

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan SEA Environmental Report

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Client:

Fáilte Ireland

Date:

22 May 2024

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

7052_RP01_SEA Environmental Report

Project No. 7052
Client: Fáilte Ireland
Project Name: Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan
Report Name: SEA Environmental Report
Document No. RP01
Issue No. 02
Date: 22/05/2024

This document has been issued and amended as follows:

Issue	Status	Date	Prepared	Checked
01	Draft	10 May 2024	NK	TB
02	Final Draft	22 May 2024	NK	TB



Contents

Glossary	i
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Destination Experience Development Plans	1
1.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment	1
1.4 The Requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Draft Plan	2
2 Outline Description of the Draft Plan	3
2.1 Introduction.....	3
2.2 Vision.....	3
2.3 Strategic Objectives.....	4
2.4 Destination Catalyst Projects Overview	6
3 Strategic Environmental Assessment	7
3.1 Introduction.....	7
3.2 SEA Stages and Process	8
3.3 SEA Screening and Requirement for SEA.....	11
3.4 SEA Scoping	12
3.5 SEA Environmental Report	16
3.6 SEA Statement.....	17
3.7 SEA Guidance.....	17
3.8 Appropriate Assessment	18
4 Relationship with Plans and Programmes	20
4.1 Overview	20
4.2 Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework	20
4.3 Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy	21
4.4 Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028	23
4.5 Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028	26
4.6 Regional Tourism Development Strategies (2023-2027)	27
4.7 Other Plans and Programmes.....	29
5 Current State of the Receiving Environment (Environmental Baseline)	32
5.1 Introduction.....	32
5.2 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination Experience Development Plan	32
5.3 Description of the Environmental Baseline	32
5.3.1 Biodiversity.....	33
5.3.2 Population and Human Health.....	42
5.3.3 Land, Soils & Geology.....	46
5.3.4 Water Quality	50
5.3.5 Air Quality, Noise & Climate	57
5.3.6 Material Assets.....	60
5.3.7 Cultural Heritage	64
5.3.8 Landscape & Visual	69



Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

6	Strategic Environmental Objectives	73
7	Assessment of Alternatives.....	75
7.1	Introduction.....	75
7.2	Alternative 1: Do-nothing / Do-Minimum.....	75
7.3	Do-something (Alternatives 2A and 2B: Prepare a Plan)	75
7.4	Assessment of Alternatives	76
7.5	Reasoning for Selection of the Preferred Alternative	76
8	Assessment of Effects of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan	78
8.1	Introduction.....	78
8.2	Environmental Assessment of the Strategic Objectives of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan	78
8.3	Environmental Assessment of the Catalyst Projects listed within the Cork Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan.....	94
8.4	The Interrelationship between Environmental Factors	94
8.5	Potential Cumulative Effects	95
8.6	Overview	97
9	Mitigation Measures	98
9.1	Overview	98
9.2	Mitigation Measures	98
10	Monitoring.....	138
10.1	Introduction.....	138
11	References	146
12	Appendices	147
	Appendix 1: Detailed Assessment of Environmental Effects of the Catalyst Projects and Destination Enablers listed within the Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan.....	148
	Appendix 2: Screening Determination for Strategic Environmental Assessment	163



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 scoping is carried out in consultation with appropriate environmental authorities.

Strategic Actions

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

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)

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

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This is the Environmental Report of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Draft Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Destination Experience Development Plan (hereafter referred to the 'Plan' or the 'CDEDP').

This Environmental Report, 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 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*¹ (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.):

- 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,

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

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 Draft 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 Directive², 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)³ 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 Draft 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.

This 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 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*

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

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

2 Outline Description of the Draft 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:

"Cork City is a year round leisure tourism destination recognised for the energy of its communities, great cultural experiences and Ireland's Capital of Food. It is home to a world class Cork Harbour experience accessed by the Lee, City and Harbour Way network of trails, greenways and on water

experiences. The vibrant tourism towns of East Cork have become the gateways to activity, food and attractions clusters contributing to its profile as a family destination.”

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.

The Plan is structured around the following strategic objectives and strategic goals:

1. RTDS Strategic Objective 1: Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Cork and Ireland’s Ancient East

Strategic Goals:

- 1.1. Develop the “Lee, City and Harbour Way” Experience Corridors linking the destination’s cultural, natural and built heritage experiences.
- 1.2. Develop Cork Harbour as a world class visitor destination within Ireland’s Ancient East.
- 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.
- 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.
- 1.5. Enhance the cultural visitor experience in Cork to support the continued development of Cork’s status as an international city of culture.
- 1.6. Contribute to tourism season extension through the existing calendar of events and festivals.

2. RTDS Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism in Cork

Strategic Goals:

- 2.1. Grow the capacity of established visitor attractions across the destination to be key contributors to destination recovery and future growth.
- 2.2. Establish the food in tourism opportunity for Cork City to become the national Capital of Food and gateway to the largest concentration of artisan producers in Ireland.
- 2.3. Grow the capacity of Cork City to become a vibrant year-round evening time economy destination.
- 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.
- 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.

3. RTDS Strategic Objective 3: Ensure the destination is easy to access, navigate and consume

Strategic Goals:

- 3.1. Build on the tourism opportunity for local communities and trail heads through the development of the MY Greenway.
- 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.
- 3.3. Conduct feasibility analysis to establish the requirements to create a Cork to Dublin Greenway in partnership with TII and LA's.
- 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.
- 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.
- 3.6. Maximise the investment in increased transport infrastructure and active travel opportunities linking the City, Cork Harbour and East Cork.

4. 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.

Strategic Goals:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 4.4. Create the appropriate Industry Development Programmes to enable the tourism industry's capacity to build on the projects identified within the DEDP.
- 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.

5. RTDS Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development.

Strategic Goals:

- 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.
- 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.

- 5.3. Grow the number of tourism enterprises operating in the destination supported by an environment that encourages new levels of tourism entrepreneurship.
- 5.4. Influence sustainable tourism development to become a key element of the Cork visitor experience and the creation of a strong responsible tourism destination proposition.

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 destination supporting projects (enablers) are provided and assessed in **Appendix 1**.

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/EC⁵ 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.

Article 1 of the SEA Directive states that:

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

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish law through:

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

S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, relates 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 which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive.”*⁶

S.I. No. 436 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011, relates 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”*⁷.

Given the nature of the Plan, the SEA for the CDEDP is being prepared under the requirements of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011.

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

- Properly identified and assessed;
- Subject to public participation;

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

⁶ See Section 9(1)(a)

⁷ Section 5(c)

- 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...”⁸

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** and **Figure 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 excluded beyond all reasonable scientific doubt and is required to undergo Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>Therefore, in accordance with <i>Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08</i> the <i>Draft 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>	Completed 
2. Scoping	<p>Preparation of a SEA Scoping Report highlighting that the Environmental Report is required to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ methods of assessment; ■ contents and level of detail in the Plan / Programme; ■ the stage in the Plan or Programme-making process; and ■ the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process in order to avoid duplication of environmental assessment. <p>Scoping provides for consultation with the Environmental Authorities specified in Article 13 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011, and the process allows for incorporation of the views of the environmental authorities within the P / P and the SEA Environmental Report.</p>	Completed 

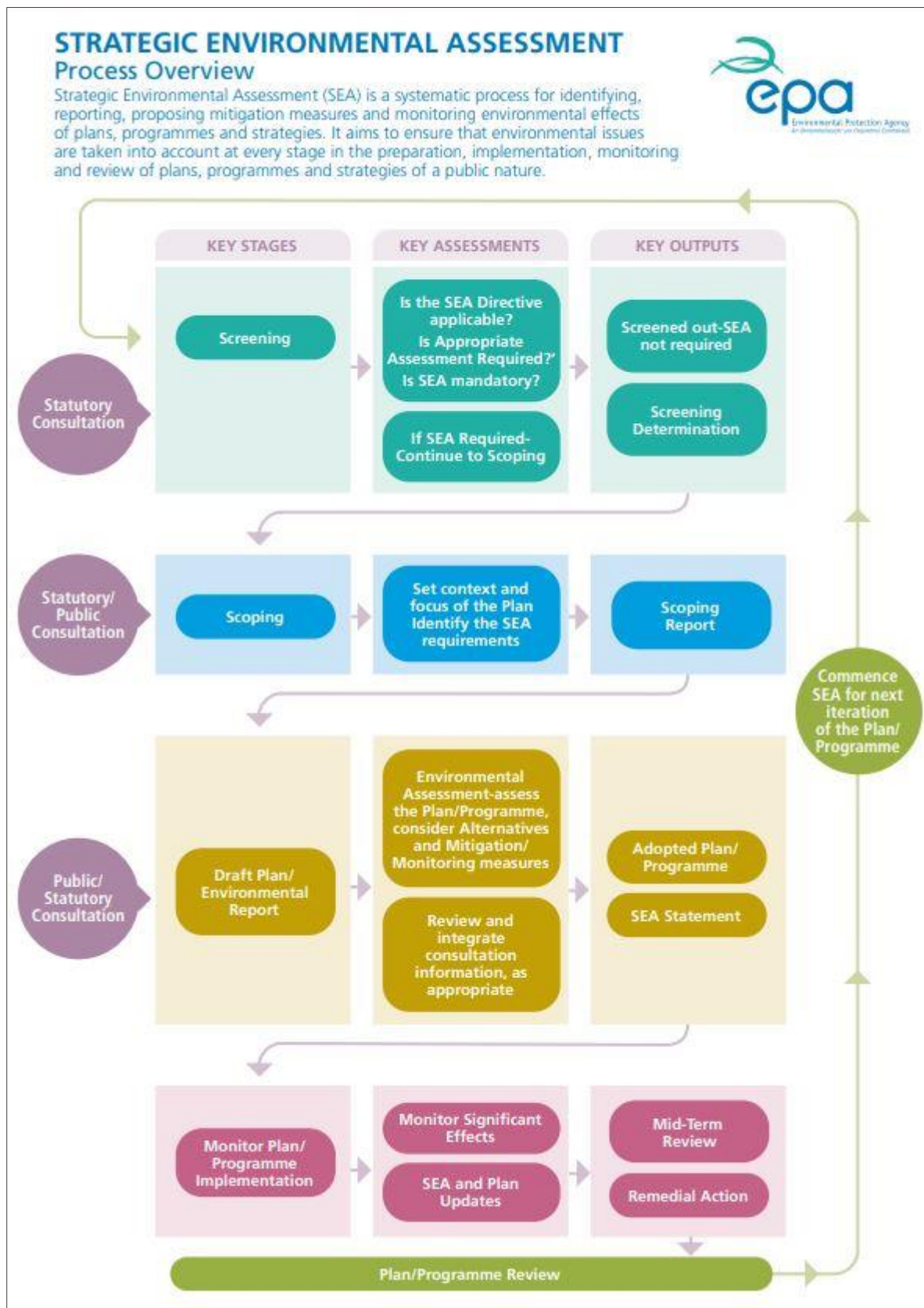
⁸ Article 2(b) of Directive 2001/42/EC, European Union, Article 2 (3) of EC (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 S.I No. 435 of 2004

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Stage	Description	Status
3. Environmental Report	<p>Preparation of a systemic identification and evaluation of alternatives and assessment of the <i>likely significant environmental effects</i> of implementing the P / P.</p> <p>The findings of the assessment, which is carried out at various stages in the P / P making (<i>e.g.</i> Draft, Amended Draft <i>etc.</i>), are provided in the SEA Environmental Report in accordance with Article 12 (including Schedule 2) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by Regulations S.I. No. 200 of 2011.</p> <p>The output from this stage is an Environmental Report which accompanies the draft P / P required on public display.</p>	Current Stage
4. SEA Statement	<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"> ▪ how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan / Programme; ▪ how the environmental report, and any submissions /observations or consultations have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan / Programme; ▪ the reasons for choosing the Plan / Programme in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and ▪ the measures decided for monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan / Programme. 	Final (Future) Stage

Figure 2.1: Overview of SEA Process (EPA SEA Process Flow, 2021⁹)



⁹ EPA: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/SEA%20Process%20Checklist.pdf>

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."*¹⁰ 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 1/08¹¹, 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).

Article 3(2) of the SEA Directive requires that:

"Subject to paragraph 3, an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all 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 Directive 85/337/EEC, 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 Directive 92/43/EEC."

Article 9(1) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, states that:

"Subject to sub-article (2), an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all plans and programmes:

(a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and 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 Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or

(b) which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site."

