support opportunities to improve ecological connectivity of non-designated habitats and sites to improve overall ecosystem resilience and functioning while supporting climate action within the county.
Ensure all projects supported by the council have taken the necessary precautions to identify and manage invasives species, particularly with regard to Schedule III species. No climate action related development project that is likely to cause the spread of invasives species listed in Schedule III shall be supported.
Support opportunities to support peatland restoration, rehabilitation and maintenance while achieving climate targets through the implementation of the climate actions within the plan.

2.2.3 Mitigation through consideration of development management standards/environmental protection objectives contained in the CDP

In addition to the environmental mitigation measures integrated into the LACAP, the development management standards and environmental protection measures defined in the CDP will serve to mitigate the environmental effects of any development proposals supported by the LACAP. These development management standards/environmental protection measures have been defined for the express purpose of ensuring proper planning and sustainable development in the County. The CDP has been subject to its own SEA and AA. The LACAP has been prepared having appropriate regard to the policies and objectives contained in the County Development Plan.

2.3 Appropriate Assessment

The environmental assessment for the Plan undertaken was carried out in accordance with an Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment based methodology in accordance with EPA's guidance document entitled '*Final Report: Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment, Streamlining AA, SEA and EIA Processes. Best Practice Guidance.*' (2012).



The methodology employed facilitated the integration of SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes relating to biodiversity impact assessment to ensure the effective and streamlined assessment of biodiversity impacts. The plan-making, SEA and AA processes - including scoping, baseline evaluation, impact assessment and mitigation/monitoring measure development processes - were carried out concurrently to facilitate holistic and complete assessment of biodiversity impacts. The effective communication and integration of scientific knowledge and analysis between assessments took place. The SEA was suitably informed by the analysis and conclusions in AA.

2.4 Consultation on SEA Environmental Report

A draft version of the SEA Environmental Report accompanied a draft version of the LACAP on public display as part of the statutory public consultation required under Article 13 of S.I. No. 435/2004 - European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004. A draft version of the Natura Impact Report (NIR) produced under the AA process for the Draft LACAP also accompanied the Draft LACAP on public display. Environmental Authorities, relevant interested stakeholder and members of the public were notified of the Draft LACAP being placed on display and the opportunity to make consultation submissions in relation to the Draft LACAP. Members of public were made aware of the Draft LACAP and associated environmental reports through a notification published by the local authority on its website. Environmental Authorities and interested stakeholders were notified through notification correspondence.

Various parties made consultation submissions and observations on the Draft LACAP and associated environmental reports. Detail on submissions received relevant to SEA and AA issues and documentation, responses to these submissions, and any changes made to SEA Environmental Report (ER) and NIR documents on foot of these submissions, is provided in Table 2-4. Updates were made to the SEA and AA documentation where relevant following on from receipt and consideration of the consultation submissions.



Table 2-4: Responses to Consultation Submissions

Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
Sea Fisheries coordination DAFM	Ireland's seafood industry (fishing and aquaculture) is one of the key stakeholders operating in the marine area and plays a vital role in the sustainability of our coastal communities. Over 15,000 people are employed around our coast both directly and indirectly. Many of these communities have very limited alternative employment and economic activity options. It is therefore essential that the socio-economic reliance on the seafood sector is fully recognised and is factored into any Climate Change Action plan. Fishing and food security is as key a part of Government Policy. Food Vision 2030 recognises and values the role of primary food producers.	Noted.	None	None.
	The Seafood industry is experiencing a period of difficult change, arising from the ongoing consequences of the EU UK Trade and Co-operation agreement which are specific and impactful on Ireland's seafood sector. There is now ever-increasing demand on the marine space from Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE), Marine Spatial Planning, Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), and other environmental measures.	Noted.	None	None.
	Our coastal communities and maritime sectors will continue to play a significant role in contributing to our climate goals and will continue to be consulted and supported in the transition to carbon neutrality. The seafood industry, through both the Sectoral Adaptation Plan (Agriculture, Forest and Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan) and the annual Climate Action Plan (CAP23) continue to support initiatives to improve understanding of our marine area and ensure sustainable resource use, including through bio and circular economy initiatives. These plans require consideration in the SEA process.	The National Climate Action Plan (2023) and Sectoral Adaptation Plans have been considered in the SEA Process. The relationship of the Plan with other relevant Plans and Programmes has been defined in Appendix 1 of the SEA. Inter-plan cumulative effects have been evaluated in Section 7 of the SEA ER.	None	None.



