

# AA CONCLUSION STATEMENT

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FOR

## VARIATION No. 4

TO THE

# WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028 (AS VARIED)

for: **Wicklow County Council**



by: **CAAS Ltd.**



**FEBRUARY 2026**

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# Section 1 Introduction and Background

## 1.1 Introduction

This is the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Conclusion Statement for Variation No. 4 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028. The obligation to undertake AA derives from Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC as transposed into Irish legislation by, inter alia, the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action (such as a plan or programme) or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of any European Site in view of its conservation objectives. This AA Conclusion Statement should be read in conjunction with the Variation and associated documents including the AA Natura Impact Report (NIR).

## 1.2 Legislative Requirements in relation to AA

In carrying out the AA for the Variation the Council must take account of matters including those arrayed in the first column on Table 1.1 below. The second column identifies how these issues have been addressed.

**Table 1.1 Matters taken into account by the AA**

Matters taken into account by the AA	How addressed by AA
The Natura Impact Report	An AA NIR accompanies this AA Conclusion Statement and the Variation.
Any supplemental information furnished in relation to any such report	This AA Conclusion Statement accompanies the NIR that provides additional detail on European Sites.  Submissions made during the Variation preparation/AA process were taken into account in the preparation of the final, consolidated AA NIR.  Proposed Material Alterations were screened for the need to undertake Stage 2 AA (Stage 2 AA was not required for the Alterations).
If appropriate, any additional information sought by the authority and furnished by the applicant in relation to a Natura Impact Report	
Any information or advice obtained by the public authority	
If appropriate, any written submissions or observations made to the public authority in relation to the application for consent for proposed plan or project	
Any other relevant information	

In addition to the above, the Council is required to make available for inspection a determination regarding the outcome of the assessment with respect to whether or not the Variation would adversely affect the integrity of a European site (a copy of this determination is provided at Section 4).

## 1.3 AA Conclusion Statement

Non-Statutory AA guidance (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009) states that (Section 4.14) it *"is recommended that planning authorities include a clear and discrete AA Conclusion Statement as a distinct section in the written statement of the plan separate to the SEA statement."* This guidance recommends that the following issues are addressed by the AA Conclusion Statement:

- Summary of how the findings of the AA were factored into the Variation (see Section 2);
- Reasons for choosing the Variation as adopted, in the light of other reasonable alternatives considered as part of the AA process (see Section 3);
- A declaration that the Variation as adopted will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European Sites (provided at Section 4); and
- The NIR (the AA NIR is accompanied by this AA Conclusion Statement and has informed the AA Determination – see Section 4).

Furthermore, as stated in the Draft "Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2021):

*"...There is a similar requirement to publish a determination relating to the AA that may have been undertaken. Under Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive the determination (often termed an 'AA Conclusion Statement') must state as to whether or not the Draft Plan would adversely affect the integrity of a European site. However as stated in Section 3.5, this determination must have been made prior to the adoption of the Draft Plan."*

This AA Conclusion Statement addresses the above issues, including the signed AA Determination included at Section 4.

## Section 2 How the findings of the AA were factored into the Variation

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

The Variation was prepared in an iterative manner whereby the Variation and AA documents have informed subsequent versions of the other. The findings of the AA were integrated into the Variation through mitigation measures. These mitigation measures ensure that the Variation will not affect the integrity of the European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the detailed Variation preparation process undertaken by the Planning Department for the County Development Plan, combined with specialist input from the SEA and AA processes, resulted in the integration of mitigation into that Plan that must be complied with in the Plan area.

The mitigation measures included in the Variation and the County Development Plan that are most relevant to the protection of European sites are identified in Table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1 Mitigation measures**

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
<p><b>Alignment with County Development Plan</b></p>	<p>As detailed under the Variation (proposed to be Part 6 of Volume 2 of the Development Plan): "In particular, development standards, retail strategies, housing strategies etc. that are included in the County Development Plan shall not be repeated. Any specific policies / objectives or development standards required for each LPF area will be stated as precisely that, and in all cases will be consistent with the County Development Plan".</p> <p><b>Section B.6 Heritage, Biodiversity &amp; Green Infrastructure</b>                      The purpose of this chapter is to set out the specific objectives with regard to the heritage of the LPF area and should be read in conjunction with the County Development Plan - the heritage strategies, objectives, schedules and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area.                      In particular, the County Development Plan addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Archaeology and National Monuments</li> <li>- Architectural heritage, including the Record of Protected Structures, vernacular structures, and Architectural Conservation Areas</li> <li>- Historical &amp; Cultural Heritage</li> <li>- Protected habitats</li> <li>- Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows</li> <li>- Water systems &amp; wetlands</li> <li>- Soils &amp; Geology</li> <li>- Landscape, including Views &amp; Prospects</li> <li>- Green Infrastructure</li> <li>- Recreational Use of Natural Resources</li> <li>- Public Rights of Way</li> <li>- Invasive species (note County Development Plan CPO 17.17 "Work with statutory authorities to prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species and require, where appropriate Invasive Species Management Plans to be prepared as part of the development management process where necessary.")</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B.7 Infrastructure &amp; Services</b>                      The infrastructure strategies, objectives and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area. In particular, the County Development Plan addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainable Transportation;</li> <li>- Water Supply &amp; Demand;</li> <li>- Wastewater Infrastructure; Storm and Surface Water Infrastructure</li> <li>- Flood Risk Management</li> <li>- Waste and Environmental Emissions</li> <li>- Energy and Information Infrastructure</li> </ul> <p><b>There is a vast array of County Development Plan provisions that would have the potential to contribute towards the mitigation of effects on European sites. These are reproduced as follow:</b>                      SCO6 Natural Heritage &amp; Biodiversity - Natural heritage and biodiversity is the cornerstone of Wicklow's identity – 'The Garden of Ireland'. It is essential that we conserve and enhance the County's rich natural heritage and biodiversity for the benefit or current and future generations.                      County Policy Objective (CPO) 4.14 To ensure that key assets in rural areas such as water quality and natural and cultural heritage are protected to support quality of life and economic vitality.                      CPO 4.15 To protect and promote the quality, character and distinctiveness of the rural landscape.                      CPO 9.36 To facilitate the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural activities, whereby watercourses, wildlife habitats, areas of ecological importance and other environmental assets are protected from the threat of pollution, and where development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside. Developments shall not be detrimental to archaeological and heritage features of importance.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) no alternative solution available, (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

<sup>2</sup> Alignment with County Development Plan, overarching protection for ecologically sensitive components or source for potential effect

<sup>3</sup> Note that non-material changes to individual Plan provisions described in this Consolidated Natura Impact Report may be updated during the finalisation of the Plan, including numbering, formatting and graphic design.

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<p>CPO 9.39 To ensure that agricultural developments do not cause increased pollution to watercourses. Developments will be required to adhere to the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC), the Nitrates National Action Programme and the EC (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2009 (as amended), with regard to storage facilities, concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources. Developments will be required to comply with relevant measures, which operate to protect water quality from pollution by agricultural sources. The disposal and storage of agricultural waste shall comply with the standards required by Council.</p> <p>Forestry Strategic Objective To promote state and private afforestation, to a scale and in a manner which maximises its contribution to the County's economic and social well being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the protection of the environment.</p> <p>CPO 9.43 To facilitate afforestation in appropriate locations, in accordance with the 'Wicklow Indicative Forestry Strategy' (Wicklow County Council, 2002), and in co-operation with forestry operators and the Forest Service. The Wicklow Indicative Forestry Strategy was produced by the Council in 2002, in consultation with the Forest Service. The Strategy is intended to be a tool of assistance to planners in dealing with proposals for forestry applications. The Strategy includes a list of areas that are preferred for afforestation and a list of areas where afforestation would be inappropriate by virtue of landscape, soil type, settlement or environmental grounds. The Strategy also includes a series of objectives which are intended to guide planning decisions. The Council will have particular regard to developments that are located in the areas included in 'Table 3: Areas Sensitive to Afforestation', and as per the Strategy, should be consulted on all forestry grant applications in these areas.</p> <p>CPO 9.44 To promote afforestation in co-operation with relevant agencies, including the Forest Service (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine) and forestry operators and to ensure that afforestation is undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the principle of 'sustainable forest management'. The Council will only permit development that complies with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development is compatible with the protection of the environment, and does not cause pollution or degradation of wildlife habitats, natural waters or areas of ecological importance;</li> <li>• the development does not have a negative visual impact on the scenic quality of the countryside, and is of an appropriate nature and scale to the surrounding area;</li> <li>• the development is not detrimental to archaeological or other historic/heritage features; and</li> <li>• the Council will permit forestry development where it is considered that the roads infrastructure (in terms of design, width, surfacing etc.), which is to serve the development, can accommodate the proposed development. No development will be permitted that will result in damage to roads infrastructure or undue nuisance to other road users. The Council may apply a special financial levy to certain developments for works that are required to be undertaken to the road network.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 9.45 To promote the use of forests for appropriate recreation purposes and to facilitate the development of appropriate recreation facilities at suitable locations. The recreational use of forests will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the recreational use is compatible with the other forest objectives, functions and values of the forest, such as timber production, sensitive habitats and important archaeology. Developments will only be permitted that are acceptable in terms of other planning considerations, including the provision of acceptable infrastructure such as roads, car parking, water and sewerage infrastructure.</p> <p>Fishing Strategic Objective - To promote the development of the County's sea and river fishing industry, to a scale and in a manner, which maximises its contribution to the County's economic and social well-being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the protection of the environment.</p> <p>CPO 9.49 To support the sustainable development of the fisheries and aquaculture industry in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Inland Fisheries Ireland. The Council will not permit development that has a detrimental impact on the environment. In particular, development that has a detrimental impact on the environmental/ ecological/ water quality of seas, rivers and streams, will not be permitted.</p> <p>CPO 9.50 To facilitate the provision of infrastructure, which is necessary for the development of the fishing and aquaculture industry. Infrastructure and buildings in coastal or riverbank locations should be located in proximity to existing landing facilities and shall be of a design that is compatible with the area. Any development, which by reason of its nature or scale is detrimental to the character or amenity of an area, will not be permitted. Any development in the coastal zone shall comply with the objectives of this plan, as set out in Chapter 19.</p> <p>CPO11.1 To promote, encourage and facilitate the development of the tourism and recreation sectors in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>CPO 11.4 To only permit the development of a tourism or recreational facility in a rural area in cases where the product or activity is dependent on its location in a rural situation and where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development does not adversely affect the character, environmental quality and amenity of the rural area or the vitality of any settlement and the provision of infrastructure therein. The natural resource / tourist product / tourist attraction that is essential to the activity shall be located at the site or in close proximity to the site, of the proposed development. The need to locate in a particular area must be balanced against the environmental impact of the development and benefits to the local community.</p> <p>CPO 11.4 To only permit the development of a tourism or recreational facility in a rural area in cases where the product or activity is dependent on its location in a rural situation and where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development does not adversely affect the character, environmental quality and amenity of the rural area or the vitality of any settlement and the provision of infrastructure therein. The natural resource / tourist product / tourist attraction that is essential to the activity shall be located at the site or in close proximity to the site, of the proposed development. The need to locate in a particular area must be balanced against the environmental impact of the development and benefits to the local community.</p> <p>CPO 11.6 To ensure that tourism and recreation related developments are appropriately located in the County. Subject to the following exceptions, all tourist and recreation related developments are 'open for consideration' in all landscape areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The following tourist uses will not be permitted within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (both the Mountain Uplands Area and the Coastal Area): Static caravans and mobile homes;</li> <li>• Holiday homes will not be permitted in any landscape category other than urban zones except where they comply with objectives CPO 11.13, CPO 11.14, CPO 11.15 and CPO 11.16.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 11.29 To encourage eco-tourism projects or those tourism projects with a strong environmentally sustainable design and operational ethos.</p> <p>CPO 11.42 To promote and encourage the recreational use of coastline, rivers and lakes and the development of 'blueways' in the County subject to normal environmental protection and management criteria. Where such recreational uses involve the development of structures or facilities, the Planning Authority will ensure that the proposals will respect the natural amenity and character of the area, listed views and prospects onto and from the area in question. Where possible, such structures should be set back an appropriate distance from the actual amenity itself and should not adversely affect the unique sustainable quality of these resources.</p> <p>CPO 11.47 Where relevant, the Council and those receiving permission for development under the plan, shall manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant environmental effects, including loss of habitat and disturbance. Management measures may include ensuring that new projects and activities are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities; visitor/habitat management plans will be required for proposed projects as relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>CPO 11.48 Ensure the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should</p>