Articles 9(2) and 9(3) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, further state that:

(2) "A plan or programme referred to in sub-article (1) which determines the use of a small area at local level or a minor modification to a plan or programme referred to in sub-article (1) shall

¹⁰ EPA: <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/SEA%20Pack%202018.pdf>

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

require an environmental assessment only where the competent authority determines that it is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, for this purpose, the competent authority shall make any necessary determination.

(3) A competent authority shall determine whether plans and programmes other than those referred to in sub-article (1), which set the framework for future development consent of projects, are likely to have significant effects on the environment”

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*¹² the *Draft CDEDP* is 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*¹³ (the *SEA Directive*).

This Environmental Report has been prepared as the *CDEDP* is subject to requirements of SEA.

Refer to **Appendix 2** for the SEA Screening Determination.

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**.

¹² <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

¹³ DIRECTIVE 2001/42/EC: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
Department of Environment, Climate & Communications	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.
Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)	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.
Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine (DAFM)	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.

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Environmental Authority	Outline of Nature of the Submission	Response to consideration of nature of submission
<p>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p>	<p>The submission from EPA includes the following comments and recommendations:</p> <p>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 & biodiversity issues.</p>	<p>The information provided has informed the preparation of the Draft Plan and the Environmental Report.</p>
	<p>Recommendations from the SEA & AA including mitigation measures and monitoring proposals should be integrated into the Plan. SEA Environmental Report and the Plan should include a chapter on how the recommendations and mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Plan.</p>	
	<p>EPA recommend that the Plan includes summary tables outlining the key findings of the SEA and linking the significant environmental effects identified to the proposed mitigation measures, monitoring programme and Plan policies/measures.</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 & Heritage, Department of Environment, Climate & 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 & reporting, SEA statement, integration with other key Plans and Programmes, available guidance & resources, webtools.</p>	

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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. **Table 3.2** provides a checklist of the information referred to in Article 5(1) with a confirmation of where the relevant information is contained within the SEA.

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

Table 3.2 Information required under Annex I of the SEA Directive

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

3.6 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.

3.7 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
- SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans - EPA Recommendations and Resources. EPA, Updated January 2023.
- SEA Pack. EPA, Updated January 2022.
- SEA Spatial Information Sources Inventory. EPA, Updated July 2023.
- 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
- Integrating Climate Change into Strategic Environmental Assessment in Ireland - A Guidance Note. EPA, 2015.
- Climate Action Plan 2023, Changing Ireland for the Better. Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, 2023.
- 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
- 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
- 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

3.8 Appropriate Assessment

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

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

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

As set out in Department Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08¹⁴ (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.

¹⁴ NPWS SEA letter: <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

4 Relationship with Plans and Programmes

4.1 Overview

Fáilte Ireland has prepared the 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.

4.2 Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework

Project Ireland 2040 is the Government's overarching planning and development policy for the country to 2040. It constitutes a *"strategy to make Ireland a better country for all of its people"* by setting public investment policy at a high level. It comprises two documents: the *National Planning Framework* (NPF), which details the strategy for development to 2040; and the *National Development Plan* (NDP), which outlines the public expenditure required to implement this strategy and identifies priority future projects.

The NPF is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland to 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment to create and promote opportunities, and to protect and enhance the environment. At its core are ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), *"a shared set of goals for every community across the country"* (p. 10), which the plan aims to deliver:

1. Compact Growth
2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility
3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
4. Sustainable Mobility
5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
6. High-quality International Connectivity
7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage
8. Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society
9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources
10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services

With a view to achieving these NSOs, the NPF identifies a suite of National Policy Objectives (NPOs).

The NPF identifies under NSO 7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage that-

'This will ensure that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. It will require investment in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. It also includes amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways. This is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place.'

The NPF addresses the Plan for Ireland's growing population and economy and to promote new economic opportunities arising from digital connectivity and indigenous innovation and enterprise as well as more traditional natural and resource assets (e.g. food, energy, tourism). Local services sectors, including tourism and small-scale manufacturing, are a significant part of the rural economy and are also important local employers.

The National Policy Objective 22 states to –

'Facilitate tourism development and in particular a National Greenways, Blueways and Peatways Strategy, which prioritises projects on the basis of achieving maximum impact and connectivity at national and regional level.'

The NPF emphasises on tourism opportunities for rural Ireland and states that –

'The development of greenways, blueways and peatways offer a unique alternative means for tourists and visitors to access and enjoy rural Ireland. The development of a strategic national network of these trails is a priority and will support the development of rural communities and job creation in the rural economy, as well as the protection and promotion of natural assets and biodiversity.'

The NPF further elaborates on the importance of Ireland's natural heritage, cultural heritage and landscape and their role and contribution towards the tourism industry and economic investment.

4.3 Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

There are three administrative Regions in Ireland: the Northern and Western Region, the Southern Region, and the Eastern and Midland Region. Under national policy, Regional Assemblies are tasked with drafting Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs), which effectively set the agenda for implementing the national level development policy – the NPF – at the Regional level. The CDEDP area is situated in the Southern Region and, therefore, falls under the remit of the Southern RSES.

The policies in the RSES are structured under Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) Policy Objectives.

The Southern region has a wealth of natural, cultural and heritage assets of national importance and is a significant tourist destination. Under the Strategy, Cork is identified as the largest urban settlement in the Region and is placed within the City-Metropolitan Areas category.

A Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan has been prepared for the Cork Metropolitan Area. The Strategy states that Cork Metropolitan Area accounts for almost one fifth of the Region's total population. The Cork Metropolitan Area includes

Cork City Boundary including Cork City Centre, Cork City Docklands and Tivoli, City Suburbs; and the recently added areas of Douglas, Rochestown, Ballincollig, Tower, Blarney, Glanmire and Cork Airport, Metropolitan towns including Carrigaline, Cobh, Midleton, Passage West, Carrigtwohill and Monard Strategic Development Zone, a new planned metropolitan town on the suburban rail line; Cork Harbour,

a strategic location of natural amenities, port activities, industry, marine sector research and development, tourism, heritage, and harbour settlements.

Further, the Cork MASP Policy Objective 2 states :

'a. To strengthen the consolidation and regeneration of Cork City Centre to drive its role as a vibrant living, retailing and working city, the economic, social and cultural heart of the Cork Metropolitan Area and Region;

b. Seek investment to achieve the infrastructure led brownfield regeneration of the Cork City Docklands and Tivoli as high quality, mixed use sustainable waterfront urban quarters, transformative projects which set national and international good practice standards in innovation, green and quality design, exemplary urbanism and place making.

c. Seek investment to achieve regeneration and consolidation in the city suburbs. Seek high quality architectural and urban design responses to enhance the uses of the waterfront and all urban quarters.

e. Seek investment for the enhancement and refurbishment of existing public buildings as a driver for private sector development e.g. English Market.'

The Strategy further states-

'As Europe's largest natural harbour, Cork Harbour is a special character area and strategic asset. It is a location sharing port activities, strategic employment uses, marine research, energy generation, tourism, heritage and residential communities in an environment with sensitive ecosystems and natural amenities (Cork Harbour SPA).'

Further, the Cork MASP Policy Objective 3 states :

'a. To promote Cork Harbour as a unique and strategic asset in the Cork Metropolitan Area and the Region and seek investment in the sustainable development of projects that will strengthen the potential for Cork Harbour to be a first mover in Marine Spatial Planning, a significant driver for economic growth, balanced with the protection of the harbour's ecology and natural habitats (Cork Harbour SPA).'

The vision statement for the Cork Metropolitan Area is to –

'Sustainably develop the potential and capacity of Metropolitan Cork, which has the State's Second City of international scale, as a healthy, people centred, affordable, socially and economically inclusive, innovative and technologically smart international gateway offering a high-quality environment, a vibrant city at its heart, supported by a network of compact metropolitan towns, connected by sustainable transport networks, serviced by a high standard of physical and community infrastructure offering a high quality of life for all. A metropolitan area that inspires pride, encourages creativity and achievement with high standards of environmental sustainability.'

The Strategy highlights the strong urban tourism and culture assets of the Cork City. There are significant heritage, tourism, recreation amenity assets in Metropolitan Cork which complement the assets of the city including access to the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East, Ireland's Maritime Paradise, Harbour Greenway Blarney Castle, close access to Kinsale, Fota Wildlife Park, Spike Island (2017 European No 1 Tourist Attraction), Fort Camden Meagher, Midleton Distillery, Cobh Heritage Centre, walkways, cycleways.

Further, the Cork MASP Policy Objective 15 states :

- a. Support the role of Metropolitan Cork’s tourism assets as a significant domestic and international tourism destination capitalising on its tourism attractions, Ireland’s Ancient East corridor, Wild Atlantic Way Corridor, Ireland’s Maritime Paradise theme and support initiatives creating a sustainable tourism future, diversifying the tourism product into non-traditional areas and extending the tourist season taking particular care of the natural and built environment.*
- b. The SRA seeks investment in the sustainable development of tourism infrastructure and tourism services across Cork and support initiatives arising from the Pure Cork brand and the “Growing Tourism in Cork: A Collective Strategy subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.*
- c. Support the delivery of large-scale all year-round tourist attraction(s) in Cork City and in County Metropolitan Cork.*
- d. Value and support cultural amenities, conservation, protection and enhancement of Cork City’s natural heritage as key assets to attract tourism.*
- e. Seek sustainable tourism development which reflects the city’s distinctive history, culture and environment.*
- f. Promote diversification and innovation in the tourism sector.*
- g. Seek an integrated approach to tourism development in conjunction with a wide range of stakeholders including state agencies, communities and stakeholders in the tourism sector.’*

Cork MASP Policy Objective 17 states :

- b. The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including parks, natural green spaces and ecosystems, greenways and blueways.*
- d. In order to support decision-making in increasing recreation and tourism opportunities along the coastline, which is in close proximity to European Sites, the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs will need to be established to understand what limits should be set for the extent of development.*
- f. The sustainable development of key recreation, sports and community facilities across Metropolitan Cork.’*

The RSES Vision is to make the Southern Region one of Europe’s most creative, innovative, greenest and liveable regions, with planned growth and development in suitable locations that nurtures places to realise their full potential, protects and enhances the environment, and delivers quality of life and economic growth.

4.4 Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028

The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out how the City will grow and develop over the next six years. This statutory plan also encompasses the towns of Ballincollig, Blarney, Tower and Glanmire, and their wider hinterland areas.

Cork City offers a range of business services, hospitality, cultural, tourism and retail to support the needs of businesses as well as residents and visitors to the region. The City Centre has a wide range of cultural, entertainment and leisure attractions including cafés, bars, restaurants, cinemas, theatres,

music venues, libraries, galleries and museums. It is a centre for domestic and international tourism and Cork City Council will work with key stakeholders to improve the cohesiveness and appeal of key attractions in Cork City and enhance the overall City Centre experience.

Objective 10.8 (City Centre Tourism) of the Plan states-

‘To support the City Centre as a destination for national and international tourism and to expand the draw and offer of the City Centre. This will include targeted measures to enhance these historic areas such as investing in Shandon and Elizabeth Fort and promoting the historic spine linking these areas along Shandon Street, North and South Main Street and Barrack Street.’

Cork City’s green and blue infrastructure form key direct and indirect assets, promoting and facilitating tourism, cultural, recreational and leisure activities. Cork’s maritime history, and in particular its relationship with the River Lee, informed the location and form of built and cultural heritage features and the blueprint of today’s City. Cork City, as a gateway to the wider region and a destination, benefits from green and blue infrastructure forming the setting of the City and visitor attractions, contributing to the overall tourism offer of the City. Cork City boasts a wide array of parks, walkways and open spaces. Cork City Council maintains a total of 607ha of these recreational and leisure assets. Informal recreation is supported by more formal recreational green infrastructure facilities including golf-courses, playgrounds, multi-use games areas, skate parks and playing fields. In facilitating the growth of Cork City, there is a need to provide for the protection and enhancement of existing green and blue infrastructure facilities to successfully integrate them into an accessible network of recreational and leisure features.

The Plan states that-

‘Fáilte Ireland, in partnership with Cork City Council, is currently leading the preparation of a Tourism Destination Experience Development Plan for Cork City and East Cork. It is envisaged that this plan will seek to broaden the appeal of Cork to tourists by enhancing the tourism product and strengthening the existing assets of the city.[...] It is also envisaged that the plan will support the expansion of the night-time economy, particularly for families, by expanding the cultural offering of the city.’

