

**Cork City, Harbour and East Cork  
Destination & Experience  
Development Plan**  
**SEA Environmental Report Non-  
Technical Summary**

**BSM**

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**Brady Shipman  
Martin**

**Built.  
Environment.**

Strategic  
Assessment  
**Built  
Environment**

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## Glossary

### Appropriate Assessment

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

### Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

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

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

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

### Environmental Problems

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

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

### Environmental Vectors

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

### Mitigation Measures

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

### Protected Structure

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

#### **Recorded Monument**

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

#### **SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment)**

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

#### **SEA Scoping**

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

#### **Strategic Actions**

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

#### **Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)**

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

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Overview

An Environmental Report of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination Experience Development Plan (hereafter referred to the 'Plan' or the 'CDEDP') has been prepared to comply with the provisions of Article 12 of S.I. 435 of 2004 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations – as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.

This document is a non-technical summary (NTS) of the SEA Environmental Report (ER). It shall endeavour, insofar as possible, to present a condensed summary of the ER, using non-technical terms, but without omitting or understating any environmental effects of note.

The Environmental Report and NTS, which should be read in conjunction with the CDEDP, has been prepared by Brady Shipman Martin, environmental, planning and landscape consultants, on behalf of Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority.

### 1.2 Destination & Experience Development Plans

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

The Cork City, Harbour and East Cork DEDP focuses on increasing the value of tourism in Cork City, Cork Harbour and East Cork by growing the appeal of the destination, reducing seasonality and increasing visitor spend. The CDEDP has been prepared through a consultative process involving tourism industry representatives, members of the local community and Cork County Council.

### 1.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) stems from *Directive 2001/42/EC*<sup>1</sup> (the 'SEA Directive') of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. Article 1 of the Directive states that:

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

In effect, SEA comprises a systematic assessment process of predicting and evaluating the 'likely significant environmental effects' of implementing a proposed plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. The overall aim of SEA is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish law through two Statutory Instruments (S.I.):

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

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

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

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

#### 1.4 The Requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan

Article 3(2) of the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes:

- a) *which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive<sup>2</sup>, or*
- b) *which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive)<sup>3</sup> i.e. requires that SEA is undertaken where Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is being undertaken on the plan or programme.*

The Cork Destination Experience Development Plan is a non-statutory tourism sector plan that does not set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive and does not contain provisions or define rules that must be complied with when consent of other projects is being granted. Therefore, SEA of the CDEDP is not required under Article 3(2)(a) above of the SEA Directive.

The Plan does, however, fall under the definition of a “plan” contained within the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and therefore, must be screened for the requirement to undertake Appropriate Assessment (AA) in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EC). The Screening for AA (BSM, 2024) has found that the Plan has the potential, if unmitigated, to affect the ecological integrity of European sites and that measures to ensure that potential effects are avoided are required. Therefore, in accordance with Article 3(2)(b) above and guidance provided in SEA Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/084, a SEA of the CDEDP has been undertaken.

<sup>2</sup> Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, *on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment*

<sup>3</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>



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The Environmental Report provides the findings of the SEA and takes account of recommendations contained in submissions from the Environmental Authorities. On finalisation of the Plan, an SEA Statement will be prepared, summarising, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan.

## 2 Outline Description of the Plan

### 2.1 Introduction

Cork City is considered a 'Progressing' destination with a focus on developing new best-in-class visitor experiences aligned with a distinctive visitor proposition. East Cork and the Harbour area are categorised as a 'Pioneering' destination with a focus on product development, improving visitor infrastructure and building effective local tourism networks.

The Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination and Experience Development Plan (CDEDP) is a five-year sustainable tourism development plan. The CDEDP focuses on increasing the value of tourism in Cork City, Cork Harbour, and East Cork by growing the appeal of the destination, reducing seasonality and increasing visitor spend. The DEDP has been developed to contribute to the overarching regional objectives for Ireland's Ancient East.

The CDEDP builds on existing projects and connects all related investment activity with the potential to impact on the visitors experience of Cork. This includes projects currently underway, projects featuring in existing plans and new concepts designed to grow the leisure tourism base within Cork City and Harbour. The plan incorporates new approaches to visitor orientation while also ensuring tourism and related cultural activity are considered for integration into future regeneration projects. The overarching approach is designed to develop the appeal of Cork City as a leisure tourism hub destination and grow its role as a visitor hub for the rest of the destination. It features a collective ambition to establish Cork Harbour as a world class visitor experience and grow the appeal of East Cork in the domestic and international market.

The plan has been created through a programme of research and consultation guided by the V.I.C.E. (Visitor, Industry, Community, Environment) model for sustainable tourism development. It incorporates the views of visitors, the tourism industry, local community stakeholders in addition to a programme of international benchmarking.

The key objectives of the plan are:

- *Ensure local experiences are brought to life through the development of the optimal mix of hero and ancillary tourism products that attract visitors and retain them for longer in the destination.*
- *Unlock the economic growth potential of an area by progressing a range of key initiatives that will motivate tourists to explore the wider destination.*
- *Develop a sustainable basis for commercial tourism development centred on creating strong signature, supporting and ancillary experiences that are commoditised through the creation of saleable experiences that excite consumers and buyers alike.*
- *Create the conditions to attract leisure visitors on a year-round basis to Cork to immerse themselves actively in the community, interacting with local people.*
- *Strengthen the value of tourism to the local community by providing sustainable employment opportunities.*

### 2.2 Vision

The Destination Vision (10 year vision) for CDEDP is:

*"Ireland's gastronomic capital linked by a world class harbour destination, sustainably connecting city, local communities and coastal experiences."*

## 2.3 Strategic Objectives

Regional Tourism Development Plans 2023- 2027 (RTDS) have been developed for each of Fáilte Ireland's four Regional Experience Brands (Ireland's Ancient East, Wild Atlantic Way, Dublin and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands). These plans provide the strategic framework for other tourism development strategies, such as, Destination and Experience Development Plans (DEDPs) and County Tourism Strategies. The DEDP has been developed to contribute to the overarching regional objectives for Ireland's Ancient East. The following five objectives provide the basis for the strategic approach reflected within the DEDP:

- RTDS Strategic Objective 1: Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Cork and Ireland's Ancient East.
- RTDS Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism in Cork.
- RTDS Strategic Objective 3: Ensure the destination is easy to access, navigate and consume.
- RTDS Strategic Objective 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability to ensure that it can thrive and create sustainable jobs in local communities.
- RTDS Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development.

The accompanying strategic goals of the CDEDP are set out in **Table 8.1** of this report.

## 2.4 Destination Catalyst Projects Overview

To achieve the above strategic objectives, the CDEDP focuses on six catalyst and six enabling projects that each include a number of sub-elements that contribute to the overarching objectives of developing the CDEDP. The delivery of these projects will collectively contribute to achieving the transformational objectives of creating a Lee, City Harbour Way Experience Corridor and realising the tourism potential of Cork Harbour.

The catalyst projects and their key objectives are as follows:

**Project 1 Lee, City, harbour Way, Experience Corridors** - *Develop an innovative trails approach linking land, water and cultural experiences to encourage visitors to explore more of the destination.*

**Project 2 World Class Harbour- Harbour Navigation – Island Journeys** – *Develop Cork Harbour into a world class visitor experience.*

**Project 3 Cork Docklands / attraction of Scale** – *Develop an attraction of scale in Cork City.*

**Project 4 Cork City Cultural Quarters** - *Create new opportunities for visitors to engage with local communities through cultural experiences and linking the city's cultural quarter.*

**Project 5 Midleton to Youghal Greenway** - *Develop the Midleton to Youghal Greenway (MY Greenway) to become a key attractor to East Cork and motivation for visitors to explore the local communities on the route.*

**Project 6 Food Capital** - *Establish Cork as Ireland's Food Capital.*

The complete list of catalyst project and enabling projects is provided and are assessed in **Appendix 1** of the SEA Environmental Report .

### 3 Strategic Environmental Assessment

#### 3.1 Introduction

SEA is a process for evaluating, at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental quality and consequences of Plans or Programmes (P/Ps). The purpose is to ensure that the environmental consequences of P/Ps are assessed both during their preparation and prior to their adoption. The SEA process also gives specified environmental authorities, interested parties and the general public, an opportunity to comment on the environmental impacts of the proposed P/P and to be kept informed during the decision-making process.

*Directive 2001/42/EC<sup>5</sup> on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment* (the ‘SEA Directive’) requires EU Member States to assess the ‘likely significant environmental effects’ of plans and programmes prior to their adoption. This provides for the assessment of strategic environmental considerations at an early stage in the decision-making process.

The SEA process is designed to ensure that significant environmental effects arising from plans are:

- Properly identified and assessed;
- Subject to public participation;
- Taken into account by decision makers; and
- Regularly monitored.


The SEA Directive and SEA Regulations require that competent authorities determine whether the implementation of plans or programmes, or modifications thereof, will be likely to have significant effects on the environment. This determination process is referred to as an Environmental Assessment and defined as:

*“...the preparation of an environmental report, the carrying out of consultations, the taking into account of the environmental report and the results of the consultations in decision-making and the provision of information on the decision...”<sup>6</sup>*

#### 3.2 SEA Stages and Process

The key focus of SEA is to take environmental issues, and in particular ‘likely significant environmental effects’ of a P / P, into consideration during the plan or programme making process. The key stages in the SEA process as they relate to the CDEDP are outlined in **Table 2.1** below.



**Table 2.1 Outline of the SEA Process**

Stage	Description	Status
1. Screening	<p>The requirement to undertake a SEA is mandatory for certain Plan / Programme (P / P). Where SEA is not a mandatory requirement, the P / Ps is subject to a ‘Screening process’, to consider if it is <i>likely to have significant effects</i> on the environment, and therefore, if SEA is required.</p> <p>The preparation of the <i>Draft CDEDP</i> has been screened for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and it has been concluded that potential for effects on the integrity of European sites cannot be</p>	<p>Completed</p> 

<sup>5</sup> SEA Directive: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

<sup>6</sup> Article 2(b) of Directive 2001/42/EC, European Union, Article 2 (3) of EC (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 S.I No. 435 of 2004

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Stage	Description	Status
	<p>excluded beyond all reasonable scientific doubt and is required to undergo Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>Therefore, in accordance with <i>Circular Letter SEA 1/08 &amp; NPWS 1/08</i> the <i>Draft CDEDP</i> is also required to undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with <i>Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment</i> (known as the SEA Directive).</p>	
<p><b>2. Scoping</b></p>	<p>Preparation of a SEA Scoping Report highlighting that the Environmental Report is required to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ methods of assessment;</li> <li>■ contents and level of detail in the Plan / Programme;</li> <li>■ the stage in the Plan or Programme-making process; and</li> <li>■ the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process in order to avoid duplication of environmental assessment.</li> </ul> <p>Scoping provides for consultation with the Environmental Authorities specified in Article 13 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011, and the process allows for incorporation of the views of the environmental authorities within the P / P and the SEA Environmental Report.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> 
<p><b>3. Environmental Report</b></p>	<p>Preparation of a systemic identification and evaluation of alternatives and assessment of the <i>likely significant environmental effects</i> of implementing the P / P.</p> <p>The findings of the assessment, which is carried out at various stages in the P / P making (<i>e.g.</i> Draft, Amended Draft <i>etc.</i>), are provided in the SEA Environmental Report in accordance with Article 12 (including Schedule 2) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011.</p> <p>The output from this stage is an Environmental Report which accompanies the draft P / P required on public display.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> 
<p><b>4. SEA Statement</b></p>	<p>Completion / adoption of the Final CDEDP, taking account of <i>likely significant environmental effects</i>, any submissions or observations received from consultations and integration of mitigation and monitoring measures within the Plan.</p> <p>The Environmental Report is concluded and an SEA Statement is prepared in accordance with Article 16(2)(b) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011, summarising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan / Programme;</li> <li>■ how the environmental report, and any submissions /observations or consultations have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan / Programme;</li> <li>■ the reasons for choosing the Plan / Programme in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and</li> <li>■ the measures decided for monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan / Programme.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Current Stage</b></p>

### 3.3 SEA Screening and Requirement for SEA

The requirement to undertake a SEA is mandatory for certain P / Ps that are above specified thresholds. Where SEA is not a mandatory requirement, the P / P is subject to a 'Screening process', (Stage 1) to consider if it is likely to have significant effects on the environment, and therefore, if SEA is required.