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<p>include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals.</p> <p>CPO 11.49 Where projects for new tourism projects identified in this chapter are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable development.</p> <p>CPO 12.7 To facilitate the development of services and utilities for electric vehicles and alternative fuel vehicles types, including the roll-out of additional electric charging points in collaboration with relevant agencies at appropriate locations.</p> <p>CPO 12.9 To seek to ensure all new or upgraded transport infrastructure is climate resilient.</p> <p>CPO 12.10 Where projects for new infrastructure identified in this chapter are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable mobility. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.</p> <p>CPO 13.1 To ensure and support the implementation of the EU Groundwater Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin and Sub-Basin Management Plans and Blue Dot Catchment Programme, to ensure the protection, improvement and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and estuarine waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to a deterioration in water quality. The Council will also have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 and 36 which provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>CPO13.2 To prevent development that would pollute water bodies and in particular, to regulate the installation of effluent storage and disposal systems in the vicinity of natural water bodies or development that would exacerbate existing underlying water contamination.</p> <p>CPO13.3 To minimise alterations or interference with river / stream beds, banks and channels, except for reasons of overriding public health and safety (e.g. to reduce risk of flooding); a buffer of generally 25m along watercourses should be provided (or other width, as determined by the Planning Authority having particular regard to 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment' by Inland Fisheries Ireland for urban location) free from inappropriate development, with undeveloped riparian vegetation strips, wetlands and floodplains generally being retained in as natural a state as possible.</p> <p>CPO13.4 To ensure that any development or activity with the potential to impact on ground water has regard to the GSI Groundwater Protection Scheme (see Map 17.06 Groundwater Vulnerability).</p> <p>CPO 13.5 To ensure compliance with and to implement the provisions of the Nitrates Directive in so far as it falls within the remit of the Council to do so.</p> <p>CPO 13.6 To encourage and promote the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>CPO13.7 To support and facilitate projects and programmes that aim to improve scientific knowledge and public awareness of the importance of natural water quality, and in particular to support the LAWPRO programme in County Wicklow and adjoining counties as appropriate.</p> <p>CPO 13.9 To protect existing and potential water resources of the County, in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plans, the Groundwater Protection Scheme and source protection plans for public water supplies.</p> <p>CPO 13.10 To require new developments to connect to public water supplies where services are adequate or where they will be provided in the near future, or where extension of an adjacent water supply system is technically and environmentally feasible.</p> <p>CPO 13.11 Where connection to an existing public water supply is not possible, or the existing supply system does not have sufficient capacity, the provision of a private water supply will be only permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposed water supply meets the standards set out in EU and national legislation and guidance, would not be prejudicial to public health, would not impact on the source or yield of an existing supply, particularly a public supply or would not adversely affect the ability of water bodies to meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. Private water supplies for multi-house developments will not be permitted.</p> <p>CPO 13.15 In order to fulfil the objectives of the Core Strategy, Wicklow County Council will work alongside and facilitate the delivery of Irish Water's Water Services Investment Programme, to ensure that all lands zoned or identified for development are serviced by an adequate wastewater collection and treatment system and in particular, to endeavour to secure the delivery of regional and strategic wastewater schemes.</p> <p>In particular, to support and facilitate the delivery of new / improved wastewater treatment plants in the following settlements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arklow - Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole – Auhtrim - Tinahely - Avoca</li> <li>- Laragh – Glendalough</li> </ul> <p>CPO 13.16 Permission will be considered for private wastewater treatment plants for single rural houses where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the specific ground conditions have been shown to be suitable for the construction of a treatment plant and any associated percolation area;</li> <li>• the system will not give rise to unacceptable adverse impacts on ground waters / aquifers and the type of treatment proposed has been drawn up in accordance with the appropriate groundwater protection response set out in the Wicklow Groundwater Protection Scheme (2003);</li> <li>• the proposed method of treatment and disposal complies with Wicklow County Council's Policy for Wastewater Treatment &amp; Disposal Systems for Single Houses (PE ≤ 10) and the Environmental Protection Agency "Waste Water Treatment Manuals"; and</li> <li>• in all cases the protection of ground and surface water quality shall remain the overriding priority and proposals must definitively demonstrate that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on water quality standards and requirements set out in EU and national legislation and guidance documents.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 13.17 Private wastewater treatment plants for multi-house developments will not be permitted.</p> <p>CPO 13.18 Private wastewater treatment plants for commercial / employment generating development will only be considered where:</p> <p>Irish Water has confirmed the site is due to be connected to a future public system in the area or Irish Water has confirmed there are no plans for a public system in the area;</p> <p>It can clearly demonstrated that the proposed system can meet all EPA / Local Authority environmental criteria; and</p> <p>An annually renewed contract for the management and maintenance of the system is contracted with a reputable company / person, details of which shall be provided to the Local Authority.</p> <p>CPO 13.19 Where any application for a private treatment plant would require a discharge licence under the Water Pollution Acts, a simultaneous application for same shall be required to be made when submitting the planning application.</p> <p>CPO 13.20 Ensure the separation of foul and surface water discharges in new developments through the provision of separate networks.</p> <p>CPO 13.21 Ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in accordance with the Wicklow County Council SuDS Policy to ensure surface water runoff is managed for maximum benefit. In particular to require proposed</p>