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	Also for consideration in the SEA process is the European Commission's Communication on the energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector as part of its Fisheries Policy Package. This proposes the establishment of an Energy Transition Partnership (ETP) to develop a roadmap for the energy transition of the sector towards climate neutrality by 2050. The roadmap will set out investment needs, sector initiatives and inform policy decisions to help achieve this transition. The ETP is a multi-stakeholder platform intended to promote co-operation, knowledge sharing and dialogue between private and public stakeholders in order to accelerate the energy transition in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. This Partnership will help to shape the development of future transitional actions for Ireland's seafood sector. Local authorities should include relevant steps to support a Just Transition for the sea fisheries and aquaculture sectors in their Climate Action Plans.	This commentary was noted. Local authorities in Ireland do not have a direct remit over the fisheries and aquaculture sector. The actions defined in the Plan are however mutually symbiotic and harmonious with the vision and measures defined in European Commission's Communication on the energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector. Insofar as the local authority's remit extends, the plan supports the protection and enhancement of the marine environment. The climate action defined in the plan has the potential to generate multiple climate action benefits, and co-benefits for the water and biodiversity environments and by extension the marine environment (i.e. biodiversity conservation and enhancement, coastal protection, water quality protection and improvements etc.).	Reference was made to the European Commission's Communication on the energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Section 3.4 - In-combination effects with Other Plans and Programmes, and Appendix 2 - Relationship with other plans and programmes, as appropriate.	Reference was made to the European Commission's Communication on the energy transition of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Section 7.3 - Potential Cumulative Effect of the Draft LACAP in combination with other Plans and Projects, and Appendix 1 - Relationship of the Plan with other relevant Plans and Programmes, as appropriate.
EPA	The SEA should also assist in identifying ways to maximise the potential co-benefits of climate-related measures for air quality, human health, biodiversity, water quality and other interrelated areas (i.e. win-win solutions).	Noted and agreed. It was noted that the SEA Environmental Report (ER) has defined Environmental Governance Principles and action amendment suggestions to ensure climate action co-benefit opportunities are maximized. Various defined mitigation measures serve to promote win-win solutions.	None.	None.
	We recommend that the findings of the SEA ER and NIS are fully reflected in the Plan, to ensure that the relevant recommendations are fully considered and integrated as appropriate.	Noted and agreed. Environmental mitigation measures in the form of Environmental Governance Principles and climate action amendment suggestions have been fully integrated into the Plan itself.	None	None
	Environmental Authorities Under the SEA Regulations, you should consult with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection Agency; • Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage; 	Noted. All listed Environmental Authorities have been consulted with as part of the SEA process.	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications; Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. <p>If you have any queries or need further information in relation to this submission, please contact me directly at c.omahony@epa.ie. I would be grateful if you could send an email confirming receipt of this submission to: sea@epa.ie.</p>	It was recommended the Council confirm receipt of this submission with Cian O' Mahony, if wasn't hasn't been done already.		
	<p>Non-Technical Summary</p> <p>You should ensure that the Non-Technical Summary includes the relevant information as required under Schedule 2 of S.I No. 434 Of 2004, as amended.</p>	<p>It was assumed that SI No. 434 is a typo and SI No. 435 is what was intended to be addressed with this statement.</p> <p>The requirements of Schedule 2 of SI No 435 have been noted and amendments to the NTS were be made as appropriate.</p>	None	Updated the NTS to reflect the relevant information as required under Schedule 2 of SI No 435 of 2004 as amended.
	<p>Relationship with other plans and programmes</p> <p>We acknowledge that the Plan has been prepared taking account of the key National plans including the National Climate Action Plan 2023. We also acknowledge that the Plan sets out the key plans, programmes and policies considered in preparing the SEA.</p> <p>The Plan should include a commitment to remain aligned with high level plans and programmes, Guidelines, and legislation over its lifetime. The Climate Action Plan 2024 is currently being prepared and work will be commencing on the review of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies also. Any relevant updates of these plans/strategies should be integrated as appropriate into the Plan as relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>The Plan should include a commitment to consider any relevant updated actions, measures or recommendations that may arise in updates to the National Climate Action Plan (or the National Planning Framework) over the lifetime of the Plan.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed. It was noted that this is in reference to the LACAP and not the SEA ER or AA NIR documentation.</p> <p>It was recommended the Council includes a commitment in the Plan to remain aligned with high level plans and programmes if this isn't the case already.</p> <p>It was recommended the plan includes a commitment in the Plan to consider and appropriately integrate relevant updates to the national Climate Action Plan and National Planning Framework over the lifetime of the Plan.</p>	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	Strategic Environmental Objectives We recommend that in considering strategic environmental objectives, they should where possible reflect the plan being prepared, rather than use more generic environmental objectives. This will help both in considering more specific monitoring and mitigation measures, when required.	Noted. The Strategic Environmental Objectives defined have been very specifically defined to reflect the themes, goals, objectives and climate action contained in the plan and in light of the potential environmental effects associated with Plan implementation.	None	None
	Alternatives We note the alternatives considered in the SEA and acknowledge the preferred option selected	Noted.	None	None.
	Mitigation Measures Where the potential for likely significant effects has been identified, you should provide appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or minimise these. You should also ensure that the Plan includes clear commitments to implement the relevant mitigation measures.	The SEA produced recommended a suite of mitigation measures in response to climate actions considered to have potentially significant environmental effects. Environmental Governance Principles have been defined for the purpose of underpinning and framing the defined climate actions. All activities and development supported by the defined climate actions shall be undertaken or influenced by the local authority, as appropriate, in accordance with these Environmental Governance Principles. Mitigation has also been achieved by the integration of environmental considerations into the defined LACAP climate actions. These mitigation measures have been wholly integrated into the LACAPs. Section 8 of the SEA ER provides full detail of these environmental mitigation measures. It was recommended the Plan provides a clear commitment to implement these mitigation measures, if this isn't the case already.	None	None.
	Monitoring, Implementation & Reporting	The SEA Monitoring Programme established for the LACAP is contained in the SEA ER. This monitoring	None	Updated the SEA monitoring programme



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<p>The Monitoring Programme should be flexible to take account of specific environmental issues and unforeseen adverse impacts should they arise. It should consider and deal with the possibility of cumulative effects. Monitoring of both positive and negative effects should be considered. The monitoring programme should set out the various data sources, monitoring frequencies and responsibilities.</p> <p>If the monitoring identifies adverse impacts during the implementation of the Plan, then you should ensure that suitable and effective remedial action is taken.</p> <p>Guidance on SEA-related monitoring is available on the EPA website at https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/06695-EPA-SEA-Statements-and-Monitoring-Report.pdf</p>	<p>programme has been developed in accordance with EPA guidelines entitled 'Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring' (2020).</p> <p>The monitoring programme is multi-faceted, broad in scope and has been designed to allow for a flexible and adaptive approach to SEA monitoring during Plan implementation.</p> <p>The monitoring programme has been designed to inherently measure cumulative effects that may arise due to the implementation of the Plan.</p> <p>This plan considers both positive and negative effects, as per the following statement from the SEA text:</p> <p>‘Where monitoring identifies that the implementation of the LACAP is having a significant negative environmental effect, an in-depth review of the LACAP should take place and the LACAP should be updated in a manner that satisfactorily mitigates these environmental effects (i.e., through the adoption of additional environmental mitigation measures.). Similarly, where monitoring indicates that potential positive environmental effects associated with LACAP implementation are not being adequately realized, the LACAP should be reviewed and updated in a manner that supports the realization of all potential positive environmental effects, having regard to the overall vision and high-level objectives of the plan.’</p> <p>It is noted however that additional opportunities exist in relation to monitoring the positive environmental effects of defined climate action – in connection with SEOs PHH1, L1, AQN2, TR1. The SEA monitoring programme will be updated to ensure SEOs PHH1, L1, AQN2, TR1 accommodate the</p>		<p>to ensure SEOs accommodate the monitoring of positive effects arising due to plan implementation.</p> <p>Provide additional detail on monitoring programme data sources.</p>