Tourism is an important indigenous economic industry in Cork City where it provides income and jobs through direct and indirect employment. It also plays a valuable role in promoting Cork as a place to live and work to visitors and businesses with the sector often acting as an initial interface between Ireland and international investors, therefore representing an opportunity to positively influence foreign direct investment. Cork City boasts a high quality natural, cultural and built heritage and forms a gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland’s Ancient East.

Ireland’s national tourism policy, ‘People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025’ seeks to maximise the economic contribution of tourism, while protecting the invaluable assets that are our natural, built and cultural heritage. This reflects the approach of Cork City Council in promoting the sustainable growth and expansion of tourism in the city whilst protecting the very assets and uses that attract tourism.

Heritage, cultural, creative and arts facilities form a key part of Cork City’s tourism offer and are a catalyst for further growth in visitor numbers. Cork City has significant archaeological heritage, that provides a valuable cultural, educational and tourism resource.

Objective 8.10 Archaeological Management Strategy for the City states-

'd. Cork City Council will seek to ensure that the tourism strategy within the medieval historic core and in areas/setting of historic monuments should draw on its archaeological heritage and should reflect a strong and authentic sense of place.'

It is key objective of Cork City Council to –

'To facilitate and encourage sustainable tourism development which is based on and reflects the city's distinctive history, culture and environment, and which will promote diversification and innovation in the tourism sector.'

'To protect and enhance the tourism and cultural amenities of the city including the conservation, protection and enhancement of Cork City's natural, built and cultural heritage through land use zoning, policies and objectives.'

'To expand the role of the city as an important gateway and base for regional tourism.'

Objective 7.25 of the Plan states as follows:

"Sustainable Tourism - 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;*
- b. Supporting the implementation of the Cork City Tourism Strategy 2017-2022, the Local Economic and Community Plan-2016-2021 (Pure Cork) and their successor strategies;*
- c. To support the implementation of the Tourism Destination Plan for Cork City and East Cork;*
- d. Develop existing tourist attractions and activities, while seeking investment in new attractions that help to diversify the tourism market;*
- e. Support the development of cultural facilities such as the Crawford Art Gallery and the Cork Events Centre;*
- f. Support initiatives that improve the sustainability of tourism, and support eco-tourism along with the reduction of the carbon footprint of tourist accommodation, attractions and activities;*
- g. Support high quality proposals, initiatives and pilot projects that represent opportunities to provide new or enhanced visitor facilities and attractions. This also extends to proposals that utilise technology to improve visitors' experiences and aid interpretation and navigation and seek to better leverage the city's network of green and blue infrastructure as tourism attractions;*
- h. Seeking to manage, where appropriate, any increase in visitor numbers to semi-natural areas in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, by ensuring that new any projects, such as greenways, are located a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian zones;*
- i. Seeking to manage, where relevant, any increase in visitor numbers to key habitats and / or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects, including loss of habitat and disturbance, by ensuring that new projects and activities are located a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor / Habitat Management Plans may be required for proposed projects where relevant and as appropriate."*

The Development Plan has been subject to SEA, AA and SFRA. These are discussed, where relevant, below.

4.5 Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 is a six year development plan for the County that attempts to set out, Cork County Council's current thinking on planning policy looking towards the horizon year of 2028. The Plan encompasses six volumes, Volume 1 includes Main Policy Material, Volume 2 includes Heritage & Amenity, Volume 3, 4, & 5 discuss North Cork, South Cork and West Cork respectively and Volume 6 covers Maps.

Cork's location in the South-west Region means that it is a direct beneficiary of being a part of a popular tourist region. The County has a rich scenic beauty and cultural heritage and is known for its strong maritime, sporting, and traditional music and language traditions. Cork is also well known for being the Food Capital of Ireland, with the many food festivals, markets, trails and restaurants around the county.

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.

The Plan states to –

'Promote a sustainable and well managed tourism industry which protects the environmental and heritage assets of the County while delivering economic benefits throughout the County. Identify and develop new and diverse tourism products - particularly those associated with heritage and environment, arts and culture and acknowledge the need to spread appropriate tourism growth and tourist related enterprises beyond established resorts and larger towns to rural areas.'

Tourism has a critical role to play in the development of the Irish economy. It has the potential to create and maintain employment, invest in local communities, and contribute to the national economic growth. In recent years, Fáilte Ireland has developed four regional brands to promote and further develop the Tourism sector around the Country. Two of these Brands, The Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Ancient East are evident in Cork County and are making a significant impact to our tourism industry. Objective TO 10-2 Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Ancient East states-

'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.'

Further, Objective 10-1 promotion of Sustainable Tourism in County Cork states-

'Promote a sustainable approach to the development of the tourism sector within Cork County while;

a) Ensuring the protection of the natural, built and cultural heritage assets of the county, including Natura sites, which are in themselves part of what attracts visitors to the county.

b) Having regard to cumulative impacts increased visitor numbers and visitor facilities can have on local infrastructure, sensitive areas and sites, water quality, biodiversity, soils, ecosystems, habitats and species, climate change etc.

c) Supporting investment in placemaking and the regeneration of towns and villages in recognition of the role 'People and Place' make in attracting visitors to Ireland; encouraging the development of tourism and other facilities within settlements to support such regeneration and compact growth.

d) Work in partnership with public and private sector agencies to implement the key tourism objectives in this Plan, while first ensuring early consultation with landowners around any new proposed routes and facilities.

e) Assist community groups to access funding for appropriate, sustainable and beneficial tourism developments.'

The Marine Leisure sector is the fastest growing sector within the tourism industry. Cork, with its maritime history, is well positioned to further develop its marine leisure product. Objective TO 10-4 Developing the Marine Leisure Sector states –

'a) Develop the marine leisure sector in the County in a coherent and sustainable manner making the best use of existing and planned infrastructure and resources, in a manner that is sensitive to the natural and cultural heritage resources of our coastal zone, and complies with relevant environmental legislation including the Habitats, Birds, Water Framework, Floods, SEA and EIA Directives.

b) Support the development of sustainable recreation and activity-related marine tourism developments at appropriate locations along the coastline and in the vicinity of the inland waterways and lakes where these are compatible with the environmental and heritage sensitivities of identified sites.'

Heritage Tourism involves visiting historical, industrial, or natural sites, and which is oriented towards the cultural heritage of the location where tourism is occurring. It is recognised as one of the most important and fastest growing aspects of the tourist industry and County Cork with its vast array of heritage sites including, battlefields, museums, interpretive centres, archaeology and historic town centres is well positioned to benefit from this activity.

The RSES reflects the NPF position that countryside *"is and will continue to be, a living and lived-in landscape focusing on the requirements of rural economies and rural communities, based on agriculture, forestry, tourism, and rural enterprise, while at the same time avoiding ribbon and over-spill development from urban areas and protecting environmental qualities"*.

The Development Plan has been subject to SEA, AA and SFRA. These are discussed, where relevant, below.

4.6 Regional Tourism Development Strategies (2023-2027)

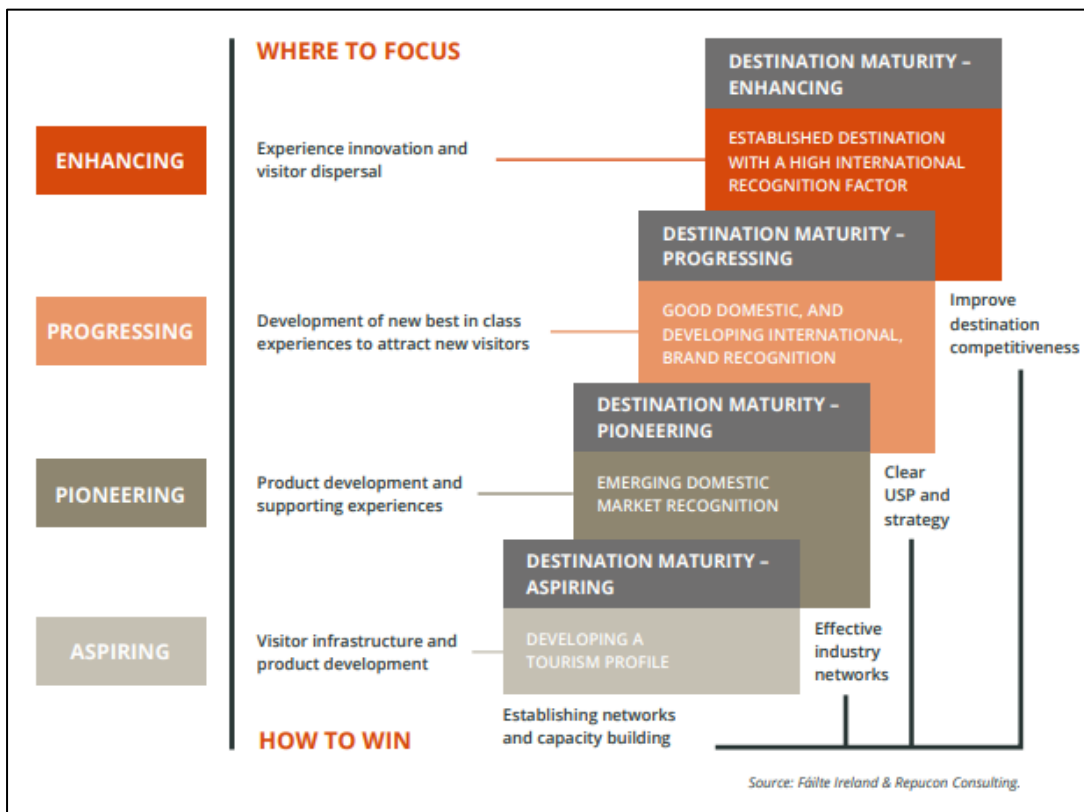
Regional Tourism Development Strategies (2023-2027) have been developed for each of Fáilte Ireland's four Regional Experience Brands (Ireland's Ancient East, Dublin, Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands). The purpose of the Regional Tourism Strategies is to identify sustainable tourism development priorities that will unlock the commercial potential of the region and generate socio-economic benefits for all local stakeholders and the tourism industry. These plans provide the strategic framework for the development of the CDEDP.

The Ireland Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023 - 2027 identifies five strategic objectives to develop the tourism economy in the region. The projects outlined in the CDEDP align to these overall regional objectives. The strategic objectives are as follows:

- *STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Ireland’s Ancient East.*
- *STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism.*
- *STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Ensure the region is easy to access, navigate and consume for the visitor.*
- *STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability to ensure it can thrive over the period of this strategy and create sustainable jobs in local communities.*
- *STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development across the region.*

A new approach to destination development is central to the delivery of the Ireland’s Ancient East Regional Tourism Strategy (2023-2027). It will ensure the appropriate interventions and supports are put in place to address the differences that exist in destination maturity levels across the region. Four levels of destination maturity have been identified within the destination development framework. Each maturity level is defined through a set of assessment criteria focused on creating distinctive visitor destinations. These include current levels of recognition within the overseas and domestic markets, range and quality of tourism products and the scale and variety of local accommodation. Additional considerations include the range of services (day and evening time) available for visitors in the primary and secondary tourism hubs in the destination in addition to the strength of local tourism industry networks.

The Ireland Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023 - 2027 has been subject to SEA and AA. These are discussed, where relevant, below.



4.7 Other Plans and Programmes

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 st 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 1976-2023
Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC)	The Water Services Act (2007 – 2017)
Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC)	Foreshore Act 1933-2022
Urban Wastewater Directive (91/271/EEC)	Aquaculture Act 1997-2006
Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)	Sea Fisheries & Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006
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

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

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan
SEA Environmental Report

National & Regional Plans and Programmes	
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 th 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
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

Some of the key Plans / Programmes, which were subject to SEA and AA, are discussed further in the following sections.

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.

Therefore, as detailed previously the study area for this report includes Cork City, Harbour and East Cork and the environmental aspects are described in the sections below.

5.3.1 Biodiversity

Biodiversity plays a significant role in the provision of clean air, water, healthy soils and food as well as visually contributing to a plan area with its natural beauty and heritage.

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.

5.3.1.1 Designated European Sites

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.

All designated European Sites located within the study area are listed in **Table 5.1** below. There are a further 9no. SPAs and 4no. SACs within the Zone of Influence (Zoi) of the study area listed in **Table 5.2** below.

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 website¹⁵. Any potential for impact on European Sites have been fully addressed in the NIS that accompanies the CDEDP and SEA Environment Report.