Screening for the purposes of SEA is defined as “*the determination of whether implementation of a P / P [Plan or Programme] would be likely to have significant environmental effects on the environment. The process of deciding whether a P / P [Plan or Programme] requires SEA.*”<sup>7</sup> The criteria for screening, i.e. determining whether a particular plan is likely to have significant environmental effects are set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. These criteria are reproduced in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011. The criteria are set out under two principal headings, each of which have a number of sub-criteria:

- Characteristics of a Plan / Programme; and
- Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected.

It is also noted that in accordance with Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08<sup>8</sup>, SEA for a P / P is also a mandatory requirement where the P / P requires Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The *Draft CDEDP* has been screened for Appropriate Assessment (AA) in accordance with Article 6(3) of the *Habitats Directive* (92/43/EEC) and Regulation 42 of the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011*, as amended. The AA Screening has concluded that potential for effects on the integrity of European sites cannot be excluded beyond all reasonable scientific doubt and therefore appropriate assessment and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is required.

Therefore, in accordance with *Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08*<sup>9</sup> the CDEDP was also required to undergo Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with *Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment*<sup>10</sup> (the *SEA Directive*).

### 3.4 SEA Scoping

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

The consultation was undertaken with the following Environmental Authorities specified in Article 9(5) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended, on 08 May 2023:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- The Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications;
- The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine;
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

Submissions / observations on the scoping of the Environmental Report were received from the environmental authorities and comments have been incorporated into the Plan and Environmental Report as set out in **Table 3.1**.

7 EPA: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/SEA%20Pack%202018.pdf>

8 <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

9 <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

10 DIRECTIVE 2001/42/EC: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

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Table 3.1 SEA Scoping Submissions / Observation from Environmental Authorities

Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
<b>Department of Environment, Climate &amp; Communications</b>	The submission noted that the Planning Advisory Division acts on behalf of the Department as a statutory consultee within the planning system. The Department provides observations in relation to County Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Strategic Environmental Assessments. The Department does not provide observations for individual planning applications, EIA or individual developments.	The response has been noted.
<b>Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)</b>	GSI encourage use of and reference to their datasets attached to their submission. These include geoheritage (county geological sites), geotourism, dimension stone/stone built Ireland, groundwater, geological mapping, geotechnical database resources, geohazards, marine and coastal unit, national coastal change assessment, physiographic units.  GSI also includes a list of publicly available datasets relevant to planning, EIA & SEA processes.  It is noted that County Geological Site audit for Co. Cork commenced in 2021 and will be completed in 2023. The audit for Cork City was complete in 2022 and eight County Geological Sites were recognised in Cork City.	The information and datasets provided have informed the preparation of the Environmental Report.
<b>Department of Agriculture, Food &amp; Marine (DAFM)</b>	The submission from DAFM highlights the following information:  Fishery Harbour - There are no impacts or requirements on fishery harbours.  Aquaculture – DAFM advise that scoping should be mindful of Aquaculture licensed sites and their role. This includes their locations, required landside infrastructure such as piers & landing place, navigational requirements of licensed sites.  Sea fishing - no significant impacts.  Cumulative impact - DAFM state that they are not aware of any other development, plans or projects that may in conjunction with this application, require further scoping.  Conclusion- DAFM advise that consideration be given to Aquaculture and potential for future aquaculture and its effects.	The response has been noted and the information provided has informed the preparation of the Environmental Report.

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Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
<p><b>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</b></p>	<p>The submission from EPA includes the following comments and recommendations:</p> <p>EPA highlights several key environmental issues to consider in preparing the Plan and SEA. The Plan should set out the implementation arrangement and governance structures, document synergy between the Plan and key national plan and programmes, reflect objective of the SEA Directive. The SEA shall address climate &amp; biodiversity issues.</p> <p>Recommendations from the SEA &amp; AA including mitigation measures and monitoring proposals should be integrated into the Plan. SEA Environmental Report and the Plan should include a chapter on how the recommendations and mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>EPA recommend that the Plan includes summary tables outlining the key findings of the SEA and linking the significant environmental effects identified to the proposed mitigation measures, monitoring programme and Plan policies/measures.</p> <p>EPA recommend that the SEA Environmental Report should include summary tables outlining the key findings of the SEA and linking the significant environmental effects identified to the proposed mitigation measures, monitoring programme and, where relevant, Plan policies/measures.</p> <p>The submission describes the key findings and chapters of the 'State of the Environment Report- Ireland's Environment An Integrated Assessment 2020'. The report recognises the need for full implementation of existing environmental legislation and review of governance/coordination on environmental protection across public bodies.</p> <p>EPA highlights the requirement under the SEA Regulations to consult with Environmental Authorities (EPA, Minister of Housing, Local Government &amp; Heritage, Department of Environment, Climate &amp; Communications, Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine)</p> <p>Appendix I to the EPA submission includes comments on the SEA Scoping Report - scope of the SEA, data and knowledge gaps, range of effects, monitoring, implementation &amp; reporting, SEA statement, integration with other key Plans and Programmes, available guidance &amp; resources, webtools.</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>



## Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination & Experience Development Plan

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Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	EPA submission also includes attached - 'SEA of Local Authority Land-Use Plans - EPA Recommendations and Resources 2023 (Version 1.19)'	

### 3.5 SEA Environmental Report

The current stage of the SEA process (Stage 3) involves the preparation of the Environmental Report for the identification, description, evaluation and mitigation of the potential environmental impacts associated with the CDEDP and the alternatives taking account of the geographical scope of the Plan.

Article 5(1) and Annex I of the *SEA Directive* provides detail on the information to be included in an Environmental Report.

The SEA Environmental Report was placed on public display, together with the CDEDP and for comment from statutory bodies, the public and interested parties.

### 3.6 Consultation

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

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

Submissions received are detailed in **Table 3.2** below.

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Table 3.2 SEA Consultation Response

Submission	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
<a href="#">Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Electoral Reform)</a>	The response from the Department acknowledges the receipt of the draft Plan and environmental assessments. The submission notes that they have forwarded it to Development Applications Unit. No further comments received.	The response has been noted.
<a href="#">Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)</a>	The submission from GSI encourages the use of their various datasets for EIAR, SEA, planning and scoping processes. GSI highlight their recently completed geological heritage audit for Co. Cork and include a link to the full report.	The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.
<a href="#">Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media</a>	The response from the Department acknowledges the receipt of the correspondence.	The response has been noted.
<a href="#">Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</a>	The submission from EPA includes the following comments and recommendations:  Ensure the Plan aligns with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes and is consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.	The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.
	Visitor Numbers  EPA note that central to the Plan is the aim of increasing visitor numbers. This increase has the potential to disturb or damage the natural environment, if not carefully managed. Where the expected increase in tourist numbers materialises, there may be a need for additional or expanded tourism and tourism-related developments. Such developments may have implications for changes to land use, loss of green field sites, disturbance to natural or cultural heritage (including designated sites and protected species, etc.). It is important that tourism offerings are developed at suitable locations and in an environmentally sustainable manner, which minimises potential adverse environmental impacts.	The Plan and the Environmental Report take into account integrating requirements for environmental protection and management under Appendix 1 and is also considered throughout the Plan.

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Submission	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p>Critical Infrastructure Provision</p> <p>In the context of increased visitor numbers and any potential development, the Plan should recognise the need for adequate and appropriate wastewater and drinking water services to be put in place to service any infrastructural development associated with Plan-related projects, in the interests of protecting both the environment and public health. In this context, Fáilte Ireland should liaise with Úisce Éireann in terms of future needs for provision of adequate critical services.</p>	<p>This is already referenced in Section 6 of Appendix 1 – ‘6. Infrastructure and Capacity Considerations.’. As such this is already included and no further change is required.</p>
	<p>Biodiversity Considerations</p> <p>EPA state that it is important that the various important ecosystem services and designated sites / protected species within the Plan area are afforded significant protection. This should be considered carefully, to ensure that any additional tourism developments are sited, designed, operated and maintained in an appropriate manner. In seeking to enhance tourism developments, the need to maintain and protect the significant environmental resources of the area should also be a clear objective.</p> <p>EPA suggest that key findings of the SEA and AA processes are incorporated into the Plan, as shown in Appendix 1. It may be useful to include a map, showing the key elements of environmental sensitivity in the area.</p>	<p>The following reference has been added to the final Plan:</p> <p><i>“Identification and mapping of the key environmental sensitivities of relevance to the Plan are detailed in the SEA Environmental Report and in the AA Natura Impact Statement.”</i></p>
	<p>EPA note the commitment to working closely with stakeholders in delivering many of the projects included in the Plan. Those projects should take into account the requirements of the EIA, Birds and Habitats Directives, as appropriate. The potential for cumulative effects that may arise from multiple tourism initiatives needs to be a key consideration also. It will be important that environmental management plans are prepared as appropriate, to ensure that important environmental and cultural resources are afforded significant protection.</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>
	<p>EPA advise to refer to the following guidance document- <i>Good practice guidance on SEA for the tourism sector</i> (EPA, 2023), <i>Good practice guidance on SEA and landscape</i> (EPA, 2023), EPA Guidance on the <i>Tiering of environmental assessments – The influence of Strategic</i></p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>

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Submission	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
	<p><i>Environmental Assessment on Project level Environmental Impact Assessment (EPA, 2021) and Ireland’s Climate Change Assessment (ICCA).</i></p>	
	<p>The Monitoring Programme should be flexible to take account of specific environmental issues and unforeseen adverse impacts should they arise. It should consider and deal with the possibility of cumulative effects. Monitoring of both positive and negative effects should be considered. The monitoring programme should set out the various data sources, monitoring frequencies and responsibilities. Guidance on SEA-related monitoring is available on the EPA website.</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>
	<p>The Submission refers to the State of the Environment Report – Ireland’s Environment 2020, which should be considered as relevant. EPA also brings to the attention that the next iteration of the report will be published later in 2024.</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>
	<p>EPA advises on the preparation of the SEA statement and to send a copy of the SEA Statement with the above information to any environmental authority consulted during the SEA process.</p>	<p>The SEA statement will be prepared as the next step in the SEA process</p>

### 3.7 SEA Statement

Following approval of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination Experience Development Plan, an SEA Statement (Stage 4) will be prepared which includes information on:

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

### 3.8 SEA Guidance

The SEA Environmental Report reflects the requirements of *Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the SEA Directive)* and the national implementing Regulations S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, and by the PDR 2001, as amended.