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
		<p>monitoring of positive effects arising due to plan implementation, wherever appropriate.</p> <p>The monitoring programme includes detail on the indicators, targets and data sources to be used to monitor and measure progress. Some additional detail on data sources has however been provided to better guide the SEA monitoring to be carried out across plan implementation.</p> <p>A commitment to remedial action in the event SEA monitoring shows the implementation of the Plan is having adverse environmental effects has been made in the SEA.</p>		
	<p>EPA State of the Environment Report</p> <p>Our State of Environment Report, Ireland's Environment - An Integrated Assessment 2020 (SOER2020) identifies thirteen 'Key Messages for Ireland'. Delivering Ireland's long-term sustainable development and environmental objectives will involve many different stakeholders to address these key actions. The report recognises the need for full implementation of existing environmental legislation and review of governance/coordination on environmental protection across public bodies.</p> <p>The EPA are currently preparing the next iteration of the SOER report, which will be published in 2024. We recommend that a commitment is made in the Plan, to take account of any relevant recommendations in the SOER 2024 report, once published, in implementing the Plan over its lifetime.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>It is recommended the Council make a commitment to take account of any relevant recommendations in the SOER 2024 report, once published, in implementing the Plan over its lifetime.</p>	None	None
	<p>SEA Statement – "Information on the Decision"</p> <p>Once the Plan is adopted, you should prepare an SEA Statement that summarises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan; 	<p>Noted. An SEA statement will be produced and circulated to any environmental authority consulted during the SEA process.</p>	None	None



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the Environmental Report, submissions, observations and consultations have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan; The reasons for choosing the Plan adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and, The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan. <p>You should send a copy of the SEA Statement with the above information to any environmental authority consulted during the SEA process.</p>			
	<p>Future Amendments to the Plan</p> <p>You should screen any future amendments to the Plan for likely significant effects, using the same method of assessment applied in the “environmental assessment” of the Plan</p>	Noted.	None	None
The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)	<p>Archaeology</p> <p>The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage welcomes the publication of local authority draft Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. The Department draws your attention to the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage (2019) prepared as part of the National Adaptation Framework. The Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan (CCSAP) identifies the priority impacts for the built and archaeological heritage based on current climate change projections.</p>	Noted.	Reference was made to the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage (2019) in Section 3.4 - In-combination effects with Other Plans and Programmes, and Appendix 2 - Relationship with other plans and programmes, as appropriate.	Reference was made to the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage (2019) in Section 7.3 - Potential Cumulative Effect of the Draft LACAP in combination with other Plans and Projects, and Appendix 1 - Relationship of the Plan with other relevant Plans and Programmes, as appropriate.



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	The Heritage Division of the Department (National Monuments Service and National Built Heritage Service) is engaged with the local authorities through the departmental Climate Change Advisory Group and established Working Groups to ensure a consistent approach to protection and adaptation of heritage assets across the country and an alignment of policies, plans and actions across national, regional and local climate action. The Department anticipates ongoing engagement with the local authorities throughout the implementation of current and future sectoral adaptation plans.	Noted.	None.	None.
	In the preparation and implementation of the local authority adaptation strategy, there are a number of issues regarding protection of built and archaeological heritage that the Department recommends be taken into account to identify the heritage assets at risk in its area, assess their vulnerability to climate change, increase their resilience and develop disaster risk reduction policies for direct and indirect risks. For example, it is recommended that the strategies should consider:		None.	None.
	Identifying the built and archaeological heritage assets in the local authority area including, but not restricted to, structures and sites subject to statutory protection under the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014, or the Planning and Development Acts.	The SEA scoping report and SEA Environmental Report identified the built and archaeological heritage assets in the LA including structures and sites subject to statutory protection under the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014, and the Planning and Development Act (as amended). Exhaustive detail on built and archaeological heritage is held on record by the local authority and provided in the Country Development Plan already.	None.	None.
	Including objectives to carry out climate change risk assessments, including condition assessments, for the historic structures and sites in its area	Noted. The local authority has included an action in the Plan to undertake a climate risk assessment of heritage assets within its remit.	None.	None.



Consultee	Submission Text	Detailed Response	Changes to NIR	Changes to SEA ER
	Including objectives to develop disaster-risk reduction policies addressing direct and indirect risks to the built and archaeological heritage in its area	Noted. The Plan defines actions that will serve to minimize and manage climate related disaster risk (e.g., flood risk) and improve the climate resilience of architectural and archaeological heritage.	None.	None.
	Including objectives to develop resilience and adaptation strategies for the built and archaeological heritage in its area.	Noted. The Plan defines actions that will improve the climate resilience of architectural and archaeological heritage.	None.	None.
	Developing the skills capacity within the local authority to address adaptation/mitigation/emergency management issues affecting heritage assets in order to avoid inadvertent loss or damage in the course of climate change adaptation or mitigation works.	Noted. It was recommended that the local authority consider this as appropriate.	None.	None.
	The Department will shortly be publishing a new guidance document Improving Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings. This guidance will assist retrofitting installers and specifiers in how best to choose and apply energy efficiency measures to the historic building stock. The guidance is also intended to assist building owners and occupants in making decisions about upgrading their buildings, many of which are of architectural heritage significance. It is recommended that all proposed retrofitting projects undertaken or supported by the local authority to buildings of traditional construction should follow the principles and practice set out in that guidance	Noted. It was recommended that the local authority consider this as appropriate. The SEA Environmental Report has defined mitigation measures within the plan to ensure that any retrofitting of buildings including protected structures is carried out in a manner that doesn't impinge on built heritage or protected structures.	None.	None
	Finally, it is recommended that, where such officers are employed, the Architectural Conservation Officer, Heritage Officer and Archaeologist should be included on the local authority's Adaptation Steering Group.	Noted. It was recommended that the LA consider this as appropriate.	None.	None.
	You are requested to send any further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) at: referrals@npws.gov.ie	Noted. It was recommended that the LA consider this as appropriate.	None.	None.



2.5 SEA and Plan Modifications

WCC prepared a Chief Executive (CE) Report responding to consultation submissions from Environmental Authorities, interested stakeholders and members of the public.

The CE Report recommended Plan modifications in light of the consultations submissions received in relation to the Plan and associated environmental reports and subsequent consideration of these submissions. The CE Report was appropriately informed by recommendations made by the SEA (and AA) team on foot of their review of consultation submissions relating to SEA (and AA) issues and documentation. Recommendations were taken on board by the plan-making team as appropriate.