Table 5.1 European sites located within the study area

Site Code	Special Protection Area (SPA)	Site Code	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
004030	Cork Harbour SPA	001058	Great Island Channel SAC
004028	Blackwater Estuary SPA	000077	Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC
004023	Ballymacoda Bay SPA	002170	Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC
004022	Ballycotton Bay SPA		

Table 5.2 European sites located within the zone of influence of the study area

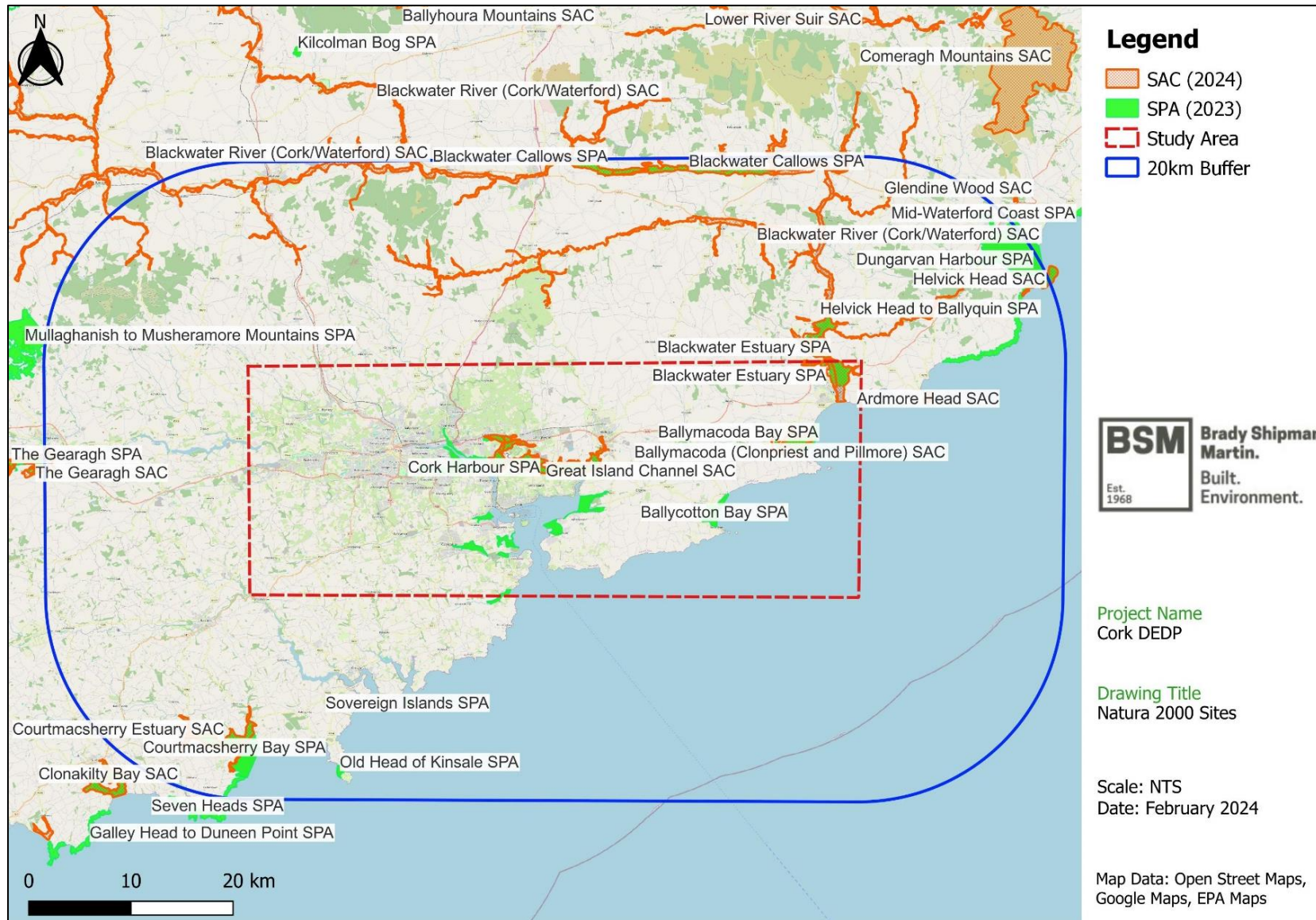
Site Code	Special Protection Area (SPA)	Site Code	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
004192	Helvick Head to Ballyquin SPA	002123	Ardmore Head SAC
004032	Dungarvan Harbour SPA	000665	Helvic Head SAC
004094	Blackwater Callows SPA	000108	Gearagh SAC
004124	Soverign Islands SPA	001230	Courtmacsherry Estuary SAC
004021	Old Head of Kinsale SPA		
004219	Courtmacsherry Bay SPA		
004191	Seven Heads SPA		
004109	The Gearagh SPA		
004162	Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA		

¹⁵ NPWS website 2019: <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Figure 5.1 European Sites within the study area and in the surrounding zone of influence



5.3.1.2 Nationally Designated Sites

Nationally Designated Sites include *Natural Heritage Areas* (NHAs) which are legally protected areas that are considered important for their habitats or which holds species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection. *Proposed Natural Heritage Areas* (pNHAs) are also of significance for wildlife and habitats but have not yet been statutorily designated. However, under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000) NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation¹⁶.

Refer to **Tables 5.3** and **5.4** and **Figure 5.2** below for the NHAs and pNHAs within the study area and within the zone of influence of the County boundary.

Table 5.3 Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) within the study area and zone of influence

Site Code	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) within study area	Site Code	Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) within zone of influence
	None	002447	Boggeragh Mountains NHA

Table 5.4 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) within the study area and zone of influence

Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) within study area	Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) within zone of influence
000103	Shoumagh Valley pNHA	001067	Lough Gal pNHA
001039	Blarney Castle Woods pNHA	001055	Glashgarriff River pNHA
001799	Ardamadane Wood pNHA	000079	Bride/Bunaglanna Valley pNHA
001857	Blarney Bog pNHA	000670	Tallow (Disused Church) pNHA
001798	Blarney Lake pNHA	001692	Ballyeelinan Wood pNHA
000094	Lee Valley pNHA	001698	Glenanna Wood pNHA
001249	Ballincollig Cave pNHA	000663	Dungarvan Harbour pNHA
001081	Cork Lough pNHA	000665	Helvick Head pNHA
001054	Glanmire Wood pNHA	001740	Bandon Valley Above Inishannon pNHA
001082	Dunkettle Shore pNHA	001515	Bandon Valley Below Inishannon pNHA
001074	Rockfarm Quarry, Little Island pNHA	001966	Minane Bridge Marsh pNHA
001046	Douglas River Estuary pNHA	001060	James Fort pNHA
001058	Great Island Channel pNHA	001053	Garrettstown Marsh pNHA
001987	Cuskinny Marsh pNHA	000087	Garrylucas Marsh pNHA
001076	Rostellan Lough, Aghada Shore and Poul nabibe Inlet pNHA	001230	Courtmacsherry Estuary pNHA
001979	Monkstown Creek pNHA		
001084	Whitegate Bay pNHA		
001990	Owenboy River pNHA		
001066	Lough Beg (Cork) pNHA		

¹⁶ NPWS website 2019: <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/nha>

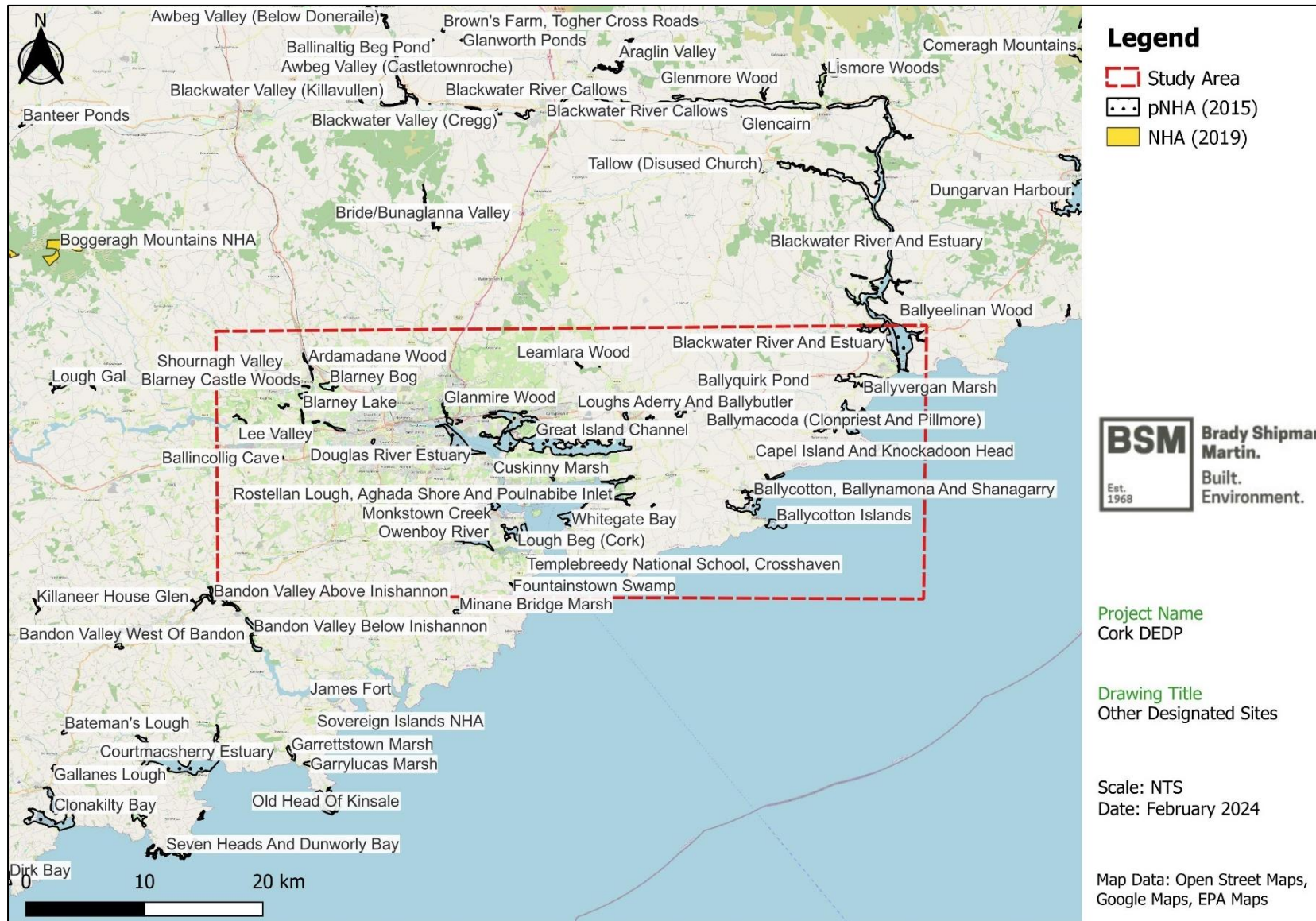
Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan
SEA Environmental Report

Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) within study area	Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) within zone of influence
000107	Templebreedy National School, Crosshaven pNHA		
000371	Fountainstown Swamp pNHA		
001408	Carrigacrump Caves pNHA		
001064	Leamlara Wood pNHA		
000099	Ballynaclashy House, North of Midleton pNHA		
000446	Loughs Aderry and Ballybutter pNHA		
001183	Clasharinka Pond pNHA		
001235	Ballyquirk Pond pNHA		
001042	Carrigshane Hill pNHA		
000076	Ballycotton, Ballynamona and Shanagarry pNHA		
001978	Ballycotton Island pNHA		
000083	Capel Island and Knockadoon Head pNHA		
000077	Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) pNHA		
000078	Ballyvergan Marsh pNHA		
000072	Blackwater River and Estuary pNHA		

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Figure 5.2 Other Designated Sites within the study area and in the surrounding zone of influence



5.3.1.3 Ecological Networks and Connectivity

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive recognises the importance of ecological networks as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife, including for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna. The Directive requires that ecological connectivity and areas of ecological value outside the Natura 2000 network of designated ecological sites are maintained and it recognises the need for the management of these areas through land use planning and development policies. Ecological networks are important in connecting areas of local biodiversity with each other and with nearby designated sites so as to prevent islands of habitat from being isolated entities. They are composed of linear features, such as treelines, hedgerows and rivers / streams which provide corridors or stepping stones for wildlife species moving within their normal range.

Ecological corridors are important for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species, particularly for mammals, bats and small birds and facilitate linkages both between and within designated ecological sites, non-designated surrounding countryside and the more urban areas of the County. 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.