The following principal sources of guidance were used in the SEA process including in the preparation of this Environmental Report:

- Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of certain plans and programmes on the environment.
- S.I. No. 435 of 2004 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004.
- S.I. No. 200 of 2011 -Environmental Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.
- Guidance on Implementation of Directive 2001/42/EC, European Commission, 2004, at: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/eia/pdf/030923\\_sea\\_guidance.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/eia/pdf/030923_sea_guidance.pdf)
- SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans - EPA Recommendations and Resources. EPA, Updated 2024.
- SEA Pack. EPA, Updated January 2023.
- SEA Spatial Information Sources Inventory. EPA, Updated April 2024.
- SEA Resource Manual for Local and Regional Planning Authorities. EPA, 2015.
- Good Practice Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Tourism Sector. EPA, June 2023.
- Good Practice Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Landscape. EPA, December 2023.
- Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statements and Monitoring. EPA, March 2023.
- Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental Impact Assessment Tiering. EPA, 2021.
- Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines. Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, March 2023.

- EPA Mapping. Environmental Mapping / Geographical Information System (GIS) tools are available at: <http://gis.epa.ie/SeeMaps>
- EPA Water and Air Quality Reports at: <https://www.epa.ie/pubs/legislation/air/quality/>
- EPA Ireland's Environment – An Integrated Assessment 2020 at: <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/irelands-environment/state-of-environment-report/#>
- SEA (EPA) Spatial Information Sources at: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/>
- Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment, EPA 2015 at: [https://www.epa.ie/publications/research/biodiversity/EPA-157\\_web.pdf](https://www.epa.ie/publications/research/biodiversity/EPA-157_web.pdf)
- Integrating Climate Change into Strategic Environmental Assessment in Ireland - A Guidance Note. EPA, 2015.
- Ireland's Climate Change Assessment. EPA, 2023.
- Climate Action Plan 2024. Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, 2024.
- Circular Letter PL 9/2013: Article 8 (Decision Making) of EU Directives 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as amended. Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2013.
- Circular Letter PSSP 6/2011: Further Transposition of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2011.
- Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08: Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2008.
- Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment - Streamlining AA, SEA and EIA Processes: Practitioner's Manual. Strive Report Series No. 106. Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2013.
- Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment. European Commission 2013.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites - The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission, 2000, at: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/provision\\_of\\_art6\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/provision_of_art6_en.pdf)
- Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission, 2002, at: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura\\_2000\\_asses\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_asses_en.pdf)
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2009, at: [http://www.npws.ie/publications/archive/NPWS\\_2009\\_AA\\_Guidance.pdf](http://www.npws.ie/publications/archive/NPWS_2009_AA_Guidance.pdf)

### 3.9 Appropriate Assessment

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

Stage 1 is to establish whether AA is required for the particular plan or project. This stage is referred to as 'screening for the requirement for AA', and its purpose is to determine, on the basis of a preliminary assessment and objective criteria, whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans

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or projects, could have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

As set out in Department Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08<sup>11</sup> (15 February 2008), Screening for AA is of relevance to SEA screening in that *“where following screening, it is found that the draft plan or amendment may have an impact on the conservation status of a Natura 2000 site or that such an impact cannot be ruled out, adopting the precautionary approach:*

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

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

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

The AA / NIS has concluded that the CDEDP will not affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.

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<sup>11</sup> NPWS SEA letter: <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>



## 4 Relationship with Plans and Programmes

Fáilte Ireland has prepared this Cork Destination Experience Development Plan to enhance the visitor experience, promote tourism and support economic growth. The plan is designed to build on the ambition of the Ireland’s Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy. Regional Tourism Development Plans, 2023- 2027 (RTDS) have been developed for each of Fáilte Ireland’s four Regional Experience Brands (Ireland’s Ancient East, Wild Atlantic Way, Dublin and Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands). These plans provide the strategic framework for other tourism development strategies, most notably, Destination and Experience Development Plans (DEDPs) and County Tourism Strategies. The CDEDP has been developed to contribute to the overarching regional objectives for Ireland’s Ancient East.

As part of the SEA process, it is necessary to consider the environmental protection objectives, established at the international; European and national level which are relevant to the CDEDP and how they have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan. In its making, the CDEDP sits at the lower level of the hierarchy and must comply with relevant higher-level strategic actions / plans. These documents include plans and programmes, which have also been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, are detailed below.

There is a legislative framework for the protection of the environment and our natural resources relevant to the CDEDP. **Table 4.1** below provides a list of the principle legislative framework.

**Table 4.2** and **Table 4.3** below provide a working list of the principal plans and programmes influencing the formulation of the CDEDP and the Environmental Report, either directly or through European, National and / or County level policy. The relationship with other plans and programmes is discussed, as appropriate, under the Current State of the Environment in **Section 5** of this Report.

**Table 4.1 Legislative Framework**

Legislative Framework	
Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended	Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)
Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended	Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EEC)	Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)
Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU) as amended by (2014/52/EU)	Renewable Energy Directive (2018/2001/EU) as amended by (EU/2023/2413)
Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)	European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations) 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) (as amended)
Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) on the Conservation of Wild Birds, 1979	Renewable Energies in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century: Building a More Sustainable Future
Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC)	EU 2020 climate and energy package
Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	EU Renewable Energy Road Map
Flood Directive (2007/60/EC)	European Landscape Convention 2000
Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC)	Wildlife Acts 1976-2024
Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC)	The Water Services Act (2007 – 2024)
Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC)	Foreshore Act 1933-2024

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Legislative Framework	
Urban Wastewater Directive (91/271/EEC)	Fisheries Act 1997 (as amended)
Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)	Sea Fisheries & Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 (as amended)
Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)	The National Monuments Act 1930-2014
EU Landfill Directive (1999/31/EC)	Roads Act 1993, as amended
Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)	European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea Fisheries) Regulations 2013 (as amended)

Table 4.2 Relevant National & Regional Plans and Programmes

National & Regional Plans and Programmes	
Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (NPF)	National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development
National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030	Climate Action Roadmap 2023-2030
Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022	National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region	Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012)
Ireland's Environment - An Integrated Assessment 2020	The Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (2014)
National Mitigation Plan 2017	Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042
Our Sustainable Future - A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland (2012)	Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019)
Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)	Ireland's First National Cycle Policy Framework 2009
Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2023)	National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024 - 2030
4 <sup>th</sup> Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030	The National Renewable Energy Action Plan
Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland 2012	National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2017-2020
National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development 2014- 2020	Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways 2018
Draft National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development 2030	The National Broadband Plan 2020
National CFRAMS Programme	National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025
River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021	Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011)
Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027	Heritage Ireland 2030
The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009)	Food Harvest 2020

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National & Regional Plans and Programmes	
South Eastern Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study	National Adaptation Framework Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland 2018 and Review of the National Adaptation Framework 2022
People, Place and Policy Growing Tourism to 2025	Climate Action Plan 2024
Fáilte Ireland Corporate Plan	Water Services Strategic Plan / Capital Investment Programme (Uisce Éireann)
Tourism Action Plan 2019 – 2021	Regional Tourism Development Strategies (2023-2027) & Ireland Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023 - 2027
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways	Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025
National Physical Activity Plan 2013 – 2025	Actions to Promote Sustainable Tourism Practices 2021 - 2023

**Table 4.3 Relevant Local Plans and Programmes**

Local Plans and Programmes	
Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork 2050
Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028	Docklands Local Area Plan 2008
Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy	Cork City Green and Blue Infrastructure Study 2021 & Strategy 2022-2028

## 5 Current State of the Receiving Environment (Environmental Baseline)

### 5.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the information on the baseline environment is focused upon the relevant aspects of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected and the likely evolution of the current environment in the absence of the CDEDP. Being consistent with the strategic provisions of the CDEDP, this section provides a strategic description of aspects of environmental components which have the greatest potential to be affected by implementation of the CDEDP, if unmitigated.

### 5.2 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination & Experience Development Plan

The *Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028* states that Cork City Council is working with Fáilte Ireland and other stakeholders to prepare a Destination Experience Development Plan for Cork City and East Cork. It is envisaged that this will address the reliance of Cork City's tourism market on commercial tourism. There is a need to broaden this base to include leisure tourism by developing the tourism products and activities in the city.

It is a requirement of the SEA Directive to consider – *'the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.'* In the absence of the CDEDP it is envisaged that the baseline environment would primarily evolve in line with the policies and objectives of the *Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028*, *Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028* and Local Area Plans (LAPs) for the County. The City and County Development Plans details policies and objectives specific to tourism, however, the standalone CDEDP provides significant opportunities for specific set of tourism-related mitigation measures and the associated likely positive environmental effects.

The CDEDP focuses on three areas, all interconnected to grow the value of tourism in Cork City and Docklands, Cork Harbour and East Cork. Within each of these areas, a range of projects have been identified to support sector recovery, reduce seasonality, increase visitor spend, grow the number of bednights and support local employment. The principles of sustainable tourism have been central to the development and vision for the CDEDP.

Therefore while higher level environmental protection objectives – such as those of *Cork City and County Development Plans* and various EU Directives and transposing Irish Regulations – would still apply, the absence of the CDEDP would mean that new development would be less coordinated and controlled. Less coordinated and controlled development would be less certain to result in the positive effects provided for by the CDEDP.

### 5.3 Description of the Environmental Baseline

The baseline data helps to assess the current state of the environment, facilitate the identification, evaluation and subsequent monitoring of the effects of the Plan. Thus, this information creates a platform whereby existing issues relevant to the Cork City & County area can be quantified, where possible, or qualified thereby ensuring that the implementation of CDEDP does not exacerbate identifiable problems.

Baseline data collection is a first step in the process of evaluating the sensitivity of the environment. The *SEA Directive* requires that information is provided on ‘*any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the Plan or programme...*’. Information is therefore provided on existing environmental problems which are relevant to the Plan, thus helping to ensure that the Plan does not exacerbate any existing environmental problems in the study area.

The environmental aspects are described in line with the legislative requirements, under the following headings:

- Biodiversity (including Flora & Fauna);
- Population and Human Health;
- Land, Soils and Geology;
- Water Quality;
- Air Quality, Noise and Climate;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Landscape & Visual;
- Material Assets;
- Interaction of the foregoing; and
- Cumulative Impacts.

The Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027 published by Fáilte Ireland provide a framework for sustainable tourism development across Ireland and include Regional Tourism Strategies for Ireland’s Ancient East, Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands and Dublin. The Regional Tourism Development Strategies will be activated across every region through a series of local area action plans, referred to as Destination and Experience Development Plans (DEDPs). Under the Ireland’s Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027, there is a requirement to prepare DEDP for Cork City, Harbour and East Cork.