Plan modifications made were screened for SEA and AA. All Plan modifications made during the plan-making process were determined to be non-material and did not introduce any additional environmental effects not previously considered and mitigated during the SEA and AA processes.

An earlier draft version of the SEA Environmental Report was finalized having appropriate regard to the consultation submissions made during the SEA consultation period, recommendations made in the CE Report on consultation submissions, and the modifications made to the original draft version of the LACAP that was put on display for consultation. The updates made to the report were clerical or minor and non-material in nature and did not materially change the parameters of the environmental assessment undertaken or the environmental mitigation defined.

The CE Report on consultation submissions received on the Plan and associated environmental reports accompany the adopted Plan and this SEA Statement and provides exact detail on how consultation submissions were considered by the local authority during the plan-making process. This CE Report also documents the Plan modifications made by the local authority following its consideration of consultation submissions relating to both the content, focus and goals of the Plan and the environmental assessment of the Plan presented in the associated SEA and AA documentation. All Plan Action modifications are presented in Table 2-5. No further modifications affecting the SEA and AA processes were made upon Plan Adoption.

Table 2-5: Plan Action Modifications

Action	Summary of Revision
13 BET	The word 'or' has been included in Action BET 13, as below. 'Strengthen towns and villages through enhancement of green infrastructure measures and/or sustainable transport linkages, having due regards for environmental sensitivities such as biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology.'
4 CRT	The sentence 'And communications through social media and the council website.' has been added to the action: 'Quarterly communications to PPN on climate action to be disseminated through their newsletter. And communications through social media and the council website.'
12 SRM	Reference to the 'Farming for Nature' scheme added to this action, as below: 'Liaise with Signpost, ACRES, TAMS and Farming for Nature Schemes to support climate action in the agricultural sector. Help to promote farms to become demonstration farms and highlight the work being done in Wicklow to decarbonize agriculture and manage land using best practice for sustainability, development planning and environmental protection and enhancement.'
11 CRT	The text of this action has been updated to state: 'Support community groups in their efforts to develop communal gardens and allotments.' The action numbering has also been updated.



Action	Summary of Revision
30 NEGI	The following additional Action has been included in the Plan: 'Support engagement of stakeholders on initiatives that assist in the control and management of deer.'
1 GL	This action will be updated to the following: 'Place Climate Action as a standing item on the agenda for Senior Management Team meetings with an annual Climate Action Summary Report produced.'
2 GL	This action will be updated to the following: 'Maintain a Climate and Biodiversity Action Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) to ensure development of policy. All other SPCs to ensure climate resilience are incorporated into policy development. Place Climate Action Policy as a Standing Item on Corporate Policy Group meetings.'
12 GL	This action will be updated to the following: Accreditation to the International Standard for Energy Management ISO 50001 by 2024 to deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual plan • register of opportunities • 3-year cycle • energy review Including monitoring and reporting to SEAL.'
5 BET	This action will be updated to the following: 'Implement and promote the National Retrofitting Housing Programme for Wicklow housing stock, achieving a BER of B2 or cost optimal level equivalent. A minimum of 700 housing units to be refurbished. Provide a minimum of 750 newly constructed housing units to a Building Energy Rating (BER) of A2 or in compliance with relevant guidelines within the lifetime of the Climate Action Plan Having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity; and the need to appropriately protect and conserve protected structures, during any retrofitting works.'
20 BET	This action will be updated to the following: 'Fleet Management: Implement a transport energy management system including a fuel management system into the council fleet. Procure only zero emission veh., unless the vehicle is exempt under EC Regs SI381 of 2021, whilst ensuring appropriate end-of-life management practices are in place for zero emission vehicles. Investigate options to convert the existing council fleet to a low carbon fuel source where feasible such as Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil (HVO), whilst ensuring energy/fuel used to power local authority alternative vehicles is sustainably sourced.'
3 NEGI	This action will be updated to the following: 'Ensure all relevant legislation and regulation on climate change and flood management is integrated into council policies and guidelines, including the promoting of natural flood measures. Undertake Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of all Local Area Plans and Development Plans. Implement the OPW Flood Risk Management Guidelines and best practices to ensure that all developments consider climate resilience and demonstrate that they integrate Nature-Based SuDS and Nature-Based Solutions to address surface water management. Ensure due regard is given to environmental sensitivities, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.'
1 CRT	This action will be updated to the following: 'Administer the funding to local community groups for climate action through the Community Climate Action Fund ensuring a diversity of themes covered. Include sustainability and climate change scoring on relevant grant assessments to ensure that community groups/stakeholders consider climate action in all their grant funded activities.'



Action	Summary of Revision
18 SRM	<p>This action will be updated to the following:</p> <p>'Review existing work practices and offices in order to promote climate change measures. Review the existing IT systems in order to reduce paper usage.'</p>
5 ADZ & BE&T	<p>This action will be updated to the following:</p> <p>'Implement the Retrofitting Housing Programme for existing housing stock achieving a BER of B2 or cost optimal level equivalent. Provide newly constructed housing units to an A2 BER rating or in compliance with relevant guidelines within the lifetime of the Climate Action Plan. Having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, European sites and biodiversity. Create awareness of works undertaken and their benefits to encourage retrofitting in private housing stock.'</p>



3. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

3.1 Introduction

Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive states that: *'Where an environmental assessment is required under Article 3(1), an environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated.'*

The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternative means of achieving the strategic goals of the LACAP (taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of a plan or programme) are identified, described and evaluated for their likely significant effects on the environment. Such reasonable alternative must be realistic and capable of implementation.

Reasonable alternatives to the LACAP were initially explored and examined during the SEA Scoping stage of the SEA process, having regard to the scope, function and strategic aims and main objectives of the LACAP, as defined in the Local Authority Climate Action Plan. This process facilitated the accurate identification of reasonable alternatives to the LACAP and also suitably informed the plan-making process, ensuring optimal environmental outcomes.

Reasonable alternatives were assessed against the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) established for the aspects of the baseline environment which are likely to be significantly affected by the LACAP.