Hedgerows contribute significantly to biodiversity and landscape character. They have an important farming function, they are wildlife habitats, and corridors, between habitats, and they also have historical significance as townland and field boundaries. Rivers, waterways and wetlands are very important assets for Cork City, particularly the urban environment. Cork Harbour, the River Lee and associated water courses, estuaries, salt marshes, reedbeds and intertidal mudflats are of ecological importance, providing a habitat for a variety of plant and animal species including mosses, lichens and bats and act as a corridor for the movement of species between the surrounding countryside and urban areas.

Wetlands include a wide range of habitats including watercourses, marshes, fens, bogs, turloughs, wet woodlands and estuaries. They support a variety of habitats and species, function in the protection of water quality and flood control, are important carbon stores contributing to climate resilience, and provide open space and recreational opportunities.

5.3.1.4 National Biodiversity Action Plan

Ireland's fourth *National Biodiversity Action Plan* (NBAP) sets national biodiversity agenda for the period 2023-2030. The Plan's vision for Ireland in 2050 is as follows:

Biodiversity in Ireland is valued, conserved, restored and sustainably used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.

The Key objectives of the NBAP are as follows:

- Adopt a Whole-of Government, Whole of-Society Approach to Biodiversity;
- Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs;
- Secure Nature's Contribution to People;
- Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity;
- Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity Initiatives.

5.3.1.5 Water Framework Directive (WFD) Register of Protected Area

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). This register is split into five categories as outlined by the EPA:

- Areas designated for the abstraction of water intended for human consumption under Article 7;
- Areas designated for the protection of economically significant aquatic species (i.e. shellfish);
- Bodies of water designated as recreational waters, including areas designated as bathing waters under Directive 76/160/EEC;
- Nutrient-sensitive areas, including areas designated as vulnerable zones under Directive 91/676/EEC and areas designated as sensitive areas under Directive 91/271/EEC; and
- Areas designated for the protection of habitats or species where the maintenance or improvement of the status of water is an important factor in their protection, including relevant European sites (Natura 2000) designated under Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 79/409/EEC.

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).

5.3.1.6 Designated Shellfish Waters

The *EU Shellfish Waters Directive* (2006/113/EC) aims to protect and improve shellfish waters in order to support shellfish life and growth.

Pollution reduction programmes are in operation for these areas. The identified pressures on these designated waters include urban wastewater systems, on-site wastewater treatment systems and port activities. The coastal waters provide an important resource, supporting and generating employment and recreational activities and must be protected.

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.

5.3.1.7 Salmonid Waters

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. Thirty-four rivers, tributaries and lakes are listed and protected under these Regulations that prescribe quality standards for salmonid waters, sampling programmes and methods of analysis and inspection to be used by local authorities to determine compliance with the standards.

The River Lee (Cork) within the study area is a designated Salmonid Water under the EU Freshwater Fish Directive.

5.3.1.8 Other Designations

RAMSAR Sites

Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. Wetlands are important ecosystems, which improve water quality, provide storm protection, flood mitigation, stabilise shorelines, maintain biodiversity, and provide natural products such as fish and shellfish. Ireland presently has 45no. RAMSAR sites. The Ramsar sites located within the study area include – Blackwater Estuary (836), Ballycotton Bay (830) and Cork Harbour (837). Relevant authorities are expected to manage their Ramsar Sites so as to maintain their ecological character and retain their essential functions and values for future generations.

Wildfowl Sanctuaries

Wildfowl sanctuaries are areas that have been excluded from the ‘Open Season Order’ so that game birds can rest and feed undisturbed. There are 68no. sanctuaries in the State¹⁷. Shooting of game birds is not allowed in these sanctuaries. The Ballynamona – Shannagarry (WFS-08), Lough Aderry (WFS-10) and The Lee Reservoir (WFS-11) are within the study area.

Nature Reserves

Other nature conservation designations are *Statutory Nature Reserves*, which are protected under Ministerial order.

There is one Nature Reserves within the study area – Capel Island and Knockadoon Head Nature Reserve. These reserves comprise all of Capel Island off the south coast near Youghal, Co. Cork, part of Knockadoon headland opposite the island and the intervening sea area. The reserve comprises 143.0 hectares, of which 126.9 are State-owned and 16.1 are privately owned.

5.3.1.9 Biodiversity Issues

Ireland is currently experiencing a decline in floral and faunal populations. Implementation of measures to achieve the requirements of the Habitats Directive and the objectives of the WFD are likely to benefit protected sites in the future.

Certain developments and activities associated with urban developments, tourism and recreation that are located within, or close to, ecologically sensitive sites can give rise to significant environmental pressures. Within Cork the creation of green and blue infrastructure network can pose pressure on the existing environment.

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.

¹⁷ NPWS (2021).

- 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.

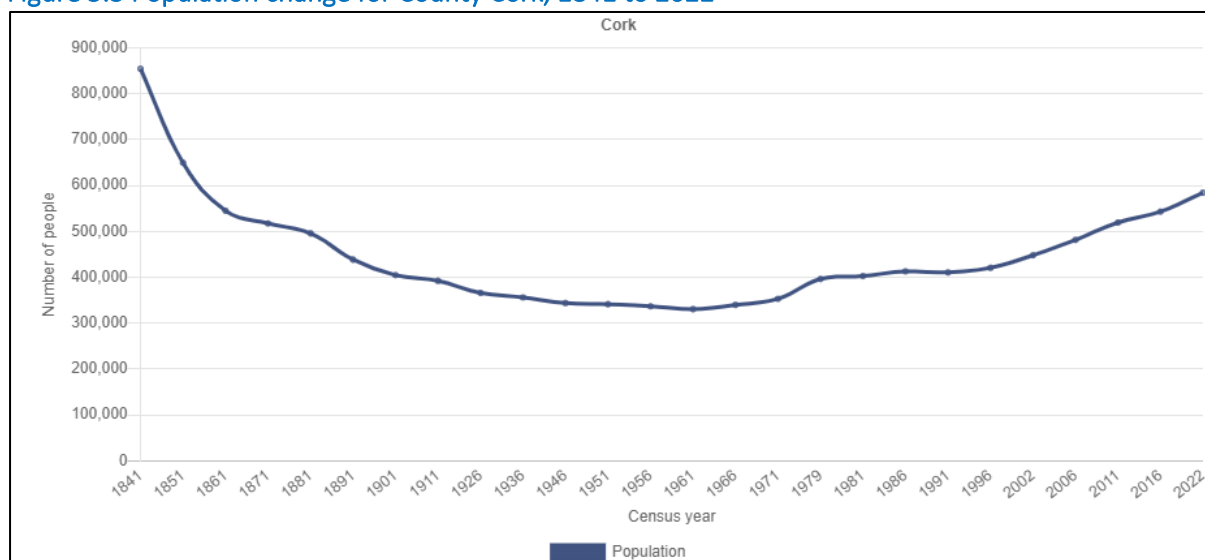
5.3.2 Population and Human Health

5.3.2.1 Population

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 *National Planning Framework* (NPF) outlines that by 2040 there will be roughly an extra one million people living in Ireland.

The 2022 Census results showed that the population for County Cork was 360,152¹⁸ persons, a decrease of c. 13.7% from the 2016 census (417,211¹⁹ persons). The 2016 Census showed that the population of County Cork was an increase of c. 4.35% from the 2011 census (399,802²⁰ persons). There has been an increase in the population of the County from 2011 to 2016 and then a decrease from 2016 to 2022. Refer to **Figure 5.3** below for the overall population change for the County between 1841 to 2022.

Figure 5.3 Population change for County Cork, 1841 to 2022²¹



5.3.2.2 Socio-Economic Trends

The Cork Metropolitan is a key employment base and economic driver in Ireland. The city serves as one of Ireland’s key services centres and offers a range of business services, hospitality, cultural, tourism and retail. Tourism is an important indigenous economic industry in Cork City where it provides income and jobs through direct and indirect employment.

¹⁸ 2022 Census Data : <https://visual.cso.ie/?body=entity/ima/cop/2022&boundary=C03789V04537&guid=2ae19629-14a8-13a3-e055-000000000001>

¹⁹ 2016 Census Data : <https://visual.cso.ie/?body=entity/ima/cop/2016&boundary=C03849V04599&guid=2ae19629-14a8-13a3-e055-000000000001>

²⁰ 2011 Census data : <https://visual.cso.ie/?body=entity/ima/cop/2011&boundary=C03994V04752&guid=C07>

²¹ 2022 Census : Population Distribution and Movements - <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpp1/censusofpopulation2022profile1-populationdistributionandmovements/populationdistribution/>

Age profiles / Age dependency ratio

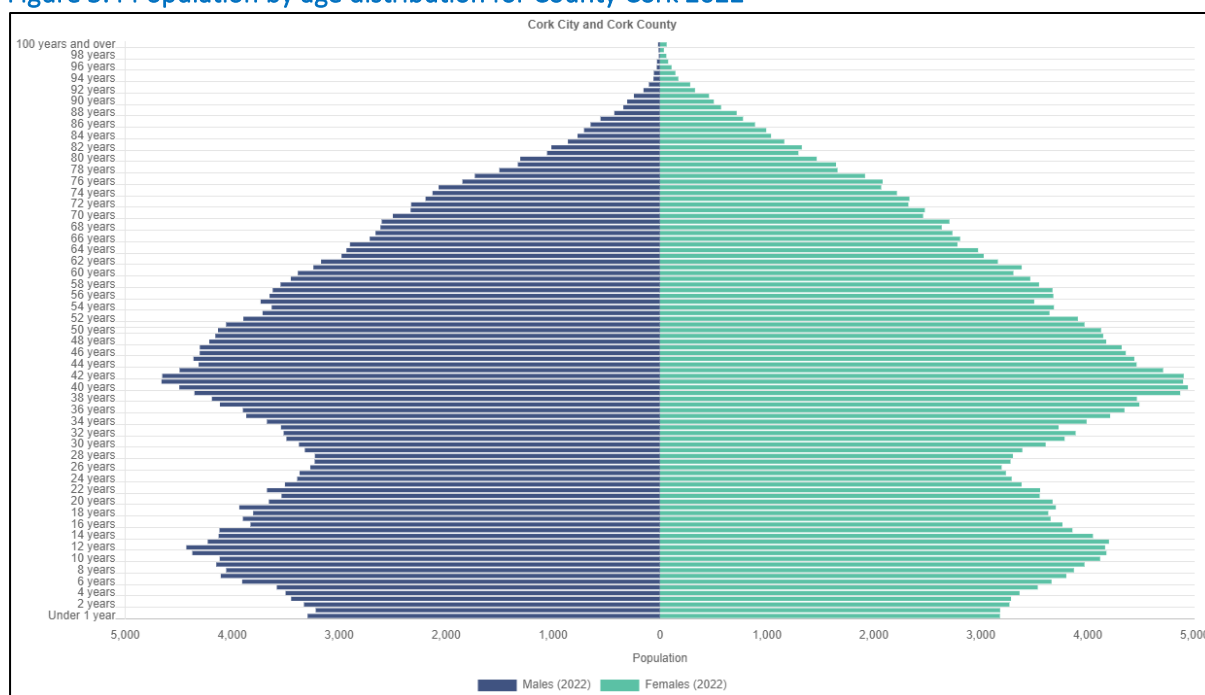
The age structure of a population is influenced by patterns of natural increase and migration. The age dependency ratio is the proportion of population in the young (0-14 years) and old (65 years and above) cohorts to the working population cohort (15-64 years).

The age structure of the population indicates that the County in 2022 has a relatively young and working population (42 years and 12 years in 2022) and corresponds to that of the State (41 years).

Child dependency²² in County Cork is high with 19.45% of the population under the age of 14 is comparable to an average of 19.65% for the State. Old age dependency²³ in the State has an average of 15% for the State, while for County Cork is 15.3%. The working population (15-64 years) for County Cork is 65.2% and corresponds to that for the State (65.02%).

The increased numbers in the young population (0-14 years) reflects a more immediate requirements for additional childcare and schools for the younger population. The slight increase in the older populations (65 years and above) will also have long-term implications relating to healthcare, social services and transport. **Figure 5.4** below shows the population by age distribution for County Cork.

Figure 5.4 Population by age distribution for County Cork 2022²⁴



Tourism

The tourism industry has long been recognised as an important economic driver for the economy of County Cork. Tourism is particularly important in that it can assist in providing business and employment opportunities across regions and leads to jobs across the spectrum of skills requirements.