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<p>developments to meet the design criteria of each of the four pillars of SuDS design; Water Quality, Water Quantity, Amenity and Biodiversity.</p> <p>CPO 13.22 To promote the use of green infrastructure, such as swales and wetlands, where feasible as landscape features in new development to provide storm / surface runoff storage and reduce pollutants, as well as habitat, recreation and aesthetic functions.</p> <p>CPO 14.14 Underground tanks and storage systems shall be permitted as a last resort only where it can be demonstrated the other more sustainable SuDS infrastructure measures are not feasible. In any case underground tanks and storage systems shall not be permitted under public open space, unless there is no other feasible alternative.</p> <p>CPO 14.15 To promote the use of green infrastructure, such as swales and wetlands, where feasible as landscape features in new development to provide storm / surface runoff storage and reduce pollutants, as well as habitat, recreation and aesthetic functions.</p> <p>CPO 14.16 For developments adjacent to all watercourses of a significant conveyance capacity or where it is necessary to maintain the ecological or environmental quality of the watercourse, any structures (including hard landscaping) must be set back from the edge of the watercourse in accordance with the guidelines in 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment' by Inland Fisheries Ireland.</p> <p>CPO 15.1 To require all developments likely to give rise to significant quantities of waste, either by virtue of the scale of the development or the nature of the development (e.g. one that involves demolition) to submit a construction management plan, which will outline, amongst other things, the plan to minimise waste generation and the plan to protect the environment with the safe and efficient disposal of waste from the site.</p> <p>CPO 15.2 To require all new developments, whether residential, community, agricultural or commercial to make provision for storage and recycling facilities (in accordance with the standards set out in Development &amp; Design Standards of this plan).</p> <p>CPO 15.3 To facilitate the development of existing and new waste prevention and recovery facilities and in particular, to facilitate the development of 'green waste' recovery sites.</p> <p>CPO 15.4 To facilitate the development of waste-to-energy facilities, particularly the use of landfill gas and biological waste.</p> <p>CPO 15.5 To have regard to the Council's duty under the 1996 Waste Management Act (as amended), to provide and operate, or arrange for the provision and operation of, such facilities as may be necessary to promote reuse or for the recovery and disposal of household waste arising within its functional area.</p> <p>CPO 15.6 To facilitate the development of sites, services and facilities necessary to achieve implementation of the objectives of the Regional Waste Management Plan.</p> <p>CPO 15.7 To facilitate the development of sites, services and facilities for the disposal of hazardous household wastes in accordance with the objectives of the Regional Waste Management Plan.</p> <p>CPO 15.9 To regulate and control activities likely to give rise to emissions to air (other than those activities which are regulated by the EPA).</p> <p>CPO 15.10 To require proposals for new developments with the potential for the accidental release of chemicals or dust generation, to submit and have approved by the Local Authority construction and/or operation management plans to control such emissions.</p> <p>CPO 15.11 To require activities likely to give rise to air emissions to implement measures to control such emissions, to undertake air quality monitoring and to provide an annual air quality audit.</p> <p>CPO 15.12 To implement the Wicklow County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 (and any subsequent Plan) in order to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to environmental noise exposure</p> <p>CPO 15.13 To enforce, where applicable, the provisions of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acts 1992 and 2003, and EPA Noise Regulations 2006.</p> <p>CPO 15.14 To regulate and control activities likely to give rise to excessive noise (other than those activities which are regulated by the EPA).</p> <p>CPO 15.15 To require proposals for new developments with the potential to create excessive noise to prepare a construction and/or operation management plans to control such emissions.</p> <p>CPO 15.16 To require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigation measures to undertake noise monitoring and to provide an annual monitoring audit.</p> <p>CPO 15.17 To ensure that all external lighting whether free standing or attached to a building shall be designed and constructed so as not to cause excessive light spillage, glare, or dazzle motorists, and thereby limiting light pollution into the surrounding environment and protecting the amenities of nearby properties, traffic and wildlife.</p> <p>CPO 15.18 To require proposals for new developments with the potential to create light pollution or light impacts on adjacent residences to mitigate impacts, in accordance with the Development &amp; Design Standards set out in this plan.</p> <p>CPO 15.19 To promote the use of low energy LED (or equivalent) lighting.</p> <p>CPO 15.20 To require the design and implementation of a hierarchy of light intensity zones in development schemes to ensure that environmental impact is minimised as far as possible particularly in areas proximate to ecological corridors.</p> <p>CPO 17.1 To protect, sustainably manage and enhance the natural heritage, biodiversity, geological heritage, landscape and environment of County Wicklow in recognition of its importance for nature conservation and biodiversity and as a non renewable resource.</p> <p>CPO 17.2 Ensure the protection of ecosystems and ecosystem services by integrating full consideration of these into all decision making.</p> <p>CPO 17.3 To support and promote the implementation of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan and the County Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>CPO 17.4 To contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of designated ecological sites including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); Wildlife Sites (including proposed Natural Heritage Areas); Salmonid Waters; Flora Protection Order sites; Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979); Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).</p> <p>To contribute towards compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including but not limited to the following and any updated/superseding documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended) , the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) , the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) , the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), EU Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC); EU 'Guidance on integrating ecosystems and their services into decision-making' (European Commission 2019)</li> <li>• National legislation, including the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2010 (as amended) , European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008 (as amended) and the Flora Protection order 2015.</li> <li>• National policy guidelines (including any clarifying circulars or superseding versions of same), including 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment' (2018), 'Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development' (2003), 'Tree Preservation Guidelines', 'Landscape and Landscape Assessment' (draft 2000), 'Appropriate Assessment Guidance' (2010);</li> </ul>

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment and water resource management plans, including the National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 (including any superseding versions of same),</li> <li>• Biodiversity plans and guidelines, including National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 (including any superseding versions of same) and the County Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan;</li> <li>• Ireland's Environment – An Integrated Assessment 2020 (EPA), including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 17.5 Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this plan .</p> <p>CPO 17.6 Ensure that development proposals, contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive. All projects and plans arising from this Plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>CPO 17.7 To maintain the conservation value of all proposed and future Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and to protect other designated ecological sites in Wicklow.</p> <p>CPO 17.8 Ensure ecological impact assessment is carried out for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Annex I habitats, or rare and threatened species including those species protected by law and their habitats. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.</p> <p>CPO 17.9 The Council recognises the natural heritage and amenity value of the Wicklow Mountains National Park and shall consult at all times with National Park management regarding any developments likely to impact upon the conservation value of the park, or on issues regarding visitor areas.</p> <p>CPO 17.10 To support the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the development of site specific conservation objectives (SSCOs) for designated sites.</p> <p>CPO 17.11 To preserve lands at 'The Rocks', Kilcoole (as shown on Map 17.13) in its existing state; to allow no development of these lands; to protect the lands as a natural habitat and biodiversity area; to protect the open nature and landscape quality of the lands.</p> <p>CPO 17.12 To protect non-designated sites from inappropriate development, ensuring that ecological impact assessment is carried out for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on locally important natural habitats, species or wildlife corridors. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.</p> <p>CPO 17.13 To facilitate, in co-operation with relevant stakeholders, the ongoing identification and recording of locally important biodiversity areas and species in County Wicklow, not otherwise protected by legislation and ensure that consideration is given to these in the development management process.</p> <p>CPO 17.14 Ensure that development proposals support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity within the plan area in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, including linear landscape features like watercourses(rivers, streams, canals, ponds, drainage channels, etc), woodlands, trees, hedgerows, road and railway margins, semi-natural grasslands, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems, features which act as stepping stones, such as marshes and woodlands, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones that taken as a whole help to improve the coherence of the European network in Wicklow.</p> <p>CPO 17.15 To protect and enhance wetland sites that are listed as being of C+ or higher importance in the County Wicklow wetlands survey and any subsequent updates or revisions thereof and to implement the recommendations of the County Wicklow wetlands survey.</p> <p>CPO 17.16 Require pollinator friendly landscape management and planting within new developments and on Council owned land.</p> <p>CPO 17.17 Work with statutory authorities to prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species and require, where appropriate Invasive Species Management Plans to be prepared as part of the development management process where necessary.</p> <p>CPO 17.18 To promote the preservation of trees, groups of trees or woodlands in particular native tree species, and those trees associated with demesne planting, in the interest of long-term sustainability of a stable ecosystem amenity or the environmental, as set out in Schedule 10.08 and Map 10.08 A, B &amp; C of this plan.</p> <p>CPO 17.19 To consider the making of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) to protect trees and woodlands of high amenity value generally and in particular where it appears that they are in danger of being felled and in response to requests from local communities.</p> <p>CPO 17.20 Development that requires the felling of mature trees of environmental and/or amenity value, even though they may not have a TPO in place, will be discouraged.</p> <p>CPO 17.21 To strongly discourage the felling of mature trees to facilitate development and encourage tree surgery rather than felling if such is essential to enable development to proceed.</p> <p>CPO 17.22 To require and ensure the preservation and enhancement of native and semi-natural woodlands, groups of trees and individual trees, as part of the development management process, and require the planting of native broad leaved species, and species of local provenance in all new developments.</p> <p>CPO 17.23 To require the retention, wherever possible, of hedgerows and other distinctive boundary treatment in the County. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, provision of the same type of boundary will be required of similar length and set back within the site in advance of the commencement of construction works on the site (unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority).</p> <p>CPO 17.24 To ensure and support the implementation of the EU Groundwater Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin and Sub-Basin Management Plans and Blue Dot Catchment Programme, to ensure the protection, improvement and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and estuarine waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to a deterioration in water quality. The Council will also have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 and 36 which provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>CPO 17.25 Ensure that floodplains and wetlands are retained for their biodiversity and ecosystems services value and resist development and activities that would interfere with the natural water cycle to a degree that would interfere with the survival and stability of these natural habitats.</p> <p>CPO 17.26 Protect rivers, streams and other water courses by avoiding interference with river / stream beds, banks and channels and maintaining a core riparian buffer zone of generally 25m along watercourses (or other width, as determined by the Planning Authority having particular regard to 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment' by Inland Fisheries Ireland for urban location) free from inappropriate development, with undeveloped riparian vegetation strips, wetlands and floodplains generally being retained in as natural a state as possible. Structures such as bridges should be clear span, and designed and built in accordance with Inland Fisheries Ireland guidance.</p>