3.2 Approach to Developing Reasonable Alternatives

A range of alternatives to the LACAP were considered during the plan-making process. The approach for identifying reasonable alternatives to the LACAP is defined below:

1. Iterative communication was held between the plan-making and environmental assessment teams to identify the various alternative approaches and options being considered to achieve the vision of the plan - the reduction of GHG emissions at Local Authority organizational level and within the Community in support of Climate Action policy. This communication commenced early on during the plan-making process.
2. Reasonable alternatives considered were identified. For an alternative to be considered reasonable, it must be practical/functional, realistic and implementable. An evaluation of whether each alternative was practical/functional, reasonable and implementable took place. This evaluation considered the following factors:
 - 2.1. The vision of high-level objectives of the LACAP.
 - 2.2. The geographic scope of the LACAP.
 - 2.3. The actual powers and functions of the Local Authority.
 - 2.4. The climate action merits of the alternative.
 - 2.5. The genuine ability of the alternative to achieve the plan vision and high-level objectives.
 - 2.6. The technical feasibility of the alternative.
 - 2.7. The availability of resources, including financial resources to deliver the plan within the required timeframe.
 - 2.8. The policy hierarchy and the parameters placed around the LACAP by higher-level policy.
 - 2.9. The legislative context and the parameters placed around the DLACAP by climate action and environmental related legislation.



The toolkit contained in the EPA's guidelines entitled 'Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment Good Practice Guidance' (2015) was utilized when identifying reasonable alternatives. The 'Why? What? Where? When?' Model defined in the guidelines were used when framing reasonable alternatives, as shown in Figure 3-1.

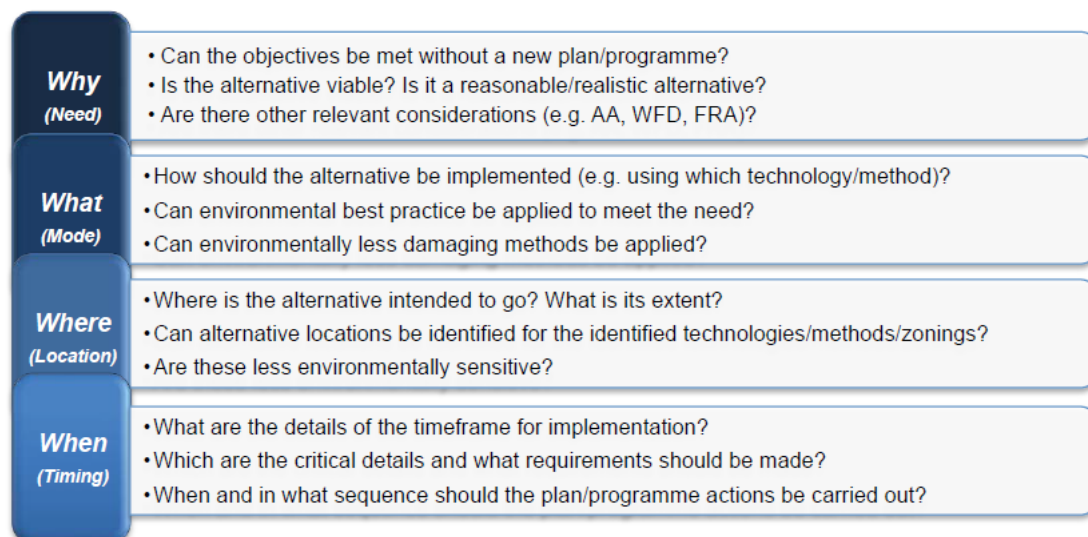


Figure 3-1: 'Why? What? Where? When?' Model for framing alternatives - Adapted from Figure 4.3 Developing and Assessing Alternatives in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Process (EPA, 2015).

3.3 Identification and Description of Reasonable Alternatives

Reasonable alternatives to the LACAP were identified. A description of these reasonable alternatives and the reasons for selecting these reasonable alternatives are presented in Table 3-1.

A 'Do Nothing' or 'Do Minimum' alternative was not a reasonable alternative in this instance as the preparation of an effective LACAP is a statutory requirement under Section 16 of the Climate Act.



Table 3-1: Reasonable Alternatives to the LACAP

Reasonable Alternative	Description of Reasonable Alternative	Reasoning for selecting this Reasonable Alternative
Alternative 1 - The Pareto Approach: Prioritize reducing GHG emissions from largest GHG emitting sectors to mitigate against climate change impacts.	This alternative involved developing a LACAP that primarily focusses on climate mitigation and reducing GHG emissions associated with the largest GHG emitting sectors in the County that a local authority can reasonable influence having regard to the functions of a local authority - the Residential and Transport sectors.	This was a viable alternative that could achieve a significant reduction in GHG emissions by prioritizing and supporting climate mitigation related action for the Residential and Transport sectors. The alternative would cover the period from 2024 to 2029 (the duration of the prospective LACAP).
Alternative 2 - The Holistic Approach: Adopt a multi-pronged approach and focus on a range of priority areas to mitigate against and adapt to climate change impacts.	This alternative involved developing a LACAP that has a balanced focus on both climate mitigation and adaptation across several theme areas and all socio-economic sectors.	This was a viable alternative that would have enhanced potential to reduce GHG emissions across multiple sectors, potential to offset GHG emissions, and greater potential to protect the local community and the environment from climate change related risks. Climate mitigation and adaptation actions across a wide breath of theme areas would be supported by the LACAP. The alternative would cover the period from 2024 to 2029 (the duration of the prospective LACAP).
Alternative 3 - The Holistic and Participatory Approach (Current LACAP): Adopt a multi-pronged approach - that has a strong community engagement emphasis - and focus on a range of priority areas to mitigate against and adapt to climate change impacts.	This alternative involved developing a LACAP that has a balanced focus on both climate mitigation and adaptation across several theme areas and all socio-economic sectors, and which has a strong community engagement emphasis, which underpins, supports and drives the climate action contained in the plan.	This was a viable alternative that would have enhanced potential to reduce GHG emissions across multiple sectors, potential to offset GHG emissions, and greater potential to protect the local community and the environment from climate change related risks. Climate mitigation and adaptation actions across a wide breath of theme areas would be supported by the LACAP. The range of climate mitigation and adaptation actions defined in the LACAP is likely to have better community level and organizational support given its strong community engagement emphasis. The alternative would cover the period from 2024 to 2029 (the duration of the prospective LACAP).



3.4 Evaluation of Reasonable Alternatives and Reasons for Choosing the Preferred Plan

An evaluation of the potential effects of the reasonable alternatives on the baseline environment was carried out in accordance with the SEA Directive and best practice guidelines. This evaluation is documented in the SEA Environmental Report for the LACAP. A summary of this evaluation and the reason for choosing the preferred Plan is presented below.