### 5.3.1 Biodiversity

Cork is rich in biodiversity, ecology and wildlife and provides a valuable range of green and blue infrastructure assets. The diverse green and blue infrastructure network in Cork offers many opportunities for Tourism, Culture, Recreation and Leisure. The Landscape and Harbour in Cork also contributes to its wider setting, creating a unique sense of place.

Within the study area, there are a number of areas designated for protection under the Natura 2000 network. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are legally protected under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats and Annex II species. Special Protection Areas are protected under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 2009/147/EC.

There are 8no. SACs and 3no. SPA within the study area. There are a further 9no. SPAs and 4no. SACs within the Zone of Influence (Zoi) of the study area. Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs have been set for the habitats and species for which the sites have been selected. Site specific detailed conservation objectives are available on the NPWS website<sup>12</sup>. Any potential for impact on European Sites have been fully addressed in the NIS that accompanies the CDEDP and SEA Environment Report.

Nationally Designated Sites include *Natural Heritage Areas* (NHAs) and *Proposed Natural Heritage Areas* (pNHAs) located within the study area and within the zone of influence of the study area are detailed in the SEA ER.

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<sup>12</sup> NPWS website 2019: <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives>

Under the requirements of the *Water Framework Directive* (WFD) a number of waterbodies (or parts of) must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife have been listed on Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs). A number of these protected areas are present within study area and these are as follows:

- The entire ground waterbody beneath the study area is included on the Drinking Water - Ground Waterbody.
- WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive Areas (Lake, Coastal & Transitional waterbodies) – Lee Estuary / Lough Mahon and Blackwater Estuary Lower.
- WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive Areas (Rivers) – none within study area.
- WFD RPA Shellfish Areas – Cork Great Island North Channel, Rostellan North, Rostellan South, Rostellan West and Ballymacoda Bay.
- Salmonid Rivers – River Lee (Cork).

The *EU Shellfish Waters Directive* (2006/113/EC) aims to protect and improve shellfish waters in order to support shellfish life and growth. There are five areas of Shellfish waters within the study area - Cork Great Island North Channel (IE\_SW\_060\_0300) within Lough Mahon, Rostellan North (IE\_SW\_060\_0000), Rostellan South (IE\_SW\_060\_0000), Rostellan West (IE\_SW\_060\_0000) all within the Cork Harbour and Ballymacoda Bay (IE\_SW\_020\_0000) within the Youghal Bay.

The *Salmonid Regulations* (S.I. No. 293 of 1988) designate the waters capable of supporting salmon (*Salmo salar*), trout (*Salmo trutta*), char (*Salvelinus*) and whitefish (*Coregonus*) as protected. The River Lee (Cork) within the study area is a designated Salmonid Water under the EU Freshwater Fish Directive.

#### 5.3.1.1 Biodiversity Issues

Existing biodiversity issues / pressures and threats on Ireland's habitats and species, which are also relevant to the study area, include:

- Direct habitat loss within European Sites e.g. developments occurring on undeveloped sites, recreational activity works.
- Indirect effects on the ecological networks supporting European Sites e.g. linear developments forming barriers to movements of mobile species or loss of sites that support an overall population of species.
- Construction and use of commercial and recreational infrastructure and areas. For example development within watercourses.
- Indirect threat to water quality including changes to surface and groundwater quality and volumes.
- Direct / indirect disturbance of sensitive habitats / species e.g. recreation at harbour or coastal sites, riverside walkways, pressure from increased visitor numbers etc.
- Direct / indirect threats to European Sites by invasive species.
- Direct / indirect threats to native flora and fauna from pathogens / diseases.
- Invasive Species and problematic species - continued control and management of invasive species. For example the loss of biodiversity as native species are shaded out, but also diseases and pathogens.

#### 5.3.2 Population and Human Health

County Cork is surrounded by County Limerick to the north, County Tipperary to north-east, County Waterford to the east, County Kerry to north-west, South Western Atlantic Seaboard to the south-west and Western Celtic Sea to the south. The 2022 Census results showed that the population for County

Cork was 360,152<sup>13</sup> persons, a decrease of c. 13.7% from the 2016 census (417,211<sup>14</sup> persons). The 2016 Census showed that the population of County Cork was an increase of c. 4.35% from the 2011 census (399,802<sup>15</sup> persons). There has been an increase in the population of the County from 2011 to 2016 and then a decrease from 2016 to 2022.

The tourism industry has long been recognised as an important economic driver for the economy of County Cork. Tourism in County Cork is based on its rich natural and built heritage. The principle features of the area's tourism product include mountains and upland habitats; rivers and lakes, over 1100 km's of scenic rugged coastline and peninsulas with long stretches of sandy beaches, fertile agricultural land and many upland peatlands and forest/woodland areas. These natural assets combined with a rich heritage of archaeological and historical sites, built environment including manor homes and gardens, attractive towns and villages offer a unique tourism product.

As per the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 and based on Fáilte Ireland figures, in 2019 Cork had five attractions in Ireland's Top 50 Fee Charging visitor attractions, Fota Wildlife Park (462,047 visitors), Blarney Castle (460,000 visitors), Jameson Distillery Midleton (135,000 visitors), Charles Fort (97,990 visitors) and The Titanic Experience (88,000 visitors). While Cork County had three attractions in Ireland's Top 50 Free visitor attraction with Doneraile Park (490,000 visitors), Fota Arboretum & Gardens (113,695 visitors) and Youghal Heritage Centre (39,671 visitors). More recently, travel website 'European Best Destinations' cited Cork as among the 15 of the 'European Best Destinations 2020' following a vote of more than 600,000 people.

Cork Harbour is the most significant port in the state, and has an important role in the continuing success of the marine – leisure, recreation and tourism sectors in the Southern Region. The Council recognises that areas of the Coastline are a valuable amenity resource with significant recreation potential. County Cork has a number of recreational and amenity assets including but not limited to The Blackwater Valley - a walking, cycling, fishing destination and other outdoor activities with scope for a Blueway along the route in the future, The Bandon and Lee River Valley- important recreational amenity, heritage and fisheries areas, Cork City and Harbour, Spike Island and Fort Camden, Fota Wildlife Park, Cobh etc.

#### 5.3.2.1 Existing Population and Human Health Issues

Existing population and human health issues / pressures on the population of study area, include:

- Health and Well-being - continue the development of recreation and leisure facilities.
- Support cycle and walking tourism initiatives, in tandem with the development of greenways and blueways in the County.
- Radon - Radon risk map levels in the study area have been collated from the EPA Radon Risk Map of Ireland, refer to Figure 5.5.
- Flooding - Over the past number of years there have been significant instances where flooding has occurred in areas of the County causing damage to homes and businesses. Refer to Section 5.3.4.
- Information on the status of drinking water, wastewater and climate change are provided in other sections of this Report.

<sup>13</sup> 2022 Census Data : <https://visual.cso.ie/?body=entity/ima/cop/2022&boundary=C03789V04537&guid=2ae19629-14a8-13a3-e055-000000000001>

<sup>14</sup> 2016 Census Data : <https://visual.cso.ie/?body=entity/ima/cop/2016&boundary=C03849V04599&guid=2ae19629-14a8-13a3-e055-000000000001>

<sup>15</sup> 2011 Census data : <https://visual.cso.ie/?body=entity/ima/cop/2011&boundary=C03994V04752&guid=C07>

#### 5.3.3 Land, Soils & Geology

Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to their heritage and economic benefits. They are also important as links in the county's green infrastructure network. Cork has rich fertile agricultural land and many bogs and peatlands with a higher than national average land mass of forest and woodland area. Woodland habitat in Cork City is predominantly located in the north western fringe of the wider city, within the hinterland, Tower and Blarney and along the boundary fringe at Glanmire and Rochestown.

County Cork contains a range of soils that support various habitats and land uses and provide valuable mineral resource potential. The study area comprises a mix of soil types which are described in detail in the SEA ER. These soils can be impacted upon by development, land use changes and water quality.

The *Seveso III Directive* (European Directive 2012/18/EU) and the *European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2000* (S.I. No. 476 of 2000) apply to companies where dangerous substances are present in quantities equal to or above specified thresholds. At present there are several Upper Tier Seveso (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) (Revocation) Regulations 2015 (S.I. No. 208 of 2015) sites in the study area and these include - BASF Ireland Ltd. Little Island Industrial Estate, Little Island, Co. Cork; Calor Teoranta Tivoli Docks, Co. Cork; Calor Teoranta Whitegate Filling Plant, Midleton, Co. Cork; Flogas Ireland Ltd., Tivoli Industrial Estate, Tivoli, Co. Cork; Grassland Agro, Carrigrohane Road, Cork; Irish Distillers Ltd. Ballynona North, Dungourney. Co.Cork; Irish Distillers Ltd. Midleton Distilleries, Park North, Midleton, Co. Cork; Irving Oil Whitegate Refinery Ltd. Whitegate, Midleton, Co. Cork; Marinochem Ltd. Marino Point, Cobh, Co. Cork; Novartis Ringaskiddy Ltd. Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork; Pfizer Ireland Pharmaceuticals Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients Plant, P.O. Box 140, Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork; Portfolio Concentrate Solutions Ltd. Kilnagleary, Carrigaline, Co. Cork; Thermo Fisher Scientific Cork Ltd. Currabinny, Carrigaline. Co. Cork.

The Lower Tier Seveso Sites in the study area include- BOC Gases Little Island Co. Cork; Carbon Chemical Group Ltd Raheens Industrial Estate, Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork; Chemical Bulk Storage Ltd. Unit 19, Tivoli Industrial Estate, Tivoli, Co. Cork; Electricity Supply Board ESB Aghada Generating Station, Whitegate, Midleton, Co. Cork; Goulding Chemicals Ltd., Centre Park Road, Cork; Hovione Ltd. Loughbeg, Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork; Irish Oxygen Company Ltd. Waterfall Road, Co. Cork; Janssen Pharmaceutical Sciences UC Little Island, Cork; Merck Millipore Ltd, Tullagreen, Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork; Tervas Ltd. Knockburden, Ovens, Co.Cork.

According to Geological Survey, Ireland landslide susceptibility mapping, the vast majority of the county has been rated as having 'low' landslide susceptibility, with the risk rising to 'moderately low' to 'moderately high' in isolated patches throughout the study area.

The study area is underlain by several different rock formations and includes- ORS, sandstone, conglomerate and mudstone, Tournaisian sandstone, mudstone, limestone, Upper Devonian sandstone & mudstone (Old Head Sandstone formation), Tournaisian limestone, Visean limestone and calcareous shale, Namurian Shale, Sandstone, Siltstone & Coal<sup>16</sup>.

The GSI has identified geological sites within the study area which are important Irish Geological Heritage (IGH) sites.

##### 5.3.3.1 Existing Land, Soils, Geology & Hydrogeology Issues

Existing land, soil and geology issues / pressures with environmental considerations include:

<sup>16</sup> GSI Bedrock Geology - <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/publications/Pages/Bedrock-Geology-of-Ireland-Map-Scale-1-to-1-Million.aspx>



- Soil - the loss / damage of soil from the construction of greenfield sites for development.
- Land Management - conversion of land / sites can release CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere and further reduce areas of 'carbon sinks'.
- Land- management of woodlands for recreational purposes.
- Geological Heritage - the protection of sites of geological importance within the study area

#### 5.3.4 Water Quality (including Flooding)

The *EU Water Framework Directive* (WFD) (2000/60/EC) establishes a framework for the protection of both surface water and groundwater waterbodies. The monitoring programme, as part of the WFD, assesses water quality but also water trends of rivers in relation to ecological and physio-chemical quality. The WFD status of rivers ranges from 'high' to 'bad'. The EPA also undertakes water quality surveys for transitional and coastal waterbodies.