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<p>CPO 17.33 To have regard to the National Peatlands Strategy (NPWS 2015) as may be applicable.</p> <p>CPO 17.34 Developments sited on peatlands have the potential to increase overall carbon losses, potentially undermining expected carbon savings (in the case of renewable energy developments) and damaging rare habitats of European importance. Project proposals for developments on peatlands shall ensure no adverse impacts arise in relation to: Peatland stability; Carbon emissions balance; and Hydrology and ecology.</p> <p>CPO 17.35 All development proposals shall have regard to the County landscape classification hierarchy in particular the key landscape features and characteristics identified in the Wicklow Landscape Assessment (set in Volume 3 of the 2016 County Development Plan ) and the 'Key Development Considerations' set out for each landscape area set out in Section 5 of the Wicklow Landscape Assessment</p> <p>CPO 17.36 Any application for permission in the AONB which may have the potential to significantly adversely impact the landscape area shall be accompanied by a Landscape / Visual Impact Assessment, which shall include, inter alia, an evaluation of visibility and prominence of the proposed development in its immediate environs and in the wider landscape, a series of photos or photomontages of the site / development from clearly identified vantage points, an evaluation of impacts on any listed views / prospects and an assessment of vegetation / land cover type in the area (with particular regard to commercial forestry plantations which may be felled thus altering character / visibility). The Assessment shall demonstrate that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation.</p> <p>CPO 17.37 To resist development that would significantly or unnecessarily alter the natural landscape and topography, including land infilling / reclamation projects or projects involving significant landscape remodelling, unless it can be demonstrated that the development would enhance the landscape and / or not give rise to adverse impacts</p> <p>CPO 17.38 To protect listed views and prospects from development that would either obstruct the view / prospect from the identified vantage point or form an obtrusive or incongruous feature in that view / prospect. Due regard will be paid in assessing development applications to the span and scope of the view / prospect and the location of the development within that view / prospect.</p> <p>CPO 18.3 New development and redevelopment proposals shall wherever possible, integrate nature based solutions to the design, layout and landscaping of development proposals, and in particular to the delivery of linear parks and connected open spaces along watercourses in order to enhance the existing green infrastructure of the local area. All such proposals will be subject to ecological impact assessment.</p> <p>CPO 18.4 To facilitate the development and enhancement of suitable access to and connectivity between areas of interest for residents, wildlife and biodiversity, with focus on promoting river corridors, Natura 2000 sites, nature reserves and other distinctive landscapes as focal features for linkages between natural, semi natural and formalised green spaces where feasible and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>CPO 18.5 To identify and facilitate the provision of linkages along and between green / river corridors within the county and adjoining counties to create inter connected routes and develop riverside parks and create linkages between them to form 'necklace' effect routes including development of walkways, cycleways, bridleways and wildlife corridors where feasible and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>CPO 18.6 To promote and facilitate the development of coastal trails linking up with existing recreational trails, creating new linkages between coastal sites and inward linkages to settlements and green spaces in built up areas and extensions to existing facilities where feasible and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>CPO 18.11 To support the development of greenways, blueways and other access routes along natural corridors while ensuring that there is no adverse impact on the flora and fauna, biodiversity or water quality of natural assets. Wicklow County Council prioritises environmental protection in our design and construction of routes and surface selection. In particular, to support the development of existing and examine the feasibility of new walking, cycling, horse riding and water based routes and trails along the following routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• from Bray Head, via the Sugarloaf Mountains, joining up with The Wicklow Way;</li> <li>• the extension of the 'Blessington Greenway' walk around the Phoulaphuca reservoir;</li> <li>• the expansion of a lakeshore walk around the Vartry reservoir;</li> <li>• the extension of the old Shillelagh branch recreational trail - railway walk from Arklow to Shillelagh;</li> <li>• the development of a route along the disused Great Southern and Western Railway line (Naas to Tullow branch) through Dunlavin and Baltinglass.</li> <li>• the development of a coastal route from Bray to Arklow as well as links between this potential route and the coast road;</li> <li>• the Wicklow Way and St. Kevin's Way (as permissive waymarked routes).</li> <li>• the Wicklow to Glendalough "pilgrim walk" incorporating ancient wells.</li> <li>• 'Mountains to the Sea' amenity route incorporating Glendalough, Laragh, Annamoe, Roundwood, Newtownmountkennedy and Kilcoole-Newcastle.</li> </ul> <p>CPO 18.13 To facilitate greater public recreational access to the Wicklow coast and improved linkages between the coast and the coast road, subject to full ecological and heritage impact assessment and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>CPO 18.16 To protect the quality of bathing waters and to endeavour to ensure that bathing waters achieve "sufficient or better status" and increase the number of bathing waters classified as "good" or "excellent", in accordance with the Bathing Water Directive (Directive 2006/7/EC).</p> <p>CPO 18.17 Where projects for significant green infrastructure identified in this chapter are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable mobility. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new green infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.</p> <p>CPO 19.13 Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this plan<sup>4</sup>.</p> <p>Ensure that development proposals, contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive. All projects and plans arising from this Plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</p>

<sup>4</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) no alternative solution available, (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<p><b>Cell 3 Bray Head to Greystones (Rathdown) CPO 19.18</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To strictly regulate and manage development in this cell to protect its function as a green break between the built up area of Bray and Greystones. Within this area, the following restrictions apply:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Residential development shall be strictly limited to those persons engaged in agriculture in this cell and who can demonstrate a definable economic need to live on the farm holding;</li> <li>b) The highest standards of siting and design will be rigorously enforced for any developments in this area;</li> <li>c) Commercial and industrial development will be prohibited in the cell.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. To maintain and enhance the cliff path from Bray to Greystones, while preserving its rugged and natural character.</li> <li>3. To strictly control the development of new entrances and access driveways on the R761, to those which can be proven to be necessary for either traffic safety reasons or the normal functioning of the landholding.</li> <li>4. To facilitate coastal protection works (natural, soft and hard engineered), to protect both the amenity value of the Cliff Walk and the significant economic and social value of the railway line.</li> </ol> <p><b>Cell 4 Greystones Town CPO 19.19</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To support the objectives of the relevant Local Area Plan for Greystones – Delgany and Kilcoole, in particular to provide for a high quality integrated harbour/marina mixed development linked to a linear coastal public park and any future heritage park. The development shall provide leisure, recreational, open space and marine facilities, and mixed form residential, commercial, civic and social amenities, centred around the harbour and marina. The development shall provide a link to the coastline with public access and coastal protection works provided to preserve the landscape from further erosion in the future.</li> <li>2. To facilitate the development and enhancement of visitor and recreational facilities along the coastal area, particularly walking routes, car parking areas, signage and changing / toilet facilities.</li> </ol> <p><b>Cell 5 Greystones to Kilcoole (Ballynerrin) CPO 19.20</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To facilitate the development of visitor and interpretative facilities, particularly those relating to bird watching, in a sustainable and suitable manner which does not compromise either landscape quality or habitats.</li> <li>2. To control and limit residential development to that shown to be strictly necessary (in accordance with the County settlement and rural development strategies) and to require the highest standards of siting and design for any new dwellings and regard to environmental designations.</li> <li>3. To prohibit the development of new dwellings within 100m of the shoreline.</li> <li>4. To protect all listed views and prospects along the R761 and coast in this cell.</li> <li>5. To strictly control the development of new entrances and access driveways on the R761, to those which can be proven to be necessary for either traffic safety reasons or the normal functioning of the landholding.</li> <li>6. To facilitate the development of a coastal walk (having due regard to environmental designations and compliance with the EU Habitats Directive) and to restrict development that interferes with the achievement of this objective.</li> <li>7. To facilitate and support the upgrading of Kilcoole train station and associated facilities.</li> <li>8. To facilitate coastal protection works (natural, soft and hard engineered), to protect both the ecological and amenity value of the coastline and the significant economic and social value of the railway line.</li> </ol> <p><b>Cell 6 Kilcoole - Wicklow Town (The Murrough) CPO 19.21</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No development will be permitted that has an adverse impact on the environmental and ecological quality of The Murrough cSAC. The Planning Authority will have particular regard to the impact that all developments have on the integrity of the cSAC, including development that is within the cSAC and development that is not within a designated area, but which is likely to have an effect thereon.</li> <li>2. To facilitate the development of visitor and interpretative facilities, particularly those relating to bird watching and beach usage, in a sustainable and suitable manner which does not compromise either landscape quality or habitats.</li> <li>3. To maintain and improve points of vehicular access to the coast at Six Mile Point, Five Mile Point and Ballybla.</li> <li>4. To strictly control the development of new entrances and access driveways on the R761, to those which can be proven to be necessary for either traffic safety reasons or the normal functioning of the landholding.</li> <li>5. To control and limit residential development to that shown to be strictly necessary (in accordance with the County settlement and rural development strategies) and to require the highest standards of siting and design, which takes due cognisance of the historic settlement pattern in the area and to environmental designations.</li> <li>6. To prohibit the development of new dwellings within 100m of the shoreline.</li> <li>7. To facilitate the development of a coastal walk (having due regard to environmental designations and compliance with the EU Habitats Directive) and to restrict development that interferes with the achievement of this objective.</li> <li>8. To protect all listed views and prospects along the R761 and coast in this cell.</li> <li>9. To facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure, include water infrastructure, to serve the local settlements/area.</li> <li>10. To facilitate coastal protection works (natural, soft and hard engineered), to protect both the amenity and ecological value of the coastline and the significant economic and social value of the railway line.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Natural heritage, biodiversity and National / European sites</b></p>	<p><b>Section A2.7 Heritage Strategy</b></p> <p>To ensure the protection and enhancement of natural habitats, cultural heritage, ecological resources and biodiversity and in particular, to safeguard the integrity of European Sites, watercourses and rivers in the area.</p> <p><b>Objective GDK49</b></p> <p>Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this plan.<sup>5</sup></p> <p><b>Objective GDK50</b></p> <p>Ensure that development proposals support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity within the LPF area in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, including linear landscape features like watercourses (rivers, streams, canals, ponds, drainage channels, etc), woodlands, trees, hedgerows, road and railway margins, semi-natural grasslands, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems, features which act as stepping stones, such as marshes and woodlands, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones that taken as a whole help to improve the coherence of the European network in Wicklow.</p> <p><b>Objective GDK51</b></p> <p>To protect non-designated sites including identified GI corridors, from inappropriate development, ensuring that ecological impact assessment is carried out for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on locally important natural habitats, species or wildlife corridors. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.</p> <p><b>Objective GDK53</b></p> <p>To promote the preservation of trees, groups of trees or woodlands in particular native tree species, and those trees associated with demesne planting and designed landscape planting, whether subject to TPO or not, where considered to be viable, safe and in line with sound arboricultural management principles. To require and ensure the preservation and enhancement of native and semi-natural woodlands, groups of trees and individual trees, as part of the development</p>