Alternative 1 - The Pareto Approach - would of lead to some positive environmental effects and would of resulted in the reduction of GHG emissions in the sectors that the local authority can control or exert substantial influence on that contribute most in terms of GHG emission in the County - the Residential and Transport sectors. It is less likely that this alternative would have delivered the wide-ranging climate mitigation and offsetting related action required to fully realize GHG emission reduction potential in the County. It is also less likely this alternative would have defined a wide range of climate adaptation measures that would fully protect biodiversity, heritage resources, environmental receptors and people from climate change risks. This alternative approach may have generated several negative environmental effects, which would not be counterbalanced by the positive environmental effects associated with Alternatives 2 and 3.

Alternative 2 - The Holistic Approach - and Alternative 3 - The Holistic and Participatory Approach - would have both broadly delivered suitably wide ranging and effective climate action. These alternatives have the potential to generate multiple positive environmental effects, including a reduction in GHG emissions at organizational, community and sectoral levels, in addition to a variety of other environmental benefits. These alternatives would have placed a balanced emphasis on both climate mitigation and adaptation action, ensuring climate change related environmental risks are adequately understood and managed at community level.

Alternative 3 had the best potential to deliver effective climate action given its holistic, wide encompassing nature; and given its strong community engagement emphasis, which supports better participation in climate action at community level. Alternative 3 had better potential therefore to fully realize potential environmental effects than Alternative 2.

Reasonable Alternative 3 - The Holistic and Participatory Approach - therefore constituted the preferred alternative or preferred plan.



4. SEA CONCLUSION

The reasonable alternative evaluation presented in the preceding section resulted in the development of a LACAP that achieves the best environmental outcomes in comparison to other reasonable alternative considered.

The adoption of the mitigation measures to be integrated into the LACAP, in combination with the continued adoption of the development planning and control related environmental protection measures defined in the CDP will prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any potential negative environmental effects due to the implementation of the LACAP. No further mitigation measures are required for the LACAP.

With the adoption of the defined mitigation measures, the implementation of the adopted LACAP will not result in any likely, significant, adverse environmental effects.

All potential effects that may cause transboundary impacts will also be appropriately mitigated with the adoption of the defined mitigation. Mitigation measures have been adopted to ensure that the environmental effects of Plan Action are controlled at the source. Thus, it can be concluded that the LACAP will not have any likely, significant transboundary impacts.



5. SEA MONITORING

The SEA Directive requires that the environmental effects of the implementation of a plan are monitored in order 'to identify at an early stage unforeseen effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action.'

A series of indicators and targets were established for identified SEOs to enable ongoing monitoring and measurement of LACAP implementation performance, the environmental effects of the implementation of the LACAP and the efficacy of environmental mitigation measures. Such monitoring will be carried out regularly to support plan implementation.

SEO indicators are simple and effective quantifiable indicators used to measure the environmental effects of implementing the LACAP and the progress of SEO objectives and targets. SEO targets set focussed, measurable aims and thresholds that the LACAP can support the achievement of.

WCC are responsible for implementation of the SEA monitoring programme. The environmental effects (including positive, negative and cumulative effects) of LACAP implementation will be monitored once every year over the course of the plan's five-year lifetime. This monitoring will be carried out by the Climate Action section of Wicklow County Council who will report on progress and performance to the relevant SPC annually. A monitoring report will be prepared to document monitoring outcomes. This report shall be made available for public inspection.

Where monitoring identifies that the implementation of the LACAP is having a significant negative environmental effect, an in-depth review of the LACAP should take place and the LACAP should be updated in a manner that satisfactorily mitigates these environmental effects (i.e., through the adoption of additional environmental mitigation measures.). Similarly, where monitoring indicates that potential positive environmental effects associated with LACAP implementation are not being adequately realized, the LACAP should be reviewed and updated in a manner that supports the realization of all potential positive environmental effects, having regard to the overall vision and high-level objectives of the plan.

The SEA Monitoring Programme established for the LACAP is contained in Table 4-1. This monitoring programme has been developed in accordance with EPA guidelines entitled 'Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring' (2020). The monitoring programme includes detail on the indicators, targets and data sources used to monitor and measure progress.

A stand-alone monitoring report on the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan will be prepared in advance of the plan review process. The Council 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 remedial action.



Table 4-1: SEA Monitoring Programme

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
Overall	O1	Ensure, where appropriate, that lower-level plans and projects contribute to overall environmental monitoring processes within the County.	Lower-level plan and project accordance with the plan.	Require all lower-level plans and projects have appropriate regard to and appropriately support all action and development proposals defined in the Plan. Ensure planning policy and climate action policy is aligned.	Review of Local Area Plans. Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Review of lower-level plan SEA documentation.
Population & Human Health	PHH1	Avoid or, minimise impacts to population and human health.	Number of spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan.	No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan.	Consultation with the Health Service Executive (HSE)/Health Atlas Ireland and the EPA.
	PHH2	Ensure the Decarbonising Zone avoids and minimises impacts to the existing economic activities within the area and does not compromise/conflict with existing land use objectives.	Compliance of action and development supported by the plan with policies and land use objectives protective/supportive of economic development in the county defined in the County Development Plan (CDP) or County Local Area Plans.	No contravention of policies and land use objectives protective/supportive of economic development in the county defined in the CDP or County Local Area Plans. Planning consent for development proposals supported by the plan only to be granted where development will be carried out in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.	Internal monitoring of compliance with CDP Policy Objectives. Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.
Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna	B1	Ensure Climate Action does not conflict with biodiversity protection, restoration and rehabilitation.	Compliance of action and development supported by the plan with policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the CDP. Condition of habitats impacted by climate change (Area km2 /length metres).	No contravention of policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the CDP. Ensure no habitats are impacted by the effects of climate change. Ensure no reduction in the number of geographic distribution of species as a result of climate change effects.	Internal monitoring of compliance with CDP Policy Objectives. Internal monitoring of compliance with the County Biodiversity Action Plan. Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
			<p>Number and geographical distribution of Species or Species population trends impacted by climate change.</p> <p>Compliance of action and development supported by the plan with policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the County's Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>	<p>No contravention of policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the County's Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Planning consent for development proposals supported by the plan only to be granted where development complies with policy supporting biodiversity protection and enhancement.</p>	
	B2	Ensure compliance with Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to protection of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species ⁴ .	Condition of European Sites and annexed species.	No adverse impacts on the condition of European Sites and Annexed habitats and species as a result of plan implementation.	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Consultation with the NPWS.</p> <p>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive.</p> <p>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's National Birds Directive Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12.</p> <p>Review of NPWS publications regarding the status of European sites.</p>