The latest *Water Quality in Ireland* report 2016-2021 was published by the EPA in 2022. The status of the river waterbodies in County Cork range from 'bad' to 'high', however the majority of the major river waterbodies range from 'poor' to 'high'. There is a part of Inniscarra Lake (IE\_SW\_19\_138) ('Good' WFD status) within the study area which is designated WFD operational monitoring lakes.

There are nine transitional WFD waterbodies within the study area – Lee (Cork Estuary Upper) (IE\_SW\_060\_0900), Lough Mahon (IE\_SW\_060\_0750), Lough Mahon (Harper's Island) (IE\_SW\_060\_0700), North Channel Great Island (IE\_SW\_060\_0300), Owenboy Estuary (IE\_SW\_060\_1200), Owencarra Estuary (IE\_SW\_060\_0400), Rostellan Lake (IE\_SW\_060\_0100), Womanagh Estuary (IE\_SW\_030\_0100), Lower Blackwater Estuary / Youghal Harbour (IE\_SW\_020\_0100).

Groundwater Quality Status between 2016 and 2021 was generally 'good'<sup>17</sup> across the groundwater bodies in the study area, with the exception of one groundwater body that is Waste Facility (W0012-03) (IE\_SW\_G\_091) which have a status of 'poor'. The groundwater vulnerability within the study area ranges from 'low' to 'extreme'.

##### 5.3.4.1 Existing Hydrogeology and Water Quality Issues

The principal threat to water is pollution which can adversely impact on all parts of the water cycle from groundwater to rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters. The Plan must comply with the requirements of the WFD and the Groundwater Directive and aim to drive improvement to water quality in both the short and long-term. Existing water quality issues / pressures with environmental considerations include:

- Water - the surface waterbodies within the study area need to be improved to achieve 'good' ecological status in waterbodies by 2027.
- Water - pressure on water sources include excessive nutrient enrichment which leads to eutrophication;
- Water - pressure on water sources also comes from land-use changes, water-based recreational sports, erosion, industry and urbanisation.
- Sustainable management of waterways and water-based recreation activities to ensure a balance between tourism development and conservation of natural resources and heritage areas.
- Water - water contamination arising through poor working practices, leakages or accidental spillage of materials if efficient pollution control measures are not fully implemented and maintained.

<sup>17</sup> EPA Groundwater Quality Data - <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

- Surface, ground, transitional & coastal waters - are at risk of pollution from septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems in the vicinity of waterbodies, potential pressures and impacts on water body status, water usage and flood risk from the construction projects i.e. increased sedimentation, groundwater recharge and accidental spillages. There is growing pressures from increasing population and increasing and sometimes conflicting social, economic and recreational uses.
- Flooding - flood risk to be considered as a key environmental criteria.

#### 5.3.5 Air Quality, Noise & Climate

The current trends in air quality in Ireland are reported in the EPA publication ‘2022 Annual Report on Air Quality in Ireland’ which is currently the most up to date analysis of air quality data for Ireland. The study area is located within Zone B and Zone D, where the Cork City is within Zone B – ‘Cork conurbation’ and the Cork Harbour and East Cork are located in Zone D. The designated zones have been defined to meet the criteria for air quality monitoring, assessment and management as defined in the aforementioned regulations. There are several air quality monitoring sites in the study area, these include, Station 60 – Cobh Carrignafof, Co. Cork; Station 72 – Cork Harbour; Station 112 – Port of Cork; Station 90 – Cork Airport; Station 110 – Munster Technological University, Cork; Station 21 – University College Cork; Station 104 – Cork Lower Glanmire Road; Station 56 – South Link Road, Cork; Station 10 – Heatherton park, Cork.

Air Quality Map show whether air quality is ‘good’, ‘fair’, ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ in each region. The current air quality across the study area is ‘good’. Monitoring is done using continuous monitors for ozone and nitrogen oxides in various locations around Ireland. The pollutants of most concern are those whose main source is traffic such as Particulate Matter (PM) and Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).

In accordance with *Environmental Noise Regulations (S.I. No. 140 of 2006)*, a *Noise Action Plan 2018-2023* was prepared by Cork City Council. For the Cork agglomeration area the major noise source for the purpose of this plan is road traffic noise.

The recent *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021* was established to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change. This aims at pursuing the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich and climate neutral economy by no later than the end of the year 2050. Ireland’s *Climate Action Plan 2024* builds on national and sectoral targets by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings in this regard. The IPCC Working Group II Report, published in February 2022, states that economic damage from climate change has been detected in climate-exposed sectors, with regional effects on agriculture, forestry, fishing, energy, and tourism<sup>38</sup>. The Action Plan supports the further development of sustainable tourism and sustainable destination management and provides for various measures that will contribute to climate mitigation, such as those relating to sustainable mobility, carbon pricing, electricity, agriculture and the built environment.

##### 5.3.5.1 Existing Issues

In urban areas, concern has clearly shifted to a range of pollutants associated with road traffic which may be considered relatively new in the context of air quality control. The most important of these pollutants are NO<sub>2</sub>, particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO) and a wide variety of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), including carcinogens such as benzene. Therefore, it is important that a good quality road infrastructure is provided and alternatives to the private car are encouraged as much as possible.

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

The potential effects of climate change resulting in an increase in the frequency and severity of weather events, including flooding, storms, heavy snowfall, and variation in temperature. Severe rainfall events, or very cold events with or without snowfall could adversely impact upon towns and people in the study area leading to water shortages, residential flooding and disruption to infrastructure and to movement. Therefore, it will be important to improve resilience of existing and planned critical infrastructure, systems and procedures to the effects and variability of climate change.

### 5.3.6 Material Assets

The latest *Drinking Water Quality in Public Supplies 2023*<sup>18</sup> was published by the EPA in 2024. The report provides a summary of assessment of drinking water quality in public supplies and public group water schemes in Ireland during 2022. The wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) within the study area include Killeens, Blarney, Ballincollig, Ballygarvan, Riverstick, Innishannon, Ringaskiddy, Ringaskiddy Village, Cobh, North Cobh, Passage-Monkstown, Cork City, Carrigtwohill and Environs, Whitegate-Aghada, Midleton, Cloyne, Ballycotton, Castlemartyr, Ladysbridge, Killeagh and Youghal<sup>19</sup>.

Uisce Éireann and Cork City & County Council are continually progressing sewer rehabilitation activities, capital maintenance activities, etc, and the Council will continue to work with Uisce Éireann to monitor the performance of the networks and to advance and realise capital expansions and upgrades of wastewater infrastructure for the continued sustainable growth of the City & County.

EU and National waste management policy can be summarised by the waste hierarchy of prevention, recycling, energy recovery and disposal. The Regional Waste Management Planning Offices have issued the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy (NWMPCE) 2024 - 2030 in March 2024, which supersedes the Southern Region waste management plan and the two other regional waste management plans. The NWMPCE does not however dissolve the three regional waste areas. The NWMPCE sets the ambition of the plan to have a 0% total waste growth per person over the life of the Plan with an emphasis on non-household wastes including waste from commercial activities and the construction and demolition sector.

The European Commission's Circular Economy Action Plan: A New Circular Economy Action Plan for a Cleaner More Competitive Europe, March 2020, forms one of the main blocks of the European Green Deal. A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy<sup>20</sup> was published in 2020 and outlines Ireland's National Waste Policy for 2020-2025.

The 'National Sustainable Mobility Policy Action Plan 2022-2025' is a national document which seeks to achieve a shift to more sustainable means of transport by setting actions and timeline for Modal Change. Bus Éireann and a number of private operators operate services throughout County Cork. Cork is well served by a number of regional services providing national and regional connectivity to key urban centres such as Dublin, Limerick, etc. Cork is a spatially large County and as such it is acknowledged that personal transport by car will continue to be a feature of longer trips despite the significant mode shift to sustainable transport.

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<sup>18</sup> EPA Drinking Water Quality - <https://www.epa.ie/publications/compliance--enforcement/drinking-water/annual-drinking-water-reports/drinking-water-quality-in-public-supplies-2023.php>

<sup>19</sup> EPA Maps – UWW Plant Locations (>500 p.e.)

<sup>20</sup> DCCA (2020).

Cork city is served by Irish rail and provides connection to Dublin, Limerick, Galway, Waterford and Tralee. There is further commuter services within Cork providing connection from Cork city to Mallow, Little Island, Glounthane, Carrigtwohill, Middleton, Fota, Carrigaloe, Rushbrooke and Cobh.

Air travel is essential for industrial, commercial and tourism development. Cork is served by Cork Airport on the N27.

Cork plays a significant role in the security of energy supply and electricity production in Ireland being home to two Power Stations at Aghada/ Whitegate operated by the ESB and Bord Gáis, Whitegate Oil Refinery which supplies about 40% of our national petroleum needs, and Whiddy Island Oil Terminal which stores Ireland's oil reserves. Cork is well positioned to become self-sufficient in renewable energy and contribute to the achievement of national energy targets.

ESB Networks and EirGrid are the utility providers responsible for the electricity distribution and transmission systems. Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) are the utility provider responsible for the supply, transmission and distribution of natural gas.

#### 5.3.6.1 Existing Material Asset Issues

The increased tourism will result in increasing demand for water, wastewater treatment, waste management, transport infrastructure / links and energy and telecommunications services at the Country level.

Existing material assets issues / pressures within the study area, include:

- Water Supply and Wastewater Services - increased tourist numbers will generate pressure on existing water and wastewater sources to meet demands. Inadequate infrastructure, including inadequate capacity, contribute to the contamination of receiving surface water and groundwater waterbodies.
- Energy - there is a need to phase out the reliance on fossil fuels, with a shift to renewable energy resources. Identifying and enabling indigenous renewable energy will also support Ireland's energy security. New developments require excellent energy and power services which create direct and indirect emissions, particularly CO<sub>2</sub>, methane and dioxins.
- Transport - the movement of people is key to the success of new development and areas, where adequate transport infrastructure (i.e. road, rail, cycle and pedestrian routes) to these developments and accessibility throughout the development / area (safe footpath and cycle paths) is fundamental to the development of tourism in the study area. Sustainable development of blueways and greenways is essential to promote recreation and tourism.
- Waste - increased tourist numbers will pose challenge in providing sustainable recycling infrastructure and will put pressure on the local authorities to provide better waste management and access to waste services.
- Light Pollution - can arise when external lighting is not properly designed or managed which can in turn lead to inappropriate or excessive light spillage.
- Utilities - provide, protect and maintain adequate utilities to support existing and envisaged development.