<sup>5</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) no alternative solution available, (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<p>management process, and require the planting of native broad-leaved species, and species of local provenance in all new developments.</p> <p><b>Objective GDK54</b> To require the retention, wherever possible, of hedgerows and other distinctive boundary treatment in the LPF area. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, provision of the same type of boundary will be required of similar length and set back within the site in advance of the commencement of construction works on the site (unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority).</p> <p><b>B.8 Zoning Objectives</b> <u>OS2: Natural Areas To protect and enhance existing open, undeveloped lands</u> To protect, enhance and manage existing open, undeveloped lands that comprise flood plains, buffer zones along watercourses and rivers, steep banks, green breaks between built up areas, green corridors and areas of natural biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Section B.8 - European Sites Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To protect European Sites and a suitable buffer area from inappropriate development.</li> <li>• Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this LPF<sup>6</sup>.</li> <li>• Ensure that development proposals, contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive. All projects and plans arising from this LPF will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</li> </ul> <p>In order to ensure the protection of the integrity of European Sites, the planning authority is not limited to the implementation of the above objectives, and shall implement all other relevant objectives of the CDP and LAP as it sees fit.</p>
<p><b>Surface water, groundwater and wetlands</b></p>	<p><b>Section A2.7 Heritage Strategy</b> To ensure the protection and enhancement of natural habitats, cultural heritage, ecological resources and biodiversity and in particular, to safeguard the integrity of European Sites, watercourses and rivers in the area.</p> <p><b>Objective GDK52</b> Where relevant, applications for development must demonstrate that the proposal for development would not, individually or cumulatively, affect a water body's ability to meet its objectives under the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p><b>Objective GDK55</b> To enforce a general presumption against the culverting of watercourses within the LPF area, except where absolutely necessary and justified. Where development is proposed within sites that contain culverted watercourses, proposals should be included to restore or 'daylight' said watercourses with an appropriate riparian zoned in line with CPO 17.26 of the Wicklow County Development Plan.</p> <p><b>Section B.8 Zoning Objectives</b> <u>OS2: Natural Areas To protect and enhance existing open, undeveloped lands</u> To protect, enhance and manage existing open, undeveloped lands that comprise flood plains, buffer zones along watercourses and rivers, steep banks, green breaks between built up areas, green corridors and areas of natural biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Section B.9 Specific Local Objectives (SLO)</b> <u>SLO 2 – Mill Road</u> Any development proposals shall comply with the following requirements: .... If feasible within the retained trees along the southern boundary, development proposals shall provide for a new open stream channel for the existing watercourse currently culverted along the southern site boundary.</p>
<p><b>Tourism and leisure activities</b></p>	<p><b>Local Planning Framework A3.4 Development Strategy</b> To ensure that development proposals, contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive. All projects and plans arising from this LPF will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p><b>Section A2.6 Social &amp; Community Development</b> Where projects for new recreation projects (such as riverine parks, greenways, walking routes, trails etc) identified in this LPF are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the overall LPF relating to sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Objective GDK56</b> To facilitate the development and enhancement of suitable access to and connectivity between areas of interest for residents, wildlife and biodiversity, with focus on promoting river corridors, European sites, nature reserves and other distinctive landscapes as focal features for linkages between natural, semi natural and formalised green spaces where feasible and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of European sites. In particular, to promote the maintenance of existing and the development of new open spaces and recreational areas linked by green corridors as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Along the full coastal area from Greystones to Kilcoole as follows: Bray Head – Bray to Greystones cliff walk and the coastal zone to the east of same including new marina park – Greystones north beach, marina, harbour – Greystones coastal route and beaches (the Cove, south beach) – Ballygannon – the Murrough European Site at Kilcoole.</li> <li>b) Linking Delgany to Kilquade and Kilcoole along St. Patrick's river route and the Mass Path</li> <li>c) Along Three Trouts Stream from Glen Road, Delgany to the sea</li> <li>d) From the R761 at Three Trouts Bridge to Mill Road</li> <li>e) Linking Coolagad to Kindlestown Woods</li> <li>f) Ballydonarea Loop / Strawberry Lane walk in Kilcoole from Lott Lane to the coast</li> </ol> <p><b>Objective GDK32</b> To support and facilitate the improvement of existing and development of additional recreational infrastructure at beaches, harbours and coastlines in the LPF area, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to coastal access, including for those with disabilities;</li> <li>• Improvement of existing or development of new toilets, changing facilities, waste disposal facilities etc;</li> <li>• Improvement of existing or development of new appropriately scaled and located car parking;</li> <li>• Infrastructure supporting swimming, sailing and other watersports; shore fishing and bird watching;</li> <li>• Subject to ensuring no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of European sites along the coast or on the flora and fauna, biodiversity or water quality of these areas.</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. there must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and c) adequate compensatory measures in place

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
<p><b>Green / Blue Infrastructure</b></p>	<p><b>Section A2.6 Social &amp; Community Development</b> Where projects for new recreation projects (such as riverine parks, greenways, walking routes, trails etc) identified in this LPF are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the overall LPF relating to sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Section A3.3 Physical &amp; Environmental considerations – Greystones South</b> <u>The following provision is from the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028:</u> To facilitate the development of a coastal walk (having due regard to environmental designations and compliance with the EU Habitats Directive) and to restrict development that interferes with the achievement of this objective.</p> <p><b>Section 6.3 Green Infrastructure &amp; Recreational Use of Natural Resources</b> <u>The following objective is from the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028:</u> CPO 18.5 Identify and facilitate the provision of linkages along and between green / river corridors within the county and adjoining counties to create inter connected routes, and develop riverside parks and create linkages between them to form 'necklace' effect routes including development of walkways, cycleways, bridleways and wildlife corridors where feasible and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of European sites.</p>
<p><b>Built environment</b></p>	<p><b>Section A2.8 Service infrastructure</b> Where projects for new infrastructure identified in this LPF are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the LPF relating to sustainable development. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection, and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.</p> <p><b>Section A3.3 Physical &amp; Environmental considerations – Greystones South</b> <u>The following provisions are from Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 CPO 19.20:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To facilitate the development of visitor and interpretative facilities, particularly those relating to bird watching, in a sustainable and suitable manner which does not compromise either landscape quality or habitats.</li> <li>• To control and limit residential development to that shown to be strictly necessary (in accordance with the County settlement and rural development strategies) and to require the highest standards of siting and design for any new dwellings and regard to environmental designations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B.7 Infrastructure &amp; Services</b> The infrastructure strategies, objectives and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area. In particular, the County Development Plan addresses: Sustainable Transportation; Water Supply &amp; Demand; Wastewater Infrastructure; Storm and Surface Water Infrastructure Flood Risk Management Waste and Environmental Emissions Energy and Information Infrastructure</p> <p><b>Objective GDK65</b> With respect to localised drainage issues present in the LPF area:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) new significant development in Kilcoole will only be considered where the development's wastewater drainage arrangements accord with an overall Drainage Area Plan (DAP) which removes / limits need for new pumping and maximises coordination of drainage networks between sites.</li> <li>b) new significant development in the Coolagad – Templecarrig area in north Greystones will only be considered where the development's surface water drainage arrangements accord with Wicklow County Council's Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) Policy and an overall Surface Water Management Plan for the area which addresses the capacity of the area network and obviates flood risk on downstream lands.</li> </ol> <p><b>Section B.8 Zoning Objectives</b> <u>AOS: Active Open Space - To protect and enhance existing and provide for new active open space</u> Subject to the protection and enhancement of natural biodiversity, to facilitate the further development and improvement of existing active open spaces, formal exercise areas, sports grounds, playing pitches, courts and other games areas and to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality active recreational areas. <u>OS1: Open Space To protect and enhance existing and provide for recreational open space</u> Subject to the protection and enhancement of natural biodiversity, to facilitate the further development and improvement of existing parks and casual play areas, to facilitate opportunities for the development of new high quality amenity open areas and to restrict developments / activities (such as the use or development of such lands for formal sports grounds for organisations that are not available for a broad range of the public) that would reduce the opportunities for use by the wider public.</p>
<p><b>Management of water services, wastewater and implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems</b></p>	<p><b>Section A2.8 Service Infrastructure</b> Facilitate and promote the delivery of reliable and effective water, drainage, energy, waste management and communications infrastructure to service the existing and future development needs of the settlements in the LPF area. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to support and facilitate any necessary upgrades to the wastewater collection and pumping systems (where required);</li> <li>• ensure the separation of foul and surface water discharges in new developments through the provision of separate networks. Ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and in particular, to ensure that all surface water generated in a new development is disposed of on-site or is attenuated and treated prior to discharge to an approved surface water system;</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B.7 Infrastructure &amp; Services</b> The infrastructure strategies, objectives and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area. In particular, the County Development Plan addresses: Water Supply &amp; Demand; Wastewater Infrastructure; Storm and Surface Water Infrastructure</p> <p><b>Objective GDK 67</b> Developments, including new/expanded developments and any planned improvements to existing urban spaces, shall be designed in accordance with the guidance document "Implementation of Urban Nature-based Solutions: Guidance Document for Planners, Developers and Developer Agents" LAWPRO 2024.</p>
<p><b>Flood Risk Management</b></p>	<p><b>Section A2.8 Service Infrastructure</b> Facilitate and promote the delivery of reliable and effective water, drainage, energy, waste management and communications infrastructure to service the existing and future development needs of the settlements in the LPF area. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that only appropriate land uses are provided on lands identified as being at risk of flooding.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B.7 Infrastructure &amp; Services</b> The infrastructure strategies, objectives and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area. In particular, the County Development Plan addresses:</p>