⁴ '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.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
	B3	Support 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 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.	Condition of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora. Linear meters of riparian corridors enhanced with native planting. Fragmentation or breaks in continuity of habitats and loss of wildlife corridors, stepping stones and connectivity (km2). Number of developments consented that have significant greenspace proposals.	No adverse impacts on the condition of features of the landscape which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function as stepping stones (designated or not) - are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as a result of plan implementation. Increase linear metres of riparian corridor enhanced with native planting. Reduce habitat fragmentation or breaks. Increase number of developments consented that have significant greenspace proposals.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Mapping of LR important habitats and species as part of the County Biodiversity Plan.
	B4	To avoid or minimize significant impacts on semi-natural habitats, species, environmental features, or other sustaining resources in designated national sites, non-designated locally important sites, and sites proposed for designation; and to comply with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2012 with regard to listed species.	Condition of semi-natural habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated national sites, non-designated locally important sites, and sites proposed for designation. Status of listed species in the Wildlife Acts 1976 - 2012.	No adverse impacts on condition of semi-natural habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated national sites, non-designated locally important sites, and sites proposed for designation, as a result of plan implementation. No adverse impacts on listed species in the Wildlife Acts 1976 - 2012 as a result of plan implementation.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Mapping of LR important habitats and species as part of the County Biodiversity Plan.
	B5	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration in response to the biodiversity emergency.	Compliance of development supported by the plan with policies providing for the protection and enhancement of	No contravention of policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the CDP.	Internal monitoring of compliance with CDP Policy Objectives. Internal monitoring of compliance with the County Biodiversity Action Plan.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
			<p>Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined the CDP.</p> <p>No. of developments consented that have significant greenspace proposals.</p> <p>Improved biodiversity areas (Area km2 /length metres).</p> <p>Compliance of development supported by the plan with policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the County's Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>	<p>Increase number of developments consented that have significant greenspace proposals.</p> <p>Increase quantum of improved biodiversity areas.</p> <p>No contravention of policies providing for the protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and flora and fauna defined in the County's Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Planning consent for development proposals supported by the plan only to be granted where development complies with policy supportive of biodiversity protection and enhancement.</p>	<p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Mapping of LR important habitats and species as part of the County Biodiversity Plan.</p>
Landscape & Visual Amenity	L1	Avoid or, minimise impacts to statutory landscape designations defined in the CDP.	<p>Status of Landscape Character Areas, High Amenity Zones, Historic Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects.</p> <p>Number of developments consented that result in avoidable adverse impacts on Landscape Character Areas, High Amenity Zones, Historic Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects.</p> <p>Number of areas in the local authority functional area designated for their landscape character.</p>	<p>All action and development proposals supported by the plan must comply with policy objectives relating to the protection of Landscape Character Areas, High Amenity Zones, Historic Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects defined in the CDP.</p> <p>No development supported by the plan should have an adverse impact on Landscape Character Areas, High Amenity Zones, Historic Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects.</p>	<p>Internal monitoring of compliance with CDP Policy Objectives.</p> <p>Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.</p> <p>Review of future iterations of the Landscape Character Assessment.</p>