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

²² CSO Census 2022: Persons aged 0-14

²³ CSO Census 2022: Persons aged 65+

²⁴ Census 2022 Population by age - <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpp1/censusofpopulation2022profile1-populationdistributionandmovements/populationdistribution/>

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 is also well known for being the Food Capital of Ireland, with the many food festivals, markets, trails and restaurants around the county. County Cork and in particular Cork Harbour (Cobh) is a popular stop off destination for cruise liners. Cork Harbour also has a long tradition of recreational boating, is home to the oldest yacht club in the world (Royal Cork Yacht Club) and hosts the bi-annual Cork Week Sailing Regatta. Cork County Council has developed Spike Island as a unique tourism, heritage, and recreational resource in Cork Harbour.

Cork City boasts a high quality natural, cultural and built heritage and forms a gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East. The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 sets *Objective TO 10-2 Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Ancient East - 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.*

5.3.2.3 Human Health

Human health has the potential to be impacted upon by environmental vectors (*i.e.* environmental components such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings). Hazards or nuisances to human health can arise as a result of exposure to these vectors arising from incompatible adjacent land uses. The impact of development on human health is also influenced by the extent to which new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure and the maintenance of the quality of water, air and soil.

Infrastructure / Amenity and Human Health

Sporting, leisure and recreational facilities are essential to promoting good health, social cohesion, a sense of community and enhancing quality of life and well-being. Nationally there has been, in recent years, an increased focus on fitness, sports and recreation generally.

The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 under *Objective TO-8 Walking/Cycling and Greenways* states to - *Promote the development of greenways, walking and cycling routes throughout the County as an activity for both international visitors and local tourists in a manner that is compatible with nature conservation and other environmental policies.*

Cork City's green and blue infrastructure form key direct and indirect assets, promoting and facilitating tourism, cultural, recreational and leisure activities. It is a strategic objective of Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 to *'Manage and enhance green and blue infrastructure, to protect and promote biodiversity, ecology and habitat connectivity, protect natural areas, enhance landscape character and*

maritime heritage, and manage access to green and blue spaces that provide recreation, amenity and natural areas.'

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.

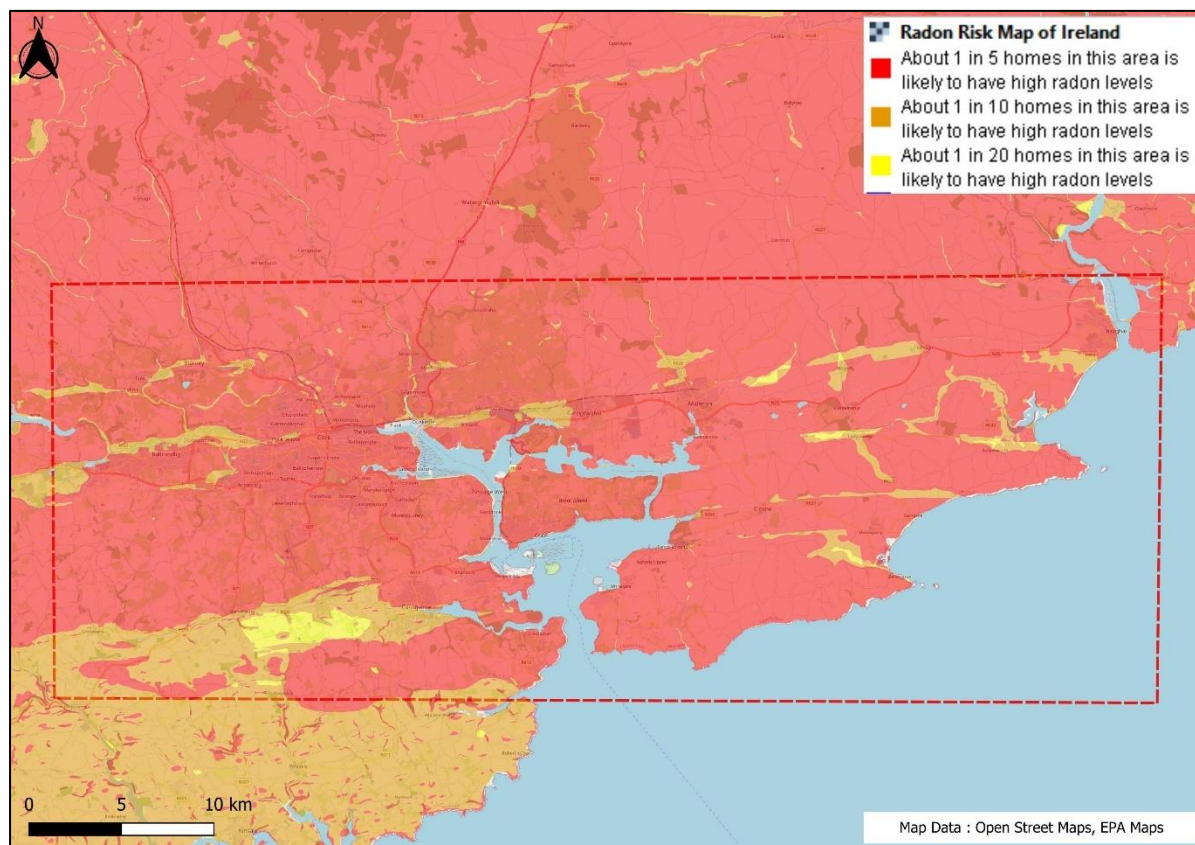
The development of cycle and walking tourism presents a particular opportunity to bring the economic benefits of tourism to the rural areas of Ireland. Newly developed Heritage Trails and Historic Walking trails have been developed in towns and villages throughout the county including the Youghal Boardwalk Project. There are a number of walking routes available in Cork, through publicly owned and private lands – including long distance and looped walks and hiking routes.

There are a large number of built recreation and sporting facilities provided throughout the county through a mix of public, private, schools, community facilities and voluntary organisations. Water sports cover a wide range of activities from tranquil uses such as angling, sailing, canoeing, rowing and sail boarding to powered activities such as jet skis, water-skiing and powerboat uses.

Radon and Human Health

Radon is a radioactive gas, which is naturally produced in the ground from the uranium present in small quantities in all rocks and soils. Tiny radioactive particles are produced by the gas which when inhaled can cause lung cancer. The risk of contracting lung cancer as a result of Radon depends on how much Radon a person has been exposed to over a period of time. Radon risk map levels in the study area have been collated from the EPA *Radon Risk Map of Ireland* and are shown in **Figure 5.5** below. Areas in red are most at risk from radon and are called High Radon Areas, the areas of the map in orange and yellow are areas of medium and low risk respectively. However, a high radon level can be found in any home in any part of the country.

Figure 5.5 Radon Risk Map for the study area²⁵



5.3.2.4 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.

5.3.3 Land, Soils & Geology

Soil is composed of mineral particles, organic matter, water, air and living organisms. Land degradation is a global problem, often caused by a combination of factors such as poor land management and unsustainable development. Land degradation may exacerbate the impacts of natural disasters.

5.3.3.1 Land

Forestry and Woodlands

²⁵ EPA Radon Risk Map of Ireland- <https://gis.epa.ie/geonetwork/srv/eng/catalog.search#/metadata/3b2e9226-c40a-44c9-b4f0-7234c0810769>

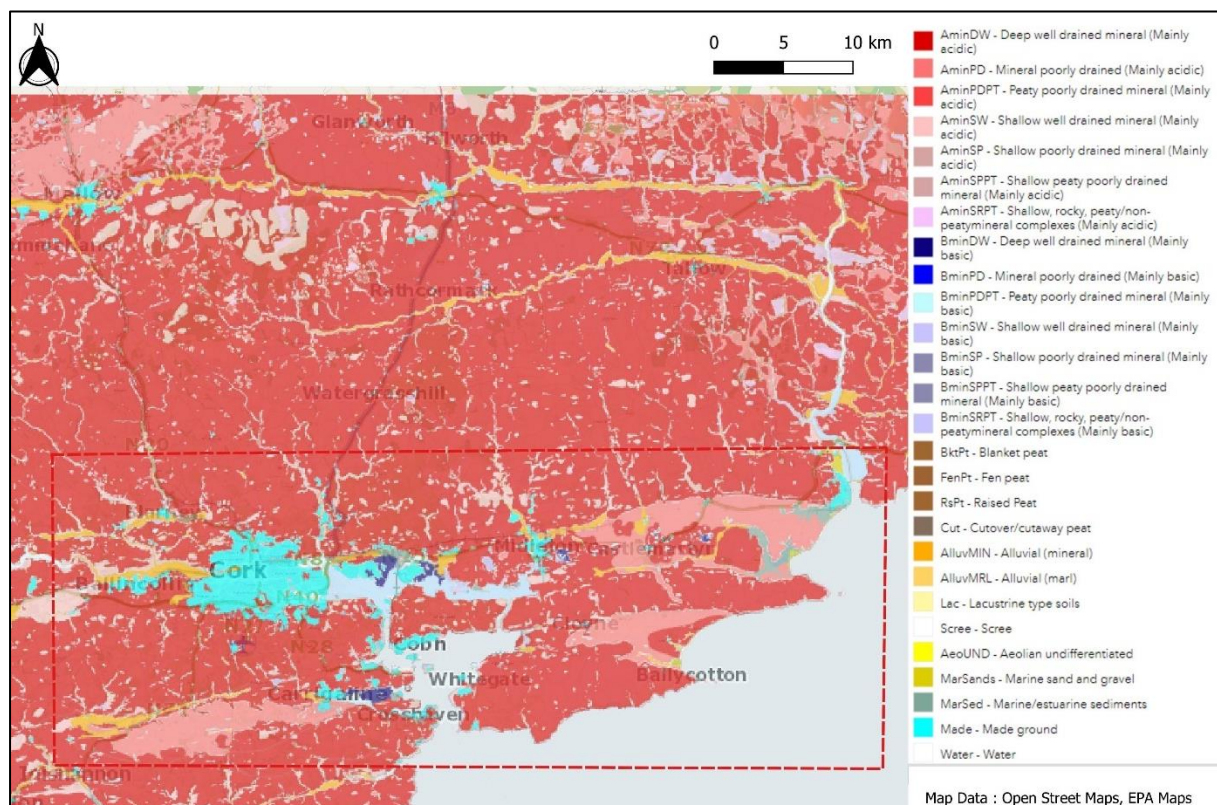
Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to their heritage and economic benefits. They are also important as links in the county’s green infrastructure network. Cork has rich fertile agricultural land and many bogs and peatlands with a higher than national average land mass of forest 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.

5.3.3.2 Soils

Soil is a non-renewable resource that performs many vital functions: food, storage, filtration and transformation of many substances including water, carbon, and nitrogen. Soil has a role as a habitat and gene pool, serves as a platform for human activities, landscape and heritage and acts as a provider of raw materials. The *Irish Soil Information System (SIS)* concludes a 5 year programme, supported by the EPA and Teagasc, to develop a 1:250,000 scale national soil map. The Irish Soil Information System adopted a unique methodology combining digital soil mapping techniques with traditional soil survey application.

Fertile soils also provide the basis for a thriving agricultural and food sector. The study area comprises a mix of soil types, see **Figure 5.6** below. These soils can be impacted upon by development, land use changes and water quality.

Figure 5.6 Teagasc Subsoils Map for the study area²⁶



Seveso Sites

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

²⁶ EPA Maps - <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

to companies where dangerous substances are present in quantities equal to or above specified thresholds. There are two thresholds, a lower one of 50 tonnes ('lower tier sites') and a higher one of 200 tonnes ('upper tier sites'). Lower tier sites are required to have a *Major Accidents Prevention Policy* and a *Safe Work Systems Plan*. Upper tier sites are required to carry out, in conjunction with the local competent authority (which includes the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Local Authority and An Garda Síochána) a *Major Accidents External Emergency Plan*.

Emergency Plans must take full account of objectives established for nearby waters in river basin plans. The legislation deals with the prevention of major accidents. 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.