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<p>- Flood Risk Management</p> <p><b>Objective GDK63</b> To work with the OPW and any other relevant bodies to address the effects of sea level changes, coastal flooding and erosion and to support the implementation of adaptation responses in vulnerable areas. To facilitate the provision of new or the reinforcement of existing coastal defences and protection measures where necessary and in particular to consider the implementation of the measures identified in the ECRIPP and any other similar studies that are produced during the lifetime of the LPF. To employ soft engineering techniques or natural solutions as an alternative to hard coastal defence works, wherever feasible.</p> <p><b>Objective GDK64</b> Applications for new developments or significant alterations/extension to existing developments in an area identified as at risk of flooding (Flood Zones A and B) as set out in the SFRA and flood maps appended to this LPF OR in Flood Zone C but within an area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o that is deemed by the Local Authority at any time to be at possible risk of flooding having regard to new information with respect to flood risk in the area that has come to light; or</li> <li>o that is identified as at possible future risk of flooding having regard to climate change scenarios either on Map 4C attached to this LPF or on any future maps prepared by the OPW during the lifetime of the LPF;</li> </ul> <p>shall comply with the 'Justification Test for Development Management', as set out in Box 5.1 of 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' Guidelines 2009 (as may be amended, supplemented or replaced during the lifetime of this LPF) and shall be accompanied by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment. Site Specific Flood Risk Assessments shall be in accordance with the requirements set out in the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and the LPF SFRA</p>
<p><b>Coastal Erosion / Protection works</b></p>	<p><b>Section A3.3 Physical &amp; Environmental considerations – Greystones South</b> The following provision is from the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028: To facilitate coastal protection works (natural, soft and hard engineered), to protect both the ecological and amenity value of the coastline and the significant economic and social value of the railway line.</p> <p><b>Section 6.2 Areas of natural biodiversity, mature trees and rivers / watercourses, coastal zone</b> With respect to coastal zone management, the County Development Plan sets out a coastal zone management strategy, based on the identification of coastal 'cells' and the provisions of cell specific development management objectives for each. The LPF area encompasses 3 such cells:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cell 3 Bray Head to Greystones (Rathdown)</li> <li>- Cell 4 Greystones Town</li> <li>- Cell 5 Greystones to Kilcoole (Ballynerrin)</li> </ul> <p><b>Objective GDK63</b> To work with the OPW and any other relevant bodies to address the effects of sea level changes, coastal flooding and erosion and to support the implementation of adaptation responses in vulnerable areas. To facilitate the provision of new or the reinforcement of existing coastal defences and protection measures where necessary and in particular to consider the implementation of the measures identified in the ECRIPP and any other similar studies that are produced during the lifetime of the LPF. To employ soft engineering techniques or natural solutions as an alternative to hard coastal defence works, wherever feasible.</p>
<p><b>Invasive species</b></p>	<p><b>Section B.6 Heritage, Biodiversity &amp; Green Infrastructure</b> The purpose of this chapter is to set out the specific objectives with regard to the heritage of the LPF area and should be read in conjunction with the County Development Plan - the heritage strategies, objectives, schedules and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area. In particular, the County Development Plan addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Archaeology and National Monuments</li> <li>- Architectural heritage, including the Record of Protected Structures, vernacular structures, and Architectural Conservation Areas</li> <li>- Historical &amp; Cultural Heritage</li> <li>- Protected habitats</li> <li>- Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows</li> <li>- Water systems &amp; wetlands</li> <li>- Soils &amp; Geology</li> <li>- Landscape, including Views &amp; Prospects</li> <li>- Green Infrastructure</li> <li>- Recreational Use of Natural Resources</li> <li>- Public Rights of Way</li> <li>- Invasive species (note County Development Plan CPO 17.17 "Work with statutory authorities to prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species and require, where appropriate Invasive Species Management Plans to be prepared as part of the development management process where necessary.")</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agriculture</b></p>	<p><b>Objective GDK52</b> Where relevant, applications for development must demonstrate that the proposal for development would not, individually or cumulatively, affect a water body's ability to meet its objectives under the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p><b>Section B.8 Zoning Objectives</b> <u>AG: Agriculture To provide for the sustainable development of agriculture, forestry and essential rural development.</u> Subject to the protection and enhancement of natural biodiversity, the rural landscape, and built and cultural heritage, to facilitate the further development and improvement of agriculture, forestry and essential rural development including rural-related enterprise and amenity / utility related infrastructure in accordance with the County Development Plan policies and objectives relating to rural areas.</p>
<p><b>Forestry</b></p>	<p><b>Objective GDK52</b> Where relevant, applications for development must demonstrate that the proposal for development would not, individually or cumulatively, affect a water body's ability to meet its objectives under the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p><b>Section B.8 Zoning Objectives</b> <u>AG: Agriculture To provide for the sustainable development of agriculture, forestry and essential rural development.</u> Subject to the protection and enhancement of natural biodiversity, the rural landscape, and built and cultural heritage, to facilitate the further development and improvement of agriculture, forestry and essential rural development including rural-related enterprise and amenity / utility related infrastructure in accordance with the County Development Plan policies and objectives relating to rural areas.</p>
<p><b>Light air and noise pollution</b></p>	<p><b>Section B.7 Infrastructure &amp; Services</b> The infrastructure strategies, objectives and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area. In particular, the County Development Plan addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable Transportation</li> <li>Waste and Environmental Emissions</li> <li>Energy and Information Infrastructure</li> </ul>

Component <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Measure(s) <sup>3</sup>
	<p>Such measures from the County Development Plan include:</p> <p>CPO 15.12 To implement the Wicklow County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 (and any subsequent Plan) in order to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to environmental noise exposure</p> <p>CPO 15.13 To enforce, where applicable, the provisions of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acts 1992 and 2003, and EPA Noise Regulations 2006.</p> <p>CPO 15.14 To regulate and control activities likely to give rise to excessive noise (other than those activities which are regulated by the EPA).</p> <p>CPO 15.15 To require proposals for new developments with the potential to create excessive noise to prepare a construction and/or operation management plans to control such emissions.</p> <p>CPO 15.16 To require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigation measures to undertake noise monitoring and to provide an annual monitoring audit.</p> <p>CPO 15.17 To ensure that all external lighting whether free standing or attached to a building shall be designed and constructed so as not to cause excessive light spillage, glare, or dazzle motorists, and thereby limiting light pollution into the surrounding environment and protecting the amenities of nearby properties, traffic and wildlife.</p> <p>CPO 15.18 To require proposals for new developments with the potential to create light pollution or light impacts on adjacent residences to mitigate impacts, in accordance with the Development &amp; Design Standards set out in this plan.</p> <p>CPO 15.19 To promote the use of low energy LED (or equivalent) lighting.</p> <p>CPO 15.20 To require the design and implementation of a hierarchy of light intensity zones in development schemes to ensure that environmental impact is minimised as far as possible particularly in areas proximate to ecological corridors.</p>
<p><b>Climate change and emissions</b></p>	<p><b>Section A2.8 Service Infrastructure</b> Facilitate and promote the delivery of reliable and effective water, drainage, energy, waste management and communications infrastructure to service the existing and future development needs of the settlements in the LPF area. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to promote energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B.7 Infrastructure &amp; Services</b> The infrastructure strategies, objectives and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area. In particular, the County Development Plan addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable Transportation</li> <li>Waste and Environmental Emissions</li> <li>Energy and Information Infrastructure</li> </ul>
<p><b>Waste Management</b></p>	<p><b>Section B.7 Infrastructure &amp; Services</b> The infrastructure strategies, objectives and standards set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan will apply directly in the LPF area. In particular, the County Development Plan addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste and Environmental Emissions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Green / Blue Infrastructure</b></p>	<p><b>Section A2.6 Social &amp; Community Development</b> Where projects for new recreation projects (such as riverine parks, greenways, walking routes, trails etc) identified in this LPF are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects shall be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the overall LPF relating to sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Section A3.3 Physical &amp; Environmental considerations – Greystones South</b> <u>The following provision is from the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028:</u> To facilitate the development of a coastal walk (having due regard to environmental designations and compliance with the EU Habitats Directive) and to restrict development that interferes with the achievement of this objective.</p> <p><b>Section 6.3 Green Infrastructure &amp; Recreational Use of Natural Resources</b> <u>The following objective is from the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028:</u> CPO 18.5 Identify and facilitate the provision of linkages along and between green / river corridors within the county and adjoining counties to create inter connected routes, and develop riverside parks and create linkages between them to form 'necklace' effect routes including development of walkways, cycleways, bridleways and wildlife corridors where feasible and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of European sites.</p>

## Section 3 Consideration of Alternatives

This section summarises the alternatives considered for the Variation during the preparation process. These alternatives have been incorporated into the Variation having regard to both:

1. The environmental effects (including those related to ecology and European sites) which are identified by the SEA (informed by the AA) and are summarised below; and
2. Planning - including social and economic - effects that also were considered by the Council.

### 3.1 Limitations in Available Alternatives

The alternatives available for the Variation are significantly limited by the provisions of higher-level planning objectives, which are not wholly consistent with each other, including those of the National Planning Framework, the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, Ministerial Guidelines and the County Plan. These documents set out various requirements for the content of the Variation, including on topics such as population, land use zoning and proper planning and sustainable development.

### 3.2 Alternatives Description and Assessment Summary

An overall comparative assessment of the alternatives against the Strategic Environmental Objectives provided on Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives**

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>BFF</b>	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species</li> <li>• Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function</li> <li>• Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species</li> <li>• Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets</li> <li>• To protect, maintain and conserve natural capital</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Human Health</b>	<b>PHH</b>	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management</li> <li>• Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services</li> <li>• Safeguard citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being</li> </ul>
<b>Soil (and Land)</b>	<b>S</b>	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource</li> <li>• Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield</li> <li>• Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<b>W</b>	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive</li> <li>• Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and wastewater capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments</li> </ul>

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid inappropriate zoning and development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion, particularly coastal areas</li> <li>• Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>MA</b>	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals - this includes transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, solar, hydro, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels</li> <li>• Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies</li> <li>• Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development</li> <li>• Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes</li> <li>• Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids</li> </ul>
<b>Air</b>	<b>A</b>	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture</li> <li>• Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency</li> <li>• Promote continuing improvement in air quality</li> <li>• Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution</li> <li>• Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health – Air Quality Directive</li> <li>• Significantly decrease noise pollution and move closer to WHO recommended levels</li> </ul>
<b>Climatic Factors</b>	<b>C</b>	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses</li> <li>• Integrate sustainable design solutions into infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure)</li> <li>• Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets</li> <li>• Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change</li> <li>• Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>CH</b>	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>L</b>	Protect and enhance the landscape character	To implement the Development Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention

### 3.2.1 Alternative 1: Maximum Environmental Protection

By limiting development within parts of the Local Planning Framework area, including those that are most sensitive to development, this alternative would reduce the potential for adverse environmental effects to occur from development within the Local Planning Framework area<sup>7</sup> (although this potential would remain,

<sup>7</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

albeit to a reduced degree) and benefit the protection and management of following environmental components within the Local Planning Framework area<sup>8</sup>:

- Biodiversity and flora and fauna (including through application of a buffer around designated sites, the protection of all mature trees and hedgerows and zoning Charlesland for Natural Areas);
- Population and human health (limiting development in certain locations would reduce potential for interactions with human health);
- Soil (as a result of limiting greenfield development in certain locations and maximising the protection of County Geological Sites);
- Air (limits in increases in traffic as a result of limiting development in certain locations)
- Water (including as a result of limiting development in certain locations and zoning all lands within 50m of watercourses for Natural Areas only);
- Cultural heritage (through restricting additional development to Protected Structures and restricting development at all designated archaeological sites); and
- Landscape (including as a result of protecting views and prospects with restricted development within the view/ prospect and zoning Charlesland for Natural Areas).

This alternative would allow for development targets to be met within the Local Planning Framework area, reducing demand and associated potential for dispersed adverse environmental effects to occur as a result of development occurring outside of the Local Planning Framework area, in areas that are potentially more sensitive, less well-serviced and less-well connected<sup>9</sup>. As a result, the protection and management of environmental components beyond the Local Planning Framework area would be benefited<sup>10</sup>.

By allowing for development targets to be met within the Local Planning Framework area, this alternative would benefit efforts to maximise sustainable mobility (including associated interactions with air, climate mitigation and human health) and infrastructural and services efficiencies (including associated interactions with population) to a moderate degree<sup>11</sup>. New development would have to be accompanied by appropriate levels of infrastructure and services<sup>12</sup>.