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
	L2	Avoid or minimise adverse visual effects on residential receptors or other sensitive visual receptors.	Number of developments consented that result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on residential receptors or other sensitive visual receptors. Number of areas in the local authority functional area designated for their visual amenity.	No development supported by the plan should have a significant adverse visual impact on residential receptors or other sensitive visual receptors. All development supported by the plan should adhere to relevant Development Management Standards defined in the CDP, in particular standards defined in relation to physical and visual impacts.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Review of future iterations of the Landscape Character Assessment.
Cultural Heritage - Archaeology & Architectural	CH1	Avoid impacts upon archaeological heritage (including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)) and architectural heritage (including entries to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAHs)).	Percentage of features contained in the RMP (and, where relevant, the associated surrounding context) protected from adverse effects due to action and development occurring as a result of this plan. Percentage of features contained in the RPS and NIAH (and, where relevant, the associated surrounding context) protected from adverse effects due to action and development occurring as a result of this plan.	No features contained in the RMP (nor the associated surrounding context) should be significantly adversely affected as a result of the implementation of this plan. No features contained in the RPS and NIAH (nor the associated surrounding context) should be significantly adversely affected as a result of the implementation of this plan.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Consultation with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media Review of Heritage Plan environmental effect monitoring
Soils	S1	Avoid or minimise effects on mineral resources or soils.	Number of instances of significant adverse impacts on mineral resources or soils occurring, including the pollution, loss or degradation of mineral resources or soils, as a result of action and development supported by the plan.	No instances of significant adverse impacts on mineral resources or soils occurring as a result of action and development supported by the plan.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Consultation with Geological Survey of Ireland and review of published data on the soils environment.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
Land Use	LU1	Avoid or minimise effects on existing land use.	Number of instances of significant adverse impacts on existing land use as a result of plan implementation.	No instances of significant adverse impacts on existing land use as a result of plan implementation.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Review of Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry related Greenhouse Gas emissions calculated in the Baseline Emission Inventory.
Air Quality and Noise	AQN1	Increase the number of people travelling to work or school via public transport or by non-mechanical means.	% change in modal split. Length of new sustainable transport routes developed.	Reduction in private car use. Extension and improvement of the sustainable transport network in the plan area.	Central Statistics Office (CSO) Population data - Commuting in Ireland. Internal monitoring of length of new sustainable transport routes developed.
	AQN2	Avoid or minimise effects on local air quality.	Number of developments consented that result in avoidable adverse air quality impacts on sensitive receptors. Number of exceedances of ambient air quality standards in the County, as monitored under the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network. Improvements in air quality status in the county.	No development supported by the plan should have a significant adverse air quality impact on sensitive receptors. All development supported by the plan should adhere to relevant Development Management Standards defined in the CDP relating to the protection of air quality. Minimise ambient air quality standard exceedances in the County.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Consultation with the EPA. Review of EPA Air Quality Monitoring undertaken in the County. Review of EPA annual 'Air Quality in Ireland' Report
	AQN3	Avoid or minimise adverse noise impacts.	Number of sensitive receptors exposed to noise nuisance.	No sensitive receptors exposed to nuisance noise in the County.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Monitoring of internal noise complaint investigations undertaken. Consultation with the EPA.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
Water	W1	Maintain and/or improve, the quality and status of surface waters.	Status of surface water bodies as reported by the EPA Water Monitoring Programme for the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Status of bathing waters as monitored under the Bathing Water Directive.	Number of Pollution Incidents detected due to poor bathing water quality results. Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status.' No deterioration in the status of any bathing waters, having appropriate regard to bathing water mandatory and guidelines values defined in the Bathing Water Directive. Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the national River Basin Management Plan.	EPA surface water monitoring data and reports. EPA bathing water monitoring data and reports. Review of environmental quality data detailed in the EPA Maps Application
	W2	Maintain and/or improve, the chemical and quantitative status of groundwaters.	Status of groundwater bodies as reported by the EPA National Groundwater Monitoring Programme for the WFD.	No deterioration in the status of groundwater quality, having appropriate regard to Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values defined under Directive 2006/118/EC.	EPA groundwater monitoring data and reports. Review of environmental quality data detailed in the EPA Maps Application
	W3	Prevent impact upon the WFD status of surface waters and groundwater in line with the requirements of the WFD.	Number of instances of significant adverse impact on surface water or groundwater bodies resulting in a reduction in water quality or the ability of a water body to achieve 'good' water quality status.	No instances of significant adverse impact on surface water or groundwater bodies resulting in a reduction in water quality or the ability of a water body to achieve 'good' water quality status.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects. Consultation with the EPA.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
	W4	Comply as appropriate with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) consented within flood risk areas.	Minimise developments (supported by the plan) granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk, having appropriate regard to the Flood Risk Management guidelines.	Internal monitoring of development projects granted planning consent.
	W5	Prevent impact upon drinking water quality	Number of non-compliances with Drinking Water Quality Standards defined in the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023.	No non-compliances with Drinking Water Quality Standards defined in the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023.	EPA Drinking Water Quality Reports. Review of environmental quality data detailed in the EPA Maps Application
Material Assets	MAI1	Avoid or minimise effects on built/amenity assets and infrastructure	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) adversely affecting built/amenity assets and infrastructure.	No incompatible development (supported by the plan) adversely affecting built/amenity assets and infrastructure.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects.
	MAI2	Avoid or minimise effects on existing and (where known) planned infrastructure.	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned infrastructure, including water supply, wastewater management, energy and transport infrastructure.	No incompatible development (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned material assets infrastructure.	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of development projects, including monitoring of effects on other future planned or committed material asset infrastructure projects. Consultation with Irish Water, Gas Networks Ireland, ESB Networks and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
	MAI3	Promote sustainable transportation.	% change in modal split. Kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network. Kilometres of permanent integrated cycling network. Number of Electric Vehicle charging points in the county.	Percentage increase in the number of public transport users in the County Increase kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network. Increase kilometres of permanent segregated cycling network.	CSO Population data - Commuting in Ireland. Internal monitoring of length of new sustainable transport routes developed.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
			Total Area of road reallocated for sustainable alternatives (m2).	Increase number of Electric Vehicle charging points in the county. Increase Total Area of road reallocated for sustainable alternatives.	
	MAI4	Promote sustainable waste management.	Tonnes of hazardous waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually. Tonnes of W.E.E.E. waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually. Tonnes of Bulky waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually. Tonnes of garden waste received at Council Waste Management Facilities annually.	Increase waste recycling in the County. Reduce waste generation in the County.	EPA Waste Statistics. Consultation with the EPA.
	MAI5	Promote sustainable water use and drainage management.	Level of water use in the County. Compliance with Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) related development management standards defined in the CDP.	Reduced water use in the county. All development (supported by the plan) must comply with SuDS related development management standards defined in the CDP.	CSO water consumption data. Internal monitoring of flood risk associated with development projects and development project compliance with relevant flood risk and management related development management standards.
Tourism & Recreation	TR1	Avoid or minimise effects upon tourism and recreation amenities.	Visitor trips to local authority functional area	Stable or increasing number of visitor trips to local authority functional area	Fáilte Ireland Data on Tourism Performance
Climate Change	CF1	Delivery of the necessary action to support the national target of 80% electricity from renewable sources by 2030.	Level of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in the County. Level of renewable energy infrastructure in the County.	Reduce GHG emissions associated with the Energy sector in the County. Increase the level of renewable energy infrastructure in the County.	EPA National Emission Inventory. Baseline Emission Inventory for the County.



Environmental Component	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicators	Targets	Data Source
					Megawatt hour (MWh) output from renewable energy infrastructure in the county.
	CF2	Actively support the delivery of all national climate policy as appropriate to the county with the prioritisation and acceleration of evidence-based measures.	Level of GHG emissions in the County	Reduce GHG emissions for all sectors in the County.	EPA National Emission Inventory. Baseline Emission Inventory for the County.
	CF3	CF3: Assist in the delivery of the climate neutrality objective at local and community levels.	Level of GHG emissions in the County. Level of GHG emissions in the Decarbonising Zone. Net addition of tree cover added.	Reduce GHG emission in the County to Net Zero. Reduce Decarbonising Zone GHG emissions to Net Zero. Increase level of tree cover in the County.	EPA National Emission Inventory. Baseline Emission Inventory for the County. Baseline Emission Inventory for the Decarbonising Zone.
	CF4	Deliver a Decarbonising Zone (DZ) within the local authority area to act as a test bed for a range of climate mitigation and adaptation measures in a specifically defined area through the identification of projects and outcomes that will assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective.	Level of GHG emissions in the Decarbonising Zone.	Reduce Decarbonising Zone GHG emissions to Net Zero.	Baseline Emission Inventory for the Decarbonising Zone.
Inter-relationships	IR1	Maintain and improve the health of people, ecosystems and natural processes Actively seek to integrate opportunities for environmental enhancement during adaptation to climate change	Number of blue and green infrastructure measures included as part of development projects that have been granted planning consent.	Increase the number of blue and green infrastructure measures included as part of development projects that have been granted planning consent.	Review of granted planning consents.



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