#### 5.3.7 Cultural Heritage

Cork city centre has 60 archaeological sites ranging from a prehistoric standing stone to the medieval city wall. In addition, the towns, villages and hinterland of the city have circa 400 sites (as listed in the Recorded Monuments and Places (RMP)). These sites range from prehistoric fulacht fiadh cooking sites to large castle sites, such as Blarney Castle. The vast majority of historic graveyards are associated with

medieval churches. These are in the care of Cork County Council or Church bodies, and are protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-1994.

County Cork's off-shore and coastal waters, tidal estuaries and rivers have a diverse and interesting range of features and finds associated with its maritime/riverine heritage such as shipwrecks, piers, quay walls, fords, stepping stones. Wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects found underwater are protected under law.

Cork has an extensive network of historical urban centres ranging from crossroads settlements, small villages to substantial towns. Seventeen Historic Towns are identified in The Urban Archaeological Survey of County Cork (1995). These are Bandon, Buttevant, Castlemartyr, Clonakilty, Cloyne, Cobh, Fermoy, Glanworth, Innishannon, Kinsale, Liscarroll, Macroom, Mallow, Midleton, Rosscarbery, Skibbereen and Youghal. The fortifications at Cork Harbour forms a part of the archaeological landscape.

Other important elements of the archaeological heritage are the later remains of structures and features associated with industrial, agricultural, cultural, military, docks and harbours, religious, and social activities. These industrial and post-medieval items of built heritage include penal chapels, limekilns, houses, mass rocks, walls and boundaries, street furniture, stepping stones, mills, bridges, railway features and famine burial grounds. They can make a valuable contribution to the local historic landscape, our cultural heritage assets and have potential to add to our understanding of the past.

The landscape of County Cork contains various layers of historic fabric which are a valuable contribution to the appearance of the countryside, are an intrinsic element of place, are tangible tourism assets and are significant as archaeological, architectural, historical, cultural and ecological resources.

Cork County is host to a rich and varied heritage of buildings and structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical importance. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage have completed and published the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) Survey of County Cork. The survey was carried out between 2006 and 2011. There are four separate volumes dealing with Cork City, North Cork, East Cork and West Cork which contain approximately 6,500 items considered to be of architectural importance in County Cork.

The Architectural Conservation Area (ACAs) within the study area include Youghal, Killeagh, Castlemartyr, Cloyne, Midleton, Passage West, Upper Monkstown, Lower Monkstown, Cobh, Haulbowline, Albert Quay, Albert Road, Ballinlough Road (Annville / Ardeevin Group), Bandon Road 38-43 and Lough Road 58-60, Barrett's Buildings, off Blarney Street, Bethesda Row, Old Blackrock Road, Bishopstown Park, Blackpool, Blackrock Road Blarney, Castleview Terrace 1-11, Lower Glanmire Road, Coburg Street and Saint Patrick's Hill, Corporation Buildings, Saint Paul's Avenue, Douglas – Donnybrook, Douglas Road-Northwest, Former Ford Factory (Marina Commercial Park), Friar Street, Grattan Hill, Lincoln Place, Hackett's Terrace and Mahony's Avenue, Greenmount, Herbert Park, Lower Glanmire Road, MacCurtain Street, Mardyke, Marie Place 1-12, Windmill Road, Melbourn Road Estates, Myrtle Hill Terrace, North Main Street, North Mall / The Marsh, Oliver Plunkett Street, Paul Street, Railway Cottages 1-13, Anglesea Street, Rockboro Road 18-20, Shandon, South Channel, South Parish, Sunday's Well, Turner's Cross, University College Cork, College Road and Magazine Road, Vandeville 1-4, Ballinlough Road, Victoria Road, Walsh's Square, Devonshire Street West, Wellington Road and Saint Luke's.

#### **5.3.7.1 Cultural Heritage Issues**

Increased tourist activities have the potential for direct negative impacts on heritage features and their setting. Development of infrastructure, in addition to development resulting from economic growth

and increasing population, can potentially impact on the integrity of sites or features of architectural, archaeological or cultural heritage interest. This could directly impact upon the cultural amenity resource and tourism potential of the study area.

Existing cultural heritage issues / pressures include:

- Development of infrastructure - increased visitor numbers can potentially impact on the integrity of sites or features and their views to / from architectural, archaeological or cultural heritage interest.
- Development in close proximity to sites and areas of cultural heritage may adversely impact upon the cultural landscape setting.
- Development has the potential to impact archaeological heritage which is sub-surface. This includes the insertion of services (e.g. cycleways), landscaping works, ground levelling and tree planting.
- Architecture - impact on heritage streetscapes of regional and local importance.
- Archaeology - impact on archaeological monuments and their settings including undiscovered sites / features.
- Risk - protection of built and archaeological heritage to identify the heritage assets at risk.

### 5.3.8 Landscape & Visual

The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for County Cork divides the county into 16 main Landscape Character Types (LCT). The 7 LCTs included with the study area include<sup>21</sup>:

- Fissured Fertile Middleground;
- Broad Fertile Lowland Valley;
- Hilly River and Reservoir Valleys;
- City Harbour and Estuary;
- Rolling Patchwork Farmland;
- Indented Estuarine Coast;
- Broad Bay Coast.

The County contains many vantage points from which views and prospects of great natural beauty may be obtained over both seascape and rural landscape. This scenery and landscape are of enormous amenity value to residents and tourists and constitutes a valuable economic asset. The protection of this asset is therefore of primary importance in developing the potential of the County. Therefore, the County Development Plan identifies specific Scenic Routes consisting of important and valued views and prospects within the County.

#### 5.3.8.1 Existing Problems

Landscape can be considered a dynamic rather than static asset. It is constantly changing, and its changes are driven by nature itself, by direct human intervention, and indirectly through the consequences of human activity, notably Climate Change. All physical development undertaken by human impacts on the landscape.

Areas of a highly sensitive landscape have a low capacity to absorb new development and this can be a challenge to locate new development in these areas without it becoming unduly obtrusive.

Existing landscape and visual issues / pressures include:

- New development having adverse and visual impacts on the landscape and seascape.
- Green Infrastructure - protecting the existing green infrastructure network from fragmentation and loss due to pressures of urban development within and adjoining the network.

<sup>21</sup> Landscape character assessment for Co. Cork- <https://www.corkcoco.ie/sites/default/files/2022-06/volume-1-main-policy-material.pdf>

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- Ecosystem Services - recognising and promoting the value of ecosystem services that the green infrastructure network provides to the County.
- Protected views – development has potential to obstruct protected views and scenic routes

## 6 Strategic Environmental Objectives

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

A series of Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) have been prepared in line with current guidance and also with specific reference to the SEA for the CDEDP (refer to **Table 6.1**). The SEOs provide a basis for the assessment of the environmental effects of the CDEDP and are framed in such a manner as to enable the CDEDP to be fully assessed in environmental terms.

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

**Table 6.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) for CDEDP**

Theme	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)	B_1	Ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annex habitats and species <sup>22</sup> and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.
	B_2	Preserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, including internationally, EU and nationally designated sites, habitats and protected species.
	B_3	Ensure CDEDP does not contradict biodiversity protection, restoration and rehabilitation objectives in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 and Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
Population & Human Health (PHH)	PHH_1	Promote sustainable high quality tourism within the County that supports economic development and maximises potential for employment and investment.
	PHH_2	Improve health and wellbeing by provision of recreational and tourism-related activities.
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG)	LSG_1	Minimise green field development and protect land and soil resources from pollution and degradation.
Water Quality (WQ)	WQ_1	Protect, maintain and where necessary improve water quality and the management of watercourses, groundwater and the marine environment, in compliance with the requirements of the WFD objectives and measures.
	WQ_2	Implement and comply with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management and Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidelines to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.

<sup>22</sup> ‘Annexed habitats and species’ refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.



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

## 7 Assessment of Alternatives

### 7.1 Introduction

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

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

### 7.2 Alternative 1: Do-nothing / Do-Minimum

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

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

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

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

In essence the Plan would present a five year sustainable tourism development plan for Cork City and County. The key objectives of the Plan would be:

- *Ensure local experiences are brought to life through the development of the optimal mix of hero and ancillary tourism products that attract visitors and retain them for longer in the destination.*
- *Unlock the economic growth potential of an area by progressing a range of key initiatives that will motivate tourists to explore the wider destination.*
- *Develop a sustainable basis for commercial tourism development centred on creating strong signature, supporting and ancillary experiences that are commoditised through the creation of saleable experiences that excite consumers and buyers alike.*
- *Create the conditions to attract leisure visitors on a year-round basis to Cork to immerse themselves actively in the community, interacting with local people.*
- *Strengthen the value of tourism to the local community by providing sustainable employment opportunities.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **7.4 Reasoning for Selection of the Preferred Alternative**

Whilst unlikely to have negative environmental effects, Alternative 1 does not deliver positive benefits for tourism in Cork City and County.

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

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

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

## 8 Assessment of Effects of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination & Experience Development Plan

### 8.1 Introduction

The CDEDP has been subject to an assessment for potential effects arising from the implementation of the Plan on the baseline environment as characterised and described in **Section 5** of this Report. The assessment is carried out having regard to the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) established for the aspects of the baseline environment which have potential to be impacted by the CDEDP. These Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are detailed in **Section 6** of this Report.

The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 states that-

*‘To support the sustainable growth of tourism and marketing of Cork City as a multi-faceted visitor destination and a gateway to the southern region, Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland’s Ancient East by:*

*a. Working in partnership with Fáilte Ireland, businesses and other stakeholders to support tourism investment, innovation and promotional and marketing strategies;’*

The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 states that-

*‘Continue to actively engage, invest, encourage and promote the development of the Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Ancient East regional brands through sustainable tourism, which will enable visitors to have enjoyable experiences while having regard for the cultural, built and natural heritage, and environmental impacts, including the protection of Natura 2000 sites.’*

It is noted that during its preparation the Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028<sup>23</sup> and Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028<sup>24</sup>, was subject to full SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

The environmental assessment of the ‘Strategic Objectives and Goals’ and of the ‘Catalyst Projects and Destination Enablers’ of the CDEDP are set out separately in the following sections of this Report. The SEA Directive requires the Environmental Report to include information on the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

### 8.2 Environmental Assessment of the Strategic Goals and Strategic Objectives of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination & Experience Development Plan

The finding of the environmental assessment of the overall Vision, Strategic Objectives of the CDEDP is presented in **Table 8.1**.