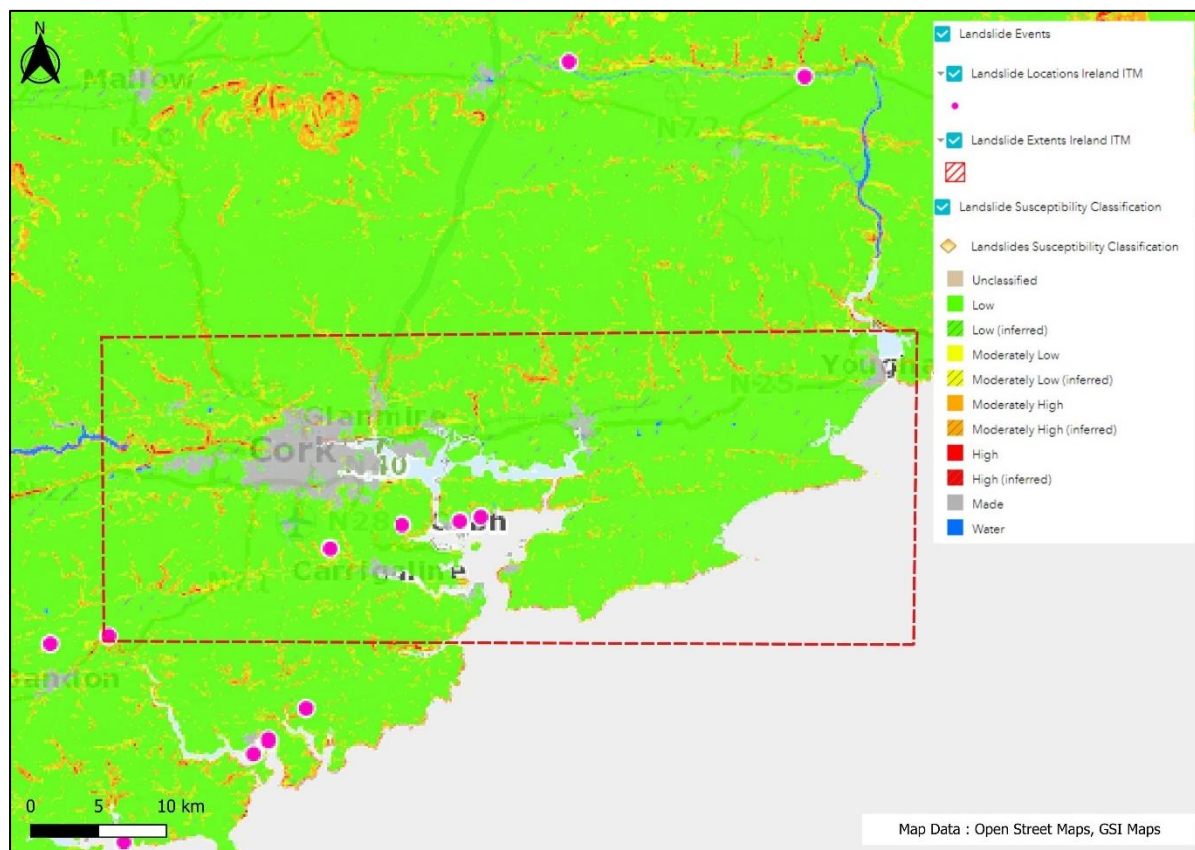
The Lower Tier Seveso Sites in the study area include- BOC Gases Little Island Co. Cork; Carbon Chemical Group Ltd Raheens Industrial Estate, Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork; Chemical Bulk Storage Ltd. Unit 19, Tivoli Industrial Estate, Tivoli, Co. Cork; Electricity Supply Board ESB Aghada Generating Station, 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.

The Councils will consult with the Health & Safety Authority when assessing proposals for development of, in or near sites which are identified under the COMAH (Seveso II) Directive.

Landslides

The study area has a low landslide risk as much of the county is low-lying ground. 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. Refer to **Figure 5.7**. There are five recorded landslide events within the study area.

Figure 5.7 GSI Landslide Susceptibility for the study area²⁷



5.3.3.3 Geology

Geological Heritage

The *Geological Survey of Ireland* (GSI) provides information available on bedrock, subsoil, aquifer classifications and vulnerability. GSI has assessed the geological heritage of County Cork and identified sites of geological and geomorphological importance. The bedrock foundation, with hundreds of millions of years in the formation and shaping, and the more recent history of geomorphological processes involving river channels and glaciers are what have created the underlying geological diversity, or geodiversity. The study area has a range of such natural and man-made sites.

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, Viséan limestone and calcareous shale, Namurian Shale, Sandstone, Siltstone & Coal²⁸.

The geological sites identified within the study area which are important Irish Geological Heritage (IGH) sites by GSI, are summarised in **Table 5.5** below. Geological Sites do not receive statutory protection like Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) but receive an effective protection from their inclusion in the planning system.

²⁷ GSI Spatial Resources - <https://dcnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aaac3c228>

²⁸ GSI Bedrock Geology - <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/publications/Pages/Bedrock-Geology-of-Ireland-Map-Scale-1-to-1-Million.aspx>

Table 5.5 Geological Heritage Sites within the study area²⁹

IGH Theme	Site Name	Site Code	Description
IGH 7	Inniscarra Bar	CC004	A face of gravels and other Quaternary deposits found behind the petrol station building
IGH 8	St. Joseph's Section	CC008	A roadside outcrop showing sub-vertical bedding planes
IGH 15	St. Fin Barre's Cathedral	CC007	An Anglican church built primarily from several local lithologies, and exhibiting rock sourced internationally
IGH 15	Shandon Tower	CC006	The striking tower of St Anne's Church, showcasing the city's two main lithologies
IGH 10	Patrick's Hill	CC005	An outcrop built into a wall at the side of the road
IGH 6	Blackrock Diamond Quarry	CC003	This historical quarry, where amethyst was found, has largely been built over, though some portions of quarry walls are still visible
IGH 7	Ballinlough Fields	CC001	Outcrop with signs of quarrying, and karst features
IGH 1	Beaumont Quarry	CC002	A partially revegetated quarry of historical importance in the city, with accessible cave systems

5.3.3.4 Existing Land, Soils, Geology & Hydrogeology Issues

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

- Soil - the loss / damage of soil from the construction of greenfield sites for development.
- Land Management - conversion of land / sites can release CO₂ 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, see Table 5.5.

5.3.4 Water Quality

Water is fundamental to all life; for humans, plants and animals alike. It is also critical in economic terms in generating and sustaining wealth in a number of key areas such as agriculture, fishing, power generation, industry, transport and tourism. However, it is also a fragile resource requiring continued protection. In general terms Ireland's waters are of good quality, however, preserving the high standard of water is essential for human health and the natural environment.

For the purposes of this section, the water environment is taken to include natural features such as lakes, rivers, streams and groundwater waterbodies. In addition flooding is also dealt within this section. The study area has a rich and extensive aquatic environment consisting of rivers, streams, harbour and ground waters.

Wastewater treatment and drinking water are discussed under Material Assets in **Section 5.3.6** below.

5.3.4.1 Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The *EU Water Framework Directive* (WFD) (2000/60/EC) establishes a framework for the protection of both surface water and groundwater waterbodies. Since 2000, Water Management in the EU has been

²⁹ GSI – The Geological Heritage of Cork City & County - <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/publications/Pages/The-Geological-Heritage-of-Cork-City.aspx> & <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/publications/Pages/Geoschol-Cork-Geology.aspx>

directed by the WFD 2000/60/EC, which was transposed into Irish law under the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003). This legislation requires governments to take a holistic approach to managing all their water resources based on natural geographic boundaries, *i.e.* the river catchment or basin. The WFD establishes a common framework for the sustainable and integrated management of all waters covering groundwater, inland surface waters, transitional waters and coastal waters. The WFD requires Member States to manage all of their waters and ensure that they achieve at least 'good status' by 2015 and beyond. The ultimate deadline for Member States for achievement of 'good' status is 2027 at the latest.

5.3.4.2 Surface Waterbodies

For the purpose of implementing the WFD, Ireland was divided into eight River Basin Districts (RBDs) or areas of land that are drained by a large river or number of rivers and the adjacent estuarine / coastal areas. The first cycle of the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) ran from 2009-2015, where the eight RBDs devised separate plans with the objective of achieving at least 'good' status for all waters by 2015.

The second cycle of the RBMP 2018-2021 merged all eight RBDs to form one national RBD. The RBMP sets out the actions that Ireland will take to improve water quality and achieve 'good' ecological status in waterbodies (rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters) by 2027. The third cycle of the RBMP 2022-2027 is currently being prepared by Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in line with the *EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC)*.

Water quality data is also collected by the EPA to provide an overall status of water quality. 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.

Water quality in Ireland has deteriorated over the past two decades. Overall, the water quality is declining and the number of water bodies in satisfactory condition (high or good status) across rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwaters has decreased under the last WFD monitoring cycle 2016-2021 as compared to the previous assessment which covered the period 2013-2018.

Table 5.6 below has a list of the **WFD Catchments** and **WFD Sub-Catchments** in the study area.

Table 5.6 WFD Catchments and Sub-Catchments within the study area

Catchment (WFD Catchment Code)	Sub-catchment Name (WFD Sub-catchment Code)
Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay (19)	Owenboy[Cork]_SC_010
	Glasheen[Corkcity]_SC_010
	Lee[Cork]_SC_050
	Lee[Cork]_SC_060
	Kiln_SC_010
	Manin_SC_010
	Glashaboy[L.Mahon]_SC_010
	Tibbotstown_SC_010
	Owennacurra_SC_010
	Womanagh_SC_010
	Farrannamanagh_SC_010

Catchment (WFD Catchment Code)	Sub-catchment Name (WFD Sub-catchment Code)
Blackwater (Munster) (18)	Tourig_SC_010
Bandon-Ilen (20)	Stick_SC_010
	Bandon_SC_060

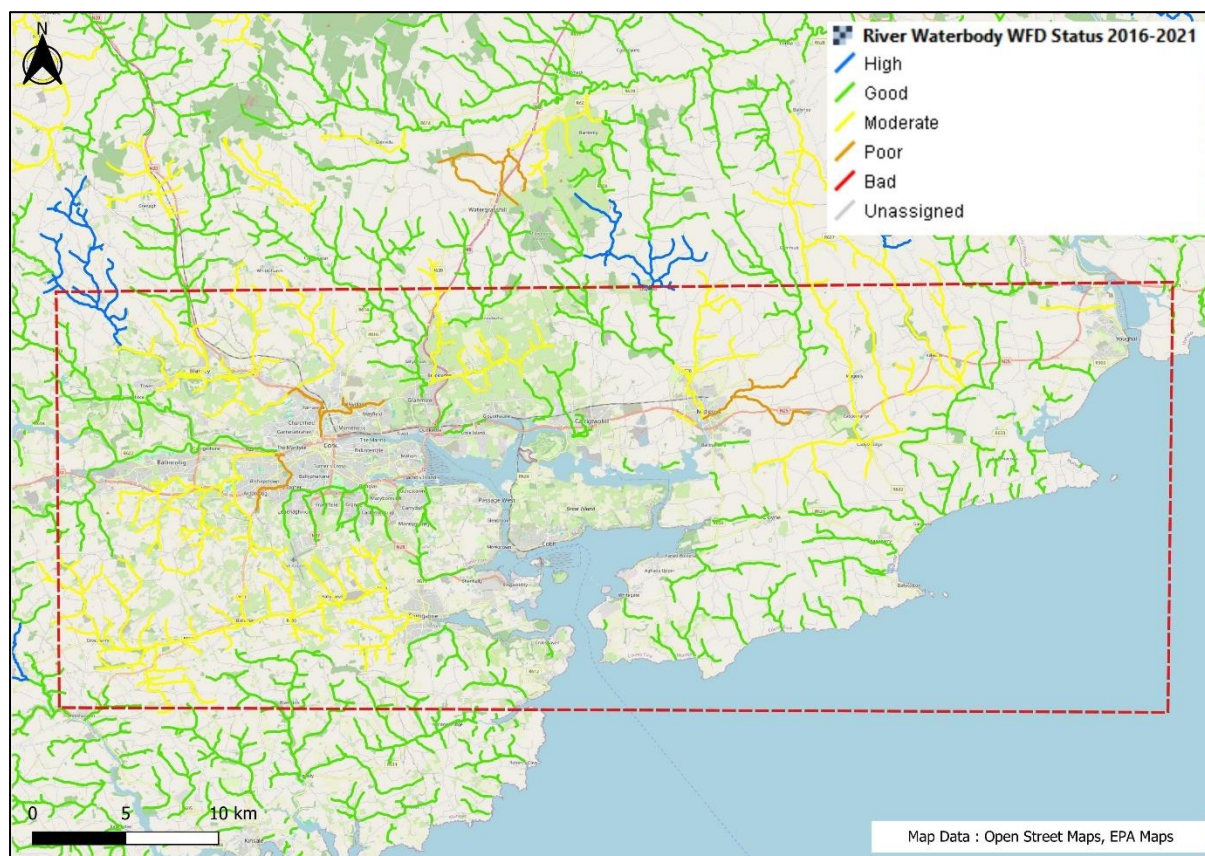
5.3.4.3 Surface Water Quality

The latest *Water Quality in Ireland* report 2016-2021 was published by the EPA in 2022. This report contains the most up-to-date and comprehensive assessment of the ecological health of Ireland’s groundwater, rivers, lakes, canals, transitional waters and coastal waters following the completion of the first six-year cycle of the WFD. The results shows that a considerable amount of work is still required to meet the environmental objectives of the WFD.