### 3.2.2 Alternative 2: Sustainable Transportation

By focusing on delivering travel solutions that support moving people from the private car to the more sustainable modes of walking, cycling and using public transport, and by providing for higher densities, this alternative would benefit efforts to maximise sustainable mobility (including associated interactions with air, climate mitigation and human health) and infrastructural and services efficiencies (including associated interactions with population) to a greater degree<sup>13</sup> and conflict with these efforts to a lesser degree<sup>14</sup>.

Dezoning undeveloped greenfield lands, including parts of the Strategic Land Bank (SLB) that is not within 12-minute walking distance of a public transport node/stop would reduce the potential for adverse environmental effects to occur from development at these locations<sup>15</sup> (although the potential would remain elsewhere, including as a result of new and enhanced transport infrastructure) and benefit the protection and management of environmental components such as biodiversity and flora and fauna, soil and landscape<sup>16</sup>.

This alternative would allow for development targets to be met within the Local Planning Framework area, reducing demand and associated potential for dispersed adverse environmental effects to occur as a result of development occurring outside of the Local Planning Framework area, in areas that are potentially more sensitive, less well-serviced and less-well connected<sup>17</sup>. As a result, the protection and management of environmental components beyond the Local Planning Framework area would be benefited<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>9</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>10</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **A C S BFF W PHH MA L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>11</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **MA A C PPH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>12</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **MA A C PPH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>13</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **MA A C PPH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>14</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **MA A C PPH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>15</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>16</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>17</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>18</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **A C S BFF W PHH MA L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

### 3.2.3 Alternative 3: Compact Growth

By allowing for development targets to be met within the Local Planning Framework area, this alternative would benefit efforts to maximise sustainable mobility (including associated interactions with air, climate mitigation and human health) and infrastructural and services efficiencies (including associated interactions with population) to a moderate degree<sup>19</sup>. New development would have to be accompanied by appropriate levels of infrastructure and services<sup>20</sup>.

Dezoning all undeveloped greenfield lands would reduce the potential for adverse environmental effects to occur from development at these locations<sup>21</sup> (although the potential would remain elsewhere, including as a result of town and village centre development and mixed use, high density residential development on infill sites previously zoned for employment uses within the built-up area) and benefit the protection and management of environmental components such as biodiversity and flora and fauna, soil and landscape<sup>22</sup>.

This alternative would allow for development targets to be met within the Local Planning Framework area, reducing demand and associated potential for dispersed adverse environmental effects to occur as a result of development occurring outside of the Local Planning Framework area, in areas that are potentially more sensitive, less well-served and less-well connected<sup>23</sup>. As a result, the protection and management of environmental components beyond the Local Planning Framework area would be benefited<sup>24</sup>.

### 3.2.4 Alternative 4: Housing Market Driven

Due to changes to the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and changes to planning legislation, in order to future proof the Local Planning Framework, this alternative will allow for flexibility in the residential zoning provisions to ensure that the population targets / any revised population targets can be achieved and in the event that unforeseen impediments to the development of certain lands arise.

By providing for

- a. excesses in zoned land (above current targets) and lower densities of housing development
- b. facilitating increases in car dependency and
- c. providing for community and education, employment and active open space uses on the periphery of the residential zoned land,

this alternative would:

- benefit efforts to maximise sustainable mobility (including associated interactions with air, climate mitigation and human health) and infrastructural and services efficiencies (including associated interactions with population) to a lesser degree<sup>25</sup>; and
- conflict with these efforts to a greater degree<sup>26</sup>.

This alternative would provide zoning for ten years of housing needs and demand would be met through lower densities, requiring a greater extent of lands to be zoned for development. The extent of greenfield development provided and the lack of a focus on infill/regeneration development would present a greater potential for adverse environmental effects to occur from such development within the Local Planning Framework area under this alternative<sup>27</sup> and consequently benefit the protection and management of environmental components such as biodiversity and flora and fauna, soil and landscape, in the Local Planning Framework area to a lesser degree<sup>28</sup>.

This alternative would allow for development targets to be met within the Local Planning Framework area, reducing demand and associated potential for dispersed adverse environmental effects to occur as a result of development occurring outside of the Local Planning Framework area, in areas that are potentially more

<sup>19</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **MA A C PPH** SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>20</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **MA A C PPH** SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>21</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>22</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>23</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>24</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **A C S BFF W PHH MA L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>25</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **MA A C PPH** SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>26</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **MA A C PPH** SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>27</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>28</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** - SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

sensitive, less well-serviced and less-well connected<sup>29</sup>. As a result, the protection and management of environmental components beyond the Local Planning Framework area would be benefited<sup>30</sup>.

### 3.2.5 Alternative 5: Community Driven

By focusing on healthy communities, where residents have all necessary facilities and services within short walking/cycling distance of their homes, this alternative would benefit efforts to maximise sustainable mobility (including associated interactions with air, climate mitigation and human health) and infrastructural and services efficiencies (including associated interactions with population) to a greater degree<sup>31</sup> and conflict with these efforts to a lesser degree<sup>32</sup>.

Providing for a strengthened town centre and more opportunity sites for the redevelopment of brownfield sites would help to reduce demand for greenfield development within the Local Planning Framework area and associated potential for adverse environmental effects to occur from such development<sup>33</sup> (although the potential would remain) and benefit the protection and management of environmental components such as biodiversity and flora and fauna, soil and landscape, especially in peripheral parts of the Local Planning Framework area<sup>34</sup>.

This alternative would allow for development targets to be met within the Local Planning Framework area, reducing demand and associated potential for dispersed adverse environmental effects to occur as a result of development occurring outside of the Local Planning Framework area, in areas that are potentially more sensitive, less well-serviced and less-well connected<sup>35</sup>. As a result, the protection and management of environmental components beyond the Local Planning Framework area would be benefited<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** ■ SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>30</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **A C S BFF W PHH MA L CH** ■ SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>31</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **MA A C PPH** ■ SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>32</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **MA A C PHH** ■ SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>33</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** ■ SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>34</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** ■ SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>35</sup> See potentially significant adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated: **BFF PHH S A W L CH** ■ SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

<sup>36</sup> See significant positive environmental effects, likely to occur: **A C S BFF W PHH MA L CH** ■ SEO interactions in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Overall Comparative Assessment of Alternatives against SEOs<sup>37</sup>**

Alternative	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs <b>+</b>			Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated <b>-</b>			Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated <b>-</b>
	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	
Alternative 1: Maximum Environmental Protection	<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b> 	<b>MA A C PPH</b>		<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b> 	<b>MA A C PPH</b>		
Alternative 2: Sustainable Transportation	<b>MA A C PPH</b> 	<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b>		<b>MA A C PPH</b> 	<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b>		
Alternative 3: Compact Growth	<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b> 	<b>MA A C PPH</b>  <b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b>		<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b> 	<b>MA A C PPH</b>  <b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b>		
Alternative 4: Housing Market Driven <sup>38</sup>	<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b> 		<b>MA A C PPH</b>  <b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b>	<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b> 		<b>MA A C PPH</b>  <b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b>	
Alternative 5: Community Driven	<b>MA A C PPH</b>  <b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b> 	<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b>		<b>MA A C PPH</b>  <b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b> 	<b>BFF PHH S W L CH -</b>		

- = These interactions relate to positive effects on the protection and management of the environment within the Local Planning Framework area (directing incompatible development away from the most sensitive areas within the Local Planning Framework area and focusing on directing compact, sustainable development within the proposed envelope of the Local Planning Framework area)
- = These interactions relate to the potential for direct adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated (arising from development within the Local Planning Framework area)
-  = These interactions relate to positive effects on the protection and management of the environment beyond the Local Planning Framework area (as a result of providing development within the Local Planning Framework area)
-  = These interactions relate to adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated, (arising from development occurring beyond the Local Planning Framework area)

<sup>37</sup> For more detail on Strategic Environmental Objectives refer to Table 3.1.

<sup>38</sup> Although potential effects would be reduced to a degree by the implementation to project level mitigation relating to the protection of individual environmental components, significant and unavoidable residual adverse environmental effects would be likely to occur following mitigation due to the extent of additional lands being zoned for development and their location.

### 3.3 Selected Alternative for the Variation

The 'Selected Alternative' for the Variation integrates the following components from the five above evaluated alternative scenarios for the Local Planning Framework for the Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole area:

- from "Alternative 1: Maximum Environmental Protection"
  - Protection to European Sites (SAC and SPA) and NHAs.
  - Protection of the trees on the Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) list and protect all other mature trees and hedgerows.
  - Protection of watercourses in accordance with Inland Fisheries Ireland 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment' 2020.
  - Enhance the protection of views and prospects.
  - Protection of County Geological Sites within the Local Planning Framework boundary.
- from "Alternative 2: Sustainable Transportation"
  - Zone land high-density mixed-use within 12-minute walking distance of the Train/DART Station in Greystones.
  - Zone land new residential located within walking distance of all bus stop areas.
  - Downzone Strategic Land Bank (SLB)
  - Enhanced pedestrianisation and cycle lanes in Greystones, Delgany and Kilcoole town and village centres.
  - Enhanced pedestrian connections throughout the settlements.
  - Enhanced cycle routes and connections throughout the settlements.
- from "Alternative 3: Compact Growth"
  - Downzone the Strategic Land Bank (SLB) beyond the established current built up area boundary.
  - All Town Centre/ Village Centre Sites provide for high density mixed use.
  - Infill sites zoned for employment uses within the built-up area are zoned mixed use, high density residential
- from "Alternative 4: Housing Market Driven"
  - Due to changes to the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and changes to planning legislation, in order to future proof the LPF this alternative will allow for flexibility in the residential zoning provisions to ensure that the population targets / any revised population targets can be achieved and in the event that unforeseen impediments to the development of certain lands arise. (*with strict phasing criteria*)
- from "Alternative 5: Community Driven"
  - Extra lands, above the minimum requirement for new schools are zoned close to residential areas.
  - Extra lands, above the minimum requirement for recreational/ sports / community facilities are zoned for Community Education (CE) and Active Open Space (AOS) (*In line with the Social Infrastructure Audit*)
  - New walking routes / cycling routes are designated throughout the settlements.
  - There will be additional policy support for childcare facilities (Crèches, Montessori, playgrounds, etc) throughout the settlements. (*Childcare uses are permitted in principle in all development zones*)
  - There will be additional policy support for healthcare facilities (extra GP's, health centres, dentists, holistic centres, etc) throughout the settlements. (*Healthcare uses are permitted in principle in all development zones*)

These components emerged from the planning/SEA process having regard to both:

1. The environmental effects which were identified by the SEA and are detailed above; and
2. Planning – including social and economic – effects that were also considered.