<sup>23</sup> Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 - <https://www.corkcity.ie/en/cork-city-development-plan/>

<sup>24</sup> Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 - <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/resident/planning-and-development/cork-county-development-plan-2022-2028>

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**Table 8.1 Environmental Assessment of Strategic Objectives of the CDEDP**

(SEO Key: B – Biodiversity, PHH – Population & Human Health, LSG – Land, Soils & Geology, WQ – Water Quality, ANC – Air Quality, Noise & Climate Change, MA – Material Assets, CH – Cultural Heritage, LV – Landscape & Visual)

Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
<p><b>Vision</b></p> <p>The Destination Vision (10 year vision) for CDEDP is:</p> <p><i>“Ireland’s gastronomic capital linked by a world class harbour destination, sustainably connecting city, local communities and coastal experiences.”</i></p>	<p>This vision statement sets an overall context for destination experience and tourism in Cork. This will support and underpin the local tourism economy, industry and associated workers. No specific projects are associated with the statement, and therefore the effect on the remaining environmental themes and SEOs will be neutral.</p>	<p><b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)</p>			<p><b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2)</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>RTDS Strategic Objective 1: Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Cork and Ireland’s Ancient East</b></p>						
<p>1.1 Develop the “Lee, City and Harbour Way” Experience Corridors linking the destination’s cultural, natural and built heritage experiences.</p>	<p>This goal will result in positive effects on population and human health by provision of enhanced visitor experience.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the goal could have the potential to result in negative or uncertain environmental effect on biodiversity, water quality, cultural heritage, land &amp; soils, landscape and visual, material assets and air &amp;</p>	<p><b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)</p>	<p><b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2)</p>	<p><b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2),</p>		<p><b>Yes</b></p>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	<p>noise. The development of new and existing blueways/greenways and culture line has the potential to contribute to sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefiting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, might result in negative environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast/transitional waters. These works can also potentially result in the spread of invasive species. Increased tourism in these locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management</p>					

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### SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
<p>1.2 Develop Cork Harbour as a world class visitor destination within Ireland’s Ancient East.</p>	<p>This goal will result in positive effects on population and human health by provision of enhanced visitor experience.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the goal could have the potential to result in negative or uncertain environmental effect on biodiversity, water quality, cultural heritage, land &amp; soils, landscape and visual, material assets and air &amp; noise. The development of new and existing blueways/greenways and marine based activities has the potential to contribute to sustainable mobility and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefiting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations. The development of these projects, however, might result in negative environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be</p>	<p><b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)</p>	<p><b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2)</p>	<p><b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2),</p>		<p><b>Yes</b></p>

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### SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast/transitional waters. These works can also potentially result in the spread of invasive species. Increased tourism in these locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management.					
1.3 Develop an attraction of scale for Cork City to contribute to the development of the city as a year round leisure tourism economy.	<p>This goal will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new attraction presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>
1.4 Integrate tourism and cultural opportunities within the regeneration of Cork Docklands as part of enhancement of Cork as a place to Live, Work and Visit.	This goal will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2) <b>ANC</b>		<b>Yes</b>



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### SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	<p>However, the development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p> <p>Increased tourism in these locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management.</p>			(ANC1, ANC2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		
1.5 Enhance the cultural visitor experience in Cork to support the continued development of Cork's status as an international city of culture.	This goal will result in positive effects on population and human health. However, in the absence of mitigation, the goal could have the potential to result in uncertain environmental effect on cultural heritage and biodiversity. The effect on the remaining environmental themes and SEOs will be neutral.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2) <b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3),	<b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2)	<b>Yes</b>
1.6 Contribute to tourism season extension through the existing calendar of events and festivals.	This goal will result in positive effects on population.  However, in the absence of mitigation, the use of visitor attractions and public spaces presents a variety of potentially	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1,		<b>Yes</b>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	uncertain environmental effects to arise from the use of these spaces and/or provision of ancillary infrastructure for the events. There is also potential for uncertain environmental effect on air quality & noise and human health due to elevated levels of noise & congestion.			MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		
<b>RTDS Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism in Cork</b>						
2.1. Grow the capacity of established visitor attractions across the destination to be key contributors to destination recovery and future growth.	This goal will provide enhanced visitor experience and have positive effect to population and human health.  However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This could also result in increased visitor numbers and pressure.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>
2.2. Establish the food in tourism opportunity for Cork City to become the national	This goal will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive or	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)			<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1,	<b>No</b>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
Capital of Food and gateway to the largest concentration of artisan producers in Ireland.	neutral effects on the environmental themes and SEOs.  No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.				ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2)	
2.3 Grow the capacity of Cork City to become a vibrant year-round evening time economy destination.	This goal will result in positive effects on population.  However, in the absence of mitigation, the increase in capacity presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from the use of these spaces and/or provision of ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased visitor numbers and pressure.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>
2.4 Develop tourism town hubs across East Cork to attract and retain visitors for longer and motivate them to explore the communities of East Cork.	This goal will enhance tourism opportunities for the county and have positive effect on population and human health.  However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	hubs and/or their ancillary infrastructure.					
2.5 Grow the opportunity for East Cork to establish itself as a national family holiday cluster through collaboration between the network of existing attractions, future product development and outdoor amenities investment.	<p>This goal will enhance tourism opportunities for families and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new future development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>
<b>RTDS Strategic Objective 3: Ensure the destination is easy to access, navigate and consume</b>						
3.1 Build on the tourism opportunity for local communities and trail heads through the development of the MY Greenway.	The development of new and existing greenways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including those within and between existing destinations, has the potential to contribute to sustainable mobility, reduction in emissions and a better management of movements in sensitive areas, thereby benefiting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2), <b>MA</b> (MA3)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2)		<b>Yes</b>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	<p>The development of these projects, however, may result in uncertain environmental effects that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.</p>					
<p>3.2 Maximise the opportunity for visitors to explore the wider destination through slow tourism linked to Cork to Waterford cycle network, EuroVelo 1 long distance cycle route and the proposed National Cycle Network.</p>	<p>This goal will result in positive effects on population and human health and on material assets by promoting sustainable transportation.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and</p>	<p><b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2), <b>MA</b> (MA3)</p>		<p><b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)</p>		<p><b>Yes</b></p>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.					
3.3 Conduct feasibility analysis to establish the requirements to create a Cork to Dublin Greenway in partnership with TII and LA's.	<p>This goal will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive or neutral effects on the environmental themes and SEOs.</p> <p>No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.</p>	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2), <b>MA</b> (MA3)			<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2)	<b>No</b>
3.4 Create the linkages across the "Lee, City, Harbour Way" to integrate on land and on water exploration of the destination from the river, harbour to greenways.	<p>This goal will result in positive effects on population and human health and on material assets by promoting sustainable transportation.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to</p>	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2), <b>MA</b> (MA3)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.					
3.5 Achieve greater levels of visitor dispersion across East Cork through the opportunities provided by outdoor, adventure and rural tourism experience clusters working together.	<p>This goal will provide enhanced visitor experience and have positive effect to population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.</p>	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>
3.6 Maximise the investment in increased transport infrastructure and active travel opportunities linking the City, Cork Harbour and East Cork.	<p>The increased investment in transport and active travel infrastructure will result in positive effect for population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the development of new and existing infrastructure presents a variety of potentially uncertain</p>	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>

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Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
	environmental effects to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This would also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.					
<b>RTDS Strategic Objective 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability to ensure that it can thrive and create sustainable jobs in local communities.</b>						
4.1 Create destination clusters to enhance the tourism industry's capacity to work together and create the experiences and reasons for visitors to explore Cork city, Cork Harbour and East Cork communities.	<p>This goal will enhance tourism opportunities for the county and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>
4.2 Develop a coherent destination network approach to encourage new levels of collaboration and how the industry collectively motivates the visitor to explore the city, Harbour and East Cork.	<p>This goal will support in raising awareness regarding tourism opportunities in Cork and promote collaboration for effective working.</p> <p>No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.</p>	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)			<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)	<b>No</b>



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### SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
4.3 Develop the digital capacity of the destination to grow the distribution capabilities of the tourism industry linked to the Digital that Delivers programme.	This goal would result in positive effects for tourism industry and will not result in adverse environmental consequences.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)			<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)	<b>No</b>
4.4 Create the appropriate Industry Development Programmes to enable the tourism industry's capacity to build on the projects identified within the DEDP.	This goal will support in raising awareness regarding tourism opportunities in Cork.  No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)			<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)	<b>No</b>
4.5 Develop the community capacity of harbour towns and villages to attract and retain visitors and prepare them for the opportunities arising from current and future capital investment.	This goal will enhance tourism opportunities for the county and have positive effect on population and human health.  However, the new development presents potential uncertain environmental effects that have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)		<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)		<b>Yes</b>
<b>RTDS Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development.</b>						

## Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination & Experience Development Plan

### SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
5.1 A new collaborative approach through the formation of a DEDP Steering Group to generate new levels of industry collaboration and the creation of a strong and coherent tourism network.	This goal will promote collaboration and support efficient delivery of tourism experiences across a range of sites and have positive effect on population and human health.  No specific projects are associated with the statement, and therefore the effect on the remaining environmental themes and SEOs will be neutral.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)			<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)	<b>No</b>
5.2 Ensure tourism is integrated as a key element of future strategic development sites across the city and county to include future urban and rural regeneration activity.	This goal will enhance tourism opportunities for the county and have positive effect on population and human health.  No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)			<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)	<b>No</b>
5.3 Grow the number of tourism enterprises operating in the destination supported by an environment that encourages new levels of tourism entrepreneurship.	This goal will enhance tourism opportunities for the county and have positive effect on population and human health.  No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	<b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2)			<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>ANC</b> (ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)	<b>No</b>
5.4 Influence sustainable tourism development to become a key element of the Cork visitor experience and the	This goal will result in positive effects across the majority of SEOs for environmental factors.	<b>B</b> (B1, B2, B3), <b>PHH</b> (PHH1, PHH2), <b>LSG</b> (LSG1), <b>WQ</b> (WQ1, WQ2), <b>ANC</b>				<b>No</b>

## Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination & Experience Development Plan

### SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

Strategic Objectives	Potential Environmental Effects	Potential Positive Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Potential Negative Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Uncertain Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	No Likely / Neutral Effects on Environmental Theme & SEO	Mitigation Required ? Yes / No
creation of a strong responsible tourism destination proposition.	No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	(ANC1, ANC2), <b>MA</b> (MA1, MA2, MA3), <b>LV</b> (LV_1, LV2), <b>CH</b> (CH1, CH2)				

### 8.3 Environmental Assessment of the Catalyst Projects listed within the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination & Experience Development Plan

The CDEDP includes a list of catalyst projects and destination enablers which will be delivered to support the above strategic objectives and goals of the DEDP. The environmental assessment of the effects of the catalyst projects is detailed in the accompanying SEA ER.

There are 6no. catalyst projects and 6no. destination enablers in total and projects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6, and destination enablers 1, 2, 3 & 6 in the absence of mitigation, could have the potential to result in uncertain environmental effect on cultural heritage. The projects where there is a requirement for development of existing and new infrastructure might also give rise to uncertain environmental effects on other environmental themes and SEOs that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. Refer to Table 8.1A in Appendix 1 of the SEA ER for the detailed assessment of effects of the catalyst projects and their actions.

### 8.4 The Interrelationship between Environmental Factors

An overview of the key and minor / no interaction between environmental factors with potential for effects arising from the CDEDP are set out in the matrix in **Table 8.2**.

Actions within the Plan that give rise to positive or negative environmental effects for one environmental component also have the potential to generate positive or negative environmental effects for inter-related environmental components – e.g. negative effect on soils can have a negative effect on biodiversity, water, and / or landscape. Likewise, actions supporting the delivery of SuDS will improve water quality, which in turn can have a positive effect on aquatic ecology.

An assessment of impact inter-relationships and interactions is already embedded in the evaluation of environmental effects that has been carried out in this environmental report. This ensures that there is adequate coverage of all potential environmental effects associated with the implementation of plan actions. In addition the mitigation measures set out in **Section 9.0** of this Report.

**Table 8.2 Significant Interrelationships between Environmental Factors**

Component Effect	Biodiversity	Population & Human Health	Land, Soils & Geology	Water Quality	Air Quality, Noise and Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual
Biodiversity		☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☒	☑
Population & Human Health	☑		☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Land, Soils & Geology	☑	☑		☑	☒	☑	☑	☑
Water Quality	☑	☑	☑		☒	☑	☒	☑
Air Quality, Noise and Climate	☑	☑	☒	☒		☑	☑	☒
Material Assets	☒	☑	☑	☑	☑		☒	☒

Component \ Effect	Biodiversity	Population & Human Health	Land, Soils & Geology	Water Quality	Air Quality, Noise and Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual
Cultural Heritage	✘	✔	✔	✘	✔	✔		✔
Landscape & Visual	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
<b>Legend:</b> Key Interaction ✔      Minor/No Interaction ✘								

## 8.5 Potential Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects can be described as the addition of many small impacts to create one larger, more significant, impact.

There are 2 types of potential cumulative effects that have been considered, namely:

- Potential intra-Plan cumulative effects - these arise from the interactions between different types of potential environmental effects resulting from a plan, programme, etc. The interrelationships between environmental factors that help determine these potential effects are identified on **Table 8.2**.
- Potential inter-Plan cumulative effects - these arise when the effects of the implementation of one plan occur in combination with those of other plans, programmes, projects, etc.

The CDEDP could have a relationship with other plans and programmes. However, these plans and programmes will also be subject to environmental assessment, including SEA and AA, for the purpose of preventing and mitigating potential negative environmental effects. **Table 8.3** lists the relevant plans and programmes that have potential for cumulative effects with the CDEDP.

The assessment of cumulative effects above focused on national, regional and local plans, programmes, strategy and policy documents that have the potential to affect the same receiving environment that could be affected by the CDEDP.

The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 and Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out policies and objectives for land use, settlement strategy, sustainable development, transport, infrastructure, environmental protection, and management, cultural heritage, climate change, etc. for Cork City & County. Other higher-level international, national and regional plans are integrated within the Cork City & County Development Plan and have been assessed as such. The CDEDP will comply with the provisions set within the Cork City & County Development Plan which itself has been subject to standalone environmental assessment (SEA, NIR, etc.).

The assessment of cumulative effects concludes that the implementation of the CDEDP will not result in direct, indirect or cumulative impacts which would have the potential to adversely affect the environment. Indeed the implementation of the CDEDP has the potential for positive cumulative interactions in delivering on policies and objectives of higher level plans in relation to increased economic activity and employment and greater appreciation and understanding of natural heritage, cultural heritage and landscape.

Table 8.3 Potential Cumulative Effects with other Plans and Programmes

Plan, Programme etc.	Potential Cumulative effect	Likely Cumulative Effect
<p>National Planning Framework (NPF) Project 2040</p> <p>National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030 (<i>As part of Project Ireland 2040 the National Development Plan sets out the Government's over-arching investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030</i>)</p>	<p>The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the National Planning Framework have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy</p>	<p>The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the RSES have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the RSES have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>National CFRAMS Programme</p> <p>South- eastern Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study</p>	<p>Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Studies and their product – Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) – are at the core of national policy for flood risk management and the strategy for its implementation. These studies are required by The Floods Directive [2007/60/EC], which is being implemented in Ireland through the European Communities (Assessment and Management of Flood Risks) Regulations 2010 [S.I.122/2010]. Each FRMP is accompanied by an associated SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement. The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the FRMP have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the FRMP have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>National 4<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030</p>	<p>The Biodiversity Action notes the requirements and purposes of AA and SEA and the vision of the plan to conserve and restored for the benefit of all sectors of society.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)</p>	<p>The policy sets a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel and public transport to support Ireland's overall requirement to achieve a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by the end of this decade. The projects which will be implemented as a result of this national policy will be subject to their individual environmental impact assessment and appropriate assessment processes (as appropriate) and hence there would be no potential adverse effects on the overall receiving environment.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Plan, Programme etc.	Potential Cumulative effect	Likely Cumulative Effect
River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for Ireland 2022-2027	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the RBMP have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
County Development Plans (Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022-2028, Tipperary County Development Plan 2022-2028, Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028)	The County Development Plan (CDP) provides the principal planning strategy document for the development of a local authority area over the statutory time period of the plan. Each of the CDP with Zone of Influence of County Cork has been subject to SEA and AA processes to ensure that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027 – Ireland’s Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the Strategy have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Strategy have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No

## 9 Mitigation Measures

### 9.1 Overview

The finding of the environmental assessment in **Section 8.0** of this Environmental Report is that, if unmitigated, a number of the actions of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination & Experience Development Plan have potential for uncertain or negative effects on aspects of the environment. These potential negative and / or uncertain effects, which derive from potential works resulting from the relevant action, focus primarily on biodiversity, water, cultural heritage, material assets and landscape. This section of the Environmental Report identifies measures for the mitigation and avoidance of potential uncertain or negative environmental effects.

### 9.2 Mitigation Measures

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

The projects included in this Plan will have to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which this Plan is not part and does not contribute towards. The Plan includes requirements for environmental protection and management including the ones set out in the *Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027* especially the *Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy*.

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

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

Therefore, the key environmental protection measures included in the Cork City and County Development Plan 2022-2028, provide for appropriate and detailed mitigation of potential uncertain environmental effects of the CDEDP. These measures are detailed in the accompanying SEA ER.



## 10 Monitoring

### 10.1 Introduction

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

Monitoring is based around indicators which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives (**Section 6**) used in the assessment. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the targets. The monitoring programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues - including unforeseen effects - as they arise. Such issues may be identified by the Council or identified to the Council by other agencies.

Fáilte Ireland is responsible for monitoring and the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action. It is recommended that the monitoring for the CDEDP and review is undertaken in parallel with monitoring and review of the Cork City & County Development Plan for efficiency and given that similar data sets will be used to measure the progress of each plan.

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

Refer to **Table 10.1** below for the monitoring programme set for the SEA which includes details on the indicators, targets and data sources to monitor the progress of the CDEDP.

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Table 10.1 Environmental Monitoring Programme

SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
<b>Biodiversity (Flora &amp; Fauna) (B)</b>				
<b>B1</b>	Ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annex habitats and species <sup>25</sup> and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.	Conservation status of habitats and species protected under European and International legislation.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for habitats and species protected under European and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.	<p>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years)</p> <p>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years)</p> <p>Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) data.</p> <p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p> <p>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.</p>
<b>B2</b>	Preserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, including internationally, EU and nationally designated sites, habitats and protected species.	Conservation status of habitats and species protected under International and National legislation.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under International and National legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.	<p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p>

<sup>25</sup> 'Annexed habitats and species' refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

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

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
<b>LSG1</b>	Promote urban infill / brownfield development and protect land and soil resources from pollution and degradation.	Extent of conversion of land cover / green field to developed / artificial surfaces.	Contribute towards the target of the SEA for the National Planning Framework's (2018) to " <i>Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%.</i> "	CORINE mapping surveys (every 5 years). EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
<b>Water Quality (WQ)</b>				
<b>WQ1</b>	Protect, maintain and where necessary improve water quality and the management of watercourses, groundwater and the marine environment, in compliance with the requirements of the WFD objectives and measures.	Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (S.I. No. 272 of 2009).  Groundwater compliance with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC, subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD.  Reference to EPA WFD Monitoring programme and status of surface waterbodies, groundwater bodies reported.	No deterioration in the status of any groundwater or surface water, or adverse effect upon the ability of any groundwater or surface water to achieve 'good status' as a result of the CDEDP.	Information issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual).  Review of WFD status of Bathing Waters, green flag / blue flag for beaches.  EPA State of the Environment reporting.  Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
<b>WQ2</b>	Implement and comply with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management and Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidelines	Flood-related incidences related to the CDEDP.	Compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and to ensure that any new	Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
	to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.		developments granted planning permissions are on appropriately zoned lands.	Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.  Review of planning applications for any new infrastructure to be accompanied by standalone flood risk assessment report in sensitive areas.
<b>Air Quality, Noise &amp; Climate (ANC)</b>				
<b>ANC1</b>	Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality and noise emissions through the reduction of emissions.	Demonstration of compliance with air quality and noise provisions.  Number of exceedances of ambient air quality standards in the County, as monitored under the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network.	To maximise the amount of measures relating to air quality and noise minimisation being implemented.	EPA State of the Environment reporting.  Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.  Review of Cork City Air Quality Dashboard for air quality monitoring data results and EPA data for air quality monitoring.
<b>ANC2</b>	Contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with National targets, including Ireland's commitment to realising a climate neutral economy by 2050.	Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation.	To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented.	EPA State of the Environment reporting.  Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
<b>Material Assets (MA)</b>				
<b>MA1</b>	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, ensure new developments are served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, wastewater, waste and	Number of incompatible developments (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned infrastructure, including water supply, wastewater	No incompatible development (supported by the plan) adversely affecting existing or planned material assets infrastructure.	Review of Annual Environmental Reports prepared by Uisce Éireann.  Review of publicly available data from EPA monitoring.  EPA State of the Environment reporting.

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

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
			road reallocated for sustainable alternatives	
<b>Cultural Heritage (CH)</b>				
<b>CH1</b>	Protect and avoid impact on places, features and landscapes of cultural and archaeological importance, including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP).	Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan.	No adverse effects on archaeological or cultural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan.	Review of data available from National Monuments Section of Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.  Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
<b>CH2</b>	Protect and avoid impact on places, features, buildings and landscapes of architectural heritage, (including entries to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAHs)).	Percentage of entries to the Records of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from the Plan.	No adverse effects on architectural heritage resulting from implementation of the Plan.	Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.
<b>Landscape &amp; Visual (LV)</b>				
<b>LV1</b>	To protect landscape character, minimise the loss of historic landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows and scenic views.	Number of unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans.	No unmitigated conflicts with the appropriate protection of statutory designations relating to the landscape, including those included in Development Plans and other statutory land-use plans.	Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
<b>LV2</b>	Avoid impacts on the statutory landscape & visual designations as identified in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Status of High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects.	All action and development proposals supported by the plan must comply with policy objectives relating to the protection of High Amenity	Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.

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SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
	and Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028.	Number of developments permitted that result in avoidable adverse impacts on High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects.	Zone and Views and Prospects defined in the CDP. No development supported by the plan should have an adverse impact on High Amenity Zones and Views and Prospects.	Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.



## 11 References

- Council Directive Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.*
- Environment Director General of the European Commission (2003). *Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment.*
- EPA (2024). *Spatial Information Resources Inventory.*
- EPA (2022). *SEA Pack.*
- EPA (2023a). *Good Practice Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Tourism Sector.*
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## Brady Shipman Martin

### **DUBLIN**

Mountpleasant Business Centre  
Ranelagh  
Dublin 6  
D06 X7P8  
+353 1 208 1900

### **CORK**

Penrose Wharf Business Centre  
Penrose Wharf  
Cork  
+353 21 242 5620

[mail@bradyshipmanmartin.com](mailto:mail@bradyshipmanmartin.com)  
[www.bradyshipmanmartin.com](http://www.bradyshipmanmartin.com)