An assessment of the 'Selected Alternative' against SEOs is provided at Table 3.3. The 'Selected Alternative' will help to:

- Maximise the provision of land use zoning and the deliverance of associated travel solutions that support moving people from the private car to the more sustainable modes of walking, cycling and using public transport (including associated interactions with air, climate mitigation and human health) and infrastructural and services efficiencies to a greater degree (improving SEO interactions for **MA A C PPH**), conflicting with these to a lesser degree (potentially conflicting SEO interactions for **MA A C PPH**);
- Maximise positive effects on the protection and management of the environment beyond the Local Planning Framework area as a result of providing development within the Local Planning Framework area (improving SEO interactions for **BFF PPH S W L CH**), while helping to minimise adverse environmental effects (if unmitigated) arising from development occurring beyond the Local Planning Framework area (potentially conflicting SEO interactions for **BFF PPH S W L CH**); and
- Maximise positive effects on the protection and management of the environment within the Local Planning Framework area as a result of directing incompatible development away from the most sensitive areas within the Local Planning Framework area and focusing on directing compact, sustainable development within the proposed envelope of the Local Planning Framework area (improving SEO interactions for **BFF PPH S W L CH**), while helping to minimise adverse environmental effects (if unmitigated) arising from development occurring within the Local Planning Framework area (potentially conflicting SEO interactions for **BFF PPH S W L CH**).

**Table 3.3 Assessment of 'Selected Alternative' against SEOs<sup>39</sup>**

	Likely to <b>Improve</b> status of SEOs <b>+</b>			Potential <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated <b>-</b>			Probable <b>Conflict</b> with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated <b>-</b>
	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Lesser</b> degree	to a <b>Moderate</b> degree	to a <b>Greater</b> degree	
<b>Selected Alternative for the Variation's Local Planning Framework for the Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole area</b>	<b>MA A C PPH</b>  <b>BFF PPH S W L CH ·</b>  <b>BFF PPH S W L CH ■■</b>			<b>MA A C PPH</b>  <b>BFF PPH S W L CH ·</b>  <b>BFF PPH S W L CH ■■</b>			

▪ = These interactions relate to positive effects on the protection and management of the environment within the Local Planning Framework area (directing incompatible development away from the most sensitive areas within the Local Planning Framework area and focusing on directing compact, sustainable development within the proposed envelope of the Local Planning Framework area)

▪ = These interactions relate to the potential for direct adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated (arising from development within the Local Planning Framework area)

■■ = These interactions relate to positive effects on the protection and management of the environment beyond the Local Planning Framework area (as a result of providing development within the Local Planning Framework area)

■■ = These interactions relate to adverse environmental effects, if unmitigated, (arising from development occurring beyond the Local Planning Framework area)

<sup>39</sup> For more detail on Strategic Environmental Objectives refer to Table 3.1. **Error! Reference source not found..**

## **Section 4 AA Determination**

The AA Determination is provided overleaf.



## Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin Wicklow County Council

### **Appropriate Assessment Determination under the European Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, as amended) and the Planning and Development Act (as amended) for Proposed Variation No. 4 (Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole Local Planning Framework) to be made<sup>1</sup> to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied)**

In order to comply with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and the Planning and Development Act (as amended) as to whether or not the Proposed Variation would affect the integrity of any European site(s), this Appropriate Assessment determination is being made by Wicklow County Council relating to the potential for the Proposed Variation No. 4 to be made<sup>2</sup> to have effects on the integrity of any European site. In carrying out this Appropriate Assessment (AA), the Council is taking into account matters including the following:

- The Consolidated AA Natura Impact Report;
- The AA Natura Impact Report prepared for the Proposed Variation (an earlier version of the consolidated document);
- Addendum I to the AA Natura Impact Report for the Proposed Variation (considering Proposed Material Alterations)
- Written submissions made during the Variation making process; and
- Ongoing advice on AA from the Council's agents.

As part of the AA, it was identified that the Proposed Variation may, if unmitigated, have likely significant effects on 5 (no.) European sites. Proposed Variation elements that could present sources with pathways for likely significant effects to European sites are:

- The Proposed Variation's provisions, including those relating to town centre regeneration, housing, development, economic development, tourism development, community development, heritage, biodiversity and green infrastructure development and infrastructure development, which introduce sources for potential effects through construction phase such as habitat loss, light pollution, disturbance effects and hydrological interactions through surface hydrological connectivity and/or shared groundwater sources;
- Loading pressures from the operational phase of developments – these sources could result in habitat loss/fragmentation, light pollution, disturbance effects and interactions with water quality (surface and/or groundwater); and
- Increases in visitor numbers to ecologically sensitive areas during the operational phase of developments which have potential to introduce sources for significant effects, such as recreational and tourism developments.

The undersigned, having carefully considered the information referred to above agrees with and adopts the reasoning and conclusions presented and determines that:

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<sup>1</sup> Incorporating the Proposed Variation, and all and any material alterations and associated modifications considered by the AA process

<sup>2</sup> Incorporating the Proposed Variation, and all and any material alterations and associated modifications considered by the AA process

- Upon the inclusion of suitable mitigation measures<sup>3</sup>, the Proposed Variation to be made<sup>4</sup> will not result in any adverse effects to the ecological integrity of any European site (directly, indirectly or cumulatively).
- The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the Qualifying Interests, Special Conservation Interests and Conservation Objectives of the European sites identified have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures in the existing Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, as varied, and the inclusion of additional mitigation measures into the Proposed Variation that will prioritise the avoidance of effects in the first place and mitigate against the identified potential significant effects where these cannot be avoided. In addition, all lower-level plans and projects arising through the implementation of the Variation will themselves be subject to AA/screening for AA when further details of design and location are known.
- In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects are considered and the mitigation measures incorporated into the Proposed Variation are seen to be robust to ensure that there will be no effect on the integrity of any European site as a result of the implementation of the Proposed Variation to be made either alone or in-combination with other plans/projects.
- Having incorporated mitigation measures into the Proposed Variation (including alignment with the mitigation measures integrated into the existing County Development Plan, as varied), it is demonstrated that the Proposed Variation to be made: is not foreseen to give rise to any effect on the integrity of any European site, alone or in combination with other plans or projects<sup>5</sup>; and no reasonable scientific doubt exists as to the absence of adverse effects on the integrity of any European site. This demonstration has been made in view of the Conservation Objectives of the habitats and/or species, for which these sites have been designated.

Signatory:

Helene Dondly  
Wicklow County Council

9<sup>th</sup> February 2026  
Date

<sup>3</sup> **Proposed Variation provisions at** Section A2.6 Social & Community Development, Section A2.7 Heritage Strategy, Section A2.8 Service infrastructure, Section A3.3 Physical & Environmental considerations – Greystones South, Section B.6 Heritage, Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure, Section B-7 Infrastructure & Services, Section 6.3 Green Infrastructure & Recreational Use of Natural Resources, B.8 Zoning Objectives, Section B-8 Zoning Objectives, Section B.8 - European Sites Objectives, Section B.9 Specific Local Objectives, SLO 12 – Bellevue Hill (should the Elected Members decide to proceed), Objective GDK48, Objective GDK49, Objective GDK50, Objective GDK51, Objective GDK52, Objective GDK53, Objective GDK54, Objective GDK62, Objective GDK63, Objective GDK64 and Objective GDK XX (PMA 17).

Note that non-material changes to individual Proposed Variation provisions referenced in this determination and described in the Consolidated Natura Impact Report may be updated during the finalisation of the Plan, including numbering, formatting and graphic design.

**Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied) measures** SCO6, CPO 4.15, CPO 9.36, CPO 9.39, CPO 9.43, CPO 9.44, CPO 9.45, CPO 9.49, CPO 9.50, CPO11.1, CPO 11.4, CPO 11.4, CPO 11.6, CPO 11.29, CPO 11.42, CPO 11.47, CPO 11.48, CPO 11.49, CPO 12.7, CPO 12.9, CPO 12.10, CPO 13.1, CPO13.2, CPO13.3, CPO13.4, CPO 13.5, CPO 13.6, CPO13.7, CPO 13.9, CPO 13.10, CPO 13.11, CPO 13.15, CPO 13.16, CPO 13.17, CPO 13.18, CPO 13.19, CPO 13.20, CPO 13.21, CPO 13.22, CPO 14.14, CPO 14.15, CPO 14.16, CPO 15.1, CPO 15.2, CPO 15.3, CPO 15.4, CPO 15.5, CPO 15.6, CPO 15.7, CPO 15.9, CPO 15.10, CPO 15.11, CPO 15.12, CPO 15.13, CPO 15.14, CPO 15.15, CPO 15.16, CPO 15.17, CPO 15.18, CPO 15.19, CPO 15.20, CPO 17.1, CPO 17.2, CPO 17.3, CPO 17.4, CPO 17.5, CPO 17.6, CPO 17.7, CPO 17.8, CPO 17.10, CPO 17.12, CPO 17.13, CPO 17.14, CPO 17.15, CPO 17.16, CPO 17.17, CPO 17.18, CPO 17.19, CPO 17.20, CPO 17.21, CPO 17.22, CPO 17.23, CPO 17.24, CPO 17.25, CPO 17.26, CPO 17.33, CPO 17.34, CPO 17.35, CPO 17.36, CPO 17.37, CPO 17.38, CPO 18.3, CPO 18.4, CPO 18.5, CPO 18.6, CPO 18.11, CPO 18.13, CPO 18.16, CPO 18.17, CPO 19.13, CPO 19.18, CPO 19.19, CPO 19.20 and CPO 19.21.

<sup>4</sup> Incorporating the Proposed Variation, and all and any material alterations and associated modifications considered by the AA process

<sup>5</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.