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*’.

The WFD water quality status of the river waterbodies within the study area is shown in **Figure 5.8** below.

Figure 5.8 WFD River Waterbody Status 2016-2021³⁰

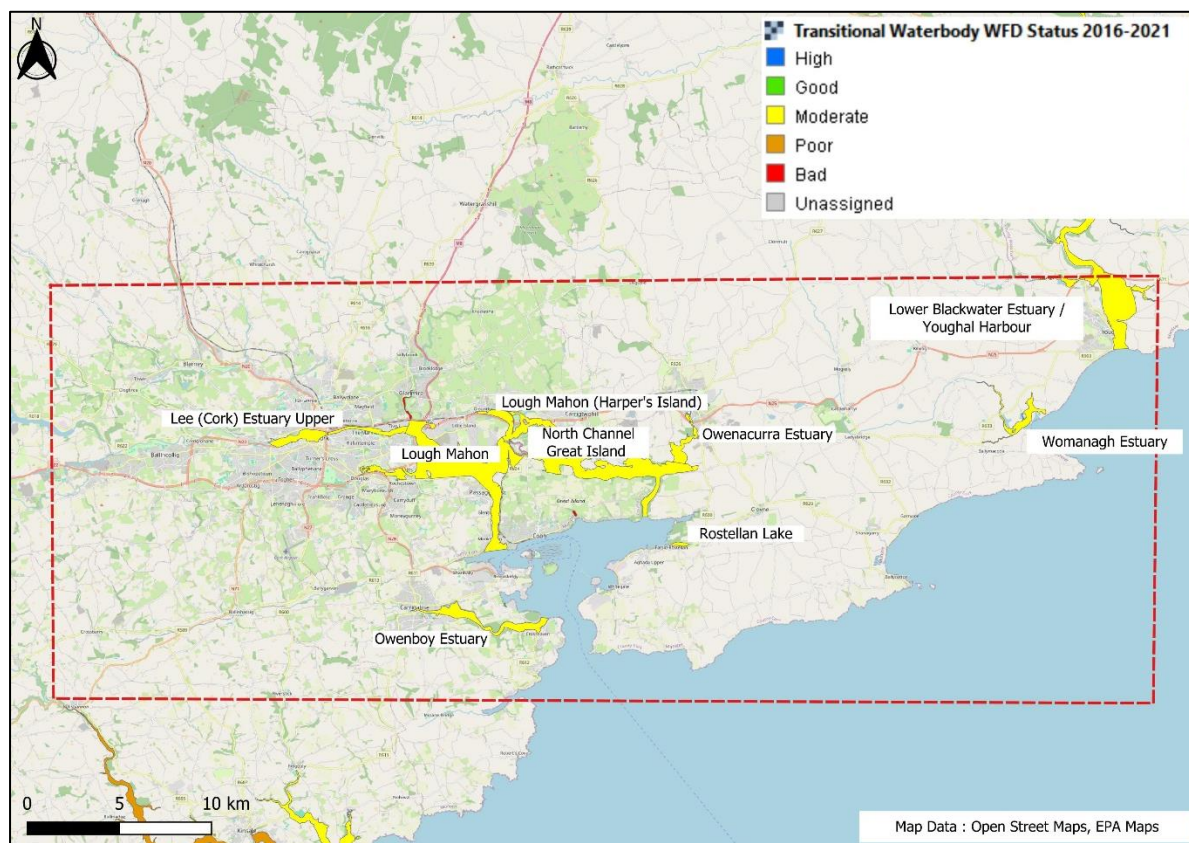


There is a part of Inniscarra Lake (IE_SW_19_138) (‘Good’ WFD status) within the study area which is designated WFD operational monitoring lakes.

³⁰ EPA Water Quality Data - <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

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). Refer to **Figure 5.9** below.

Figure 5.9 WFD Transitional Waterbody Status 2016-2021³¹



5.3.4.4 Groundwater and Aquifer Vulnerability

The *EU Groundwater Directive* (2006/118/EC) uses a holistic approach to groundwater by addressing the relationships between groundwater, surface water and ecological receptors.

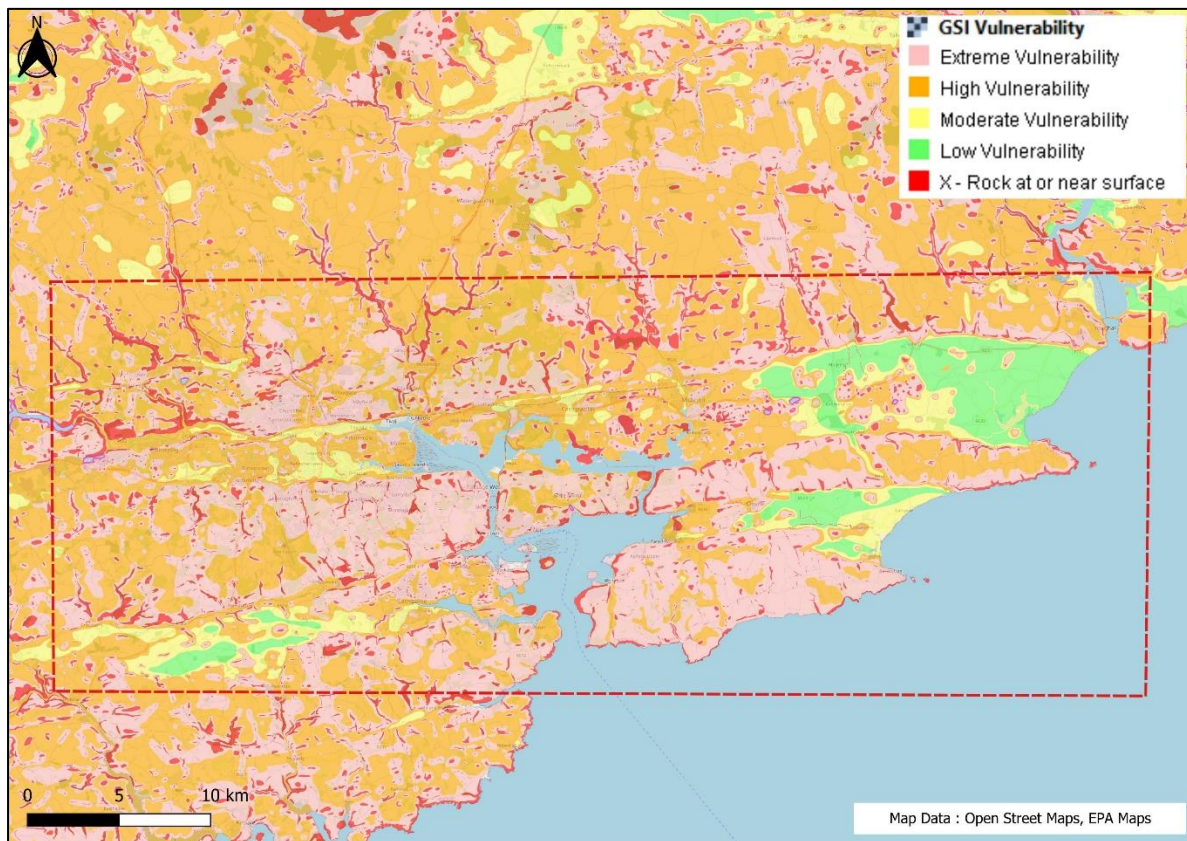
Groundwater Quality Status between 2016 and 2021 was generally ‘good’³² across the groundwater bodies in the study area, with the exception of one groundwater body that is Waste Facility (W0012-03) (IE_SW_G_091) which have a status of ‘poor’.

The groundwater vulnerability within the study area ranges from ‘low’ to ‘extreme’. The groundwater vulnerability within the study area is shown in **Figure 5.10** below.

³¹ EPA Water Quality Data - <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

³² EPA Groundwater Quality Data - <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

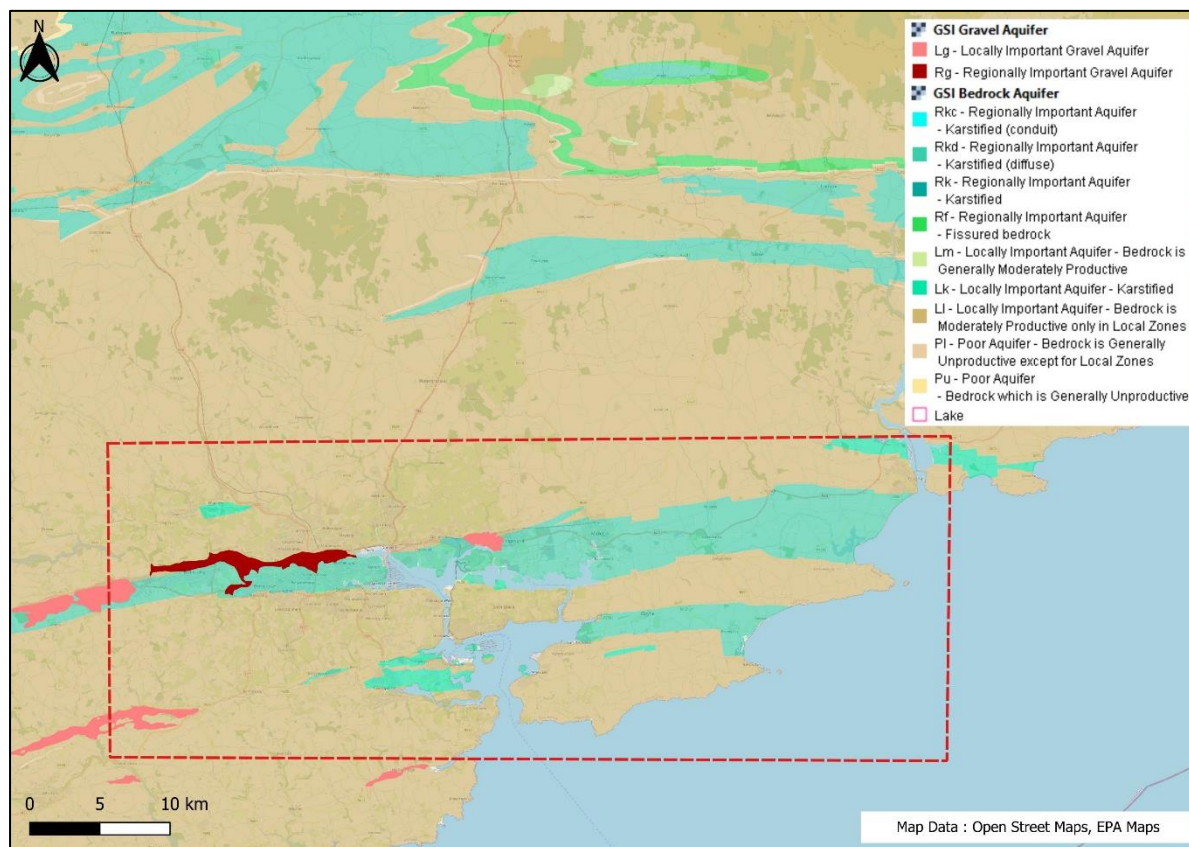
Figure 5.10 Groundwater Vulnerability in the study area³³



The GSI rates aquifers according to both their productivity and vulnerability to pollution. Aquifer vulnerability is the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter underground water. The study area is underlain with both regionally important and locally important bedrock & gravel aquifers. Refer to **Figure 5.11**.

³³ GSI Spatial Resources- <https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aaac3c228>

Figure 5.11 Bedrock and Gravel Aquifer within the study area³⁴



5.3.4.5 Flooding and Flood Risk

The underlying causes of flooding, heavy rain and high sea levels are, essentially uncontrollable. Floods are usually caused by a combination of events including overflowing river banks, heavy rains, coastal storms or blocked or overloaded drainage systems and an increase in development and impermeable surfacing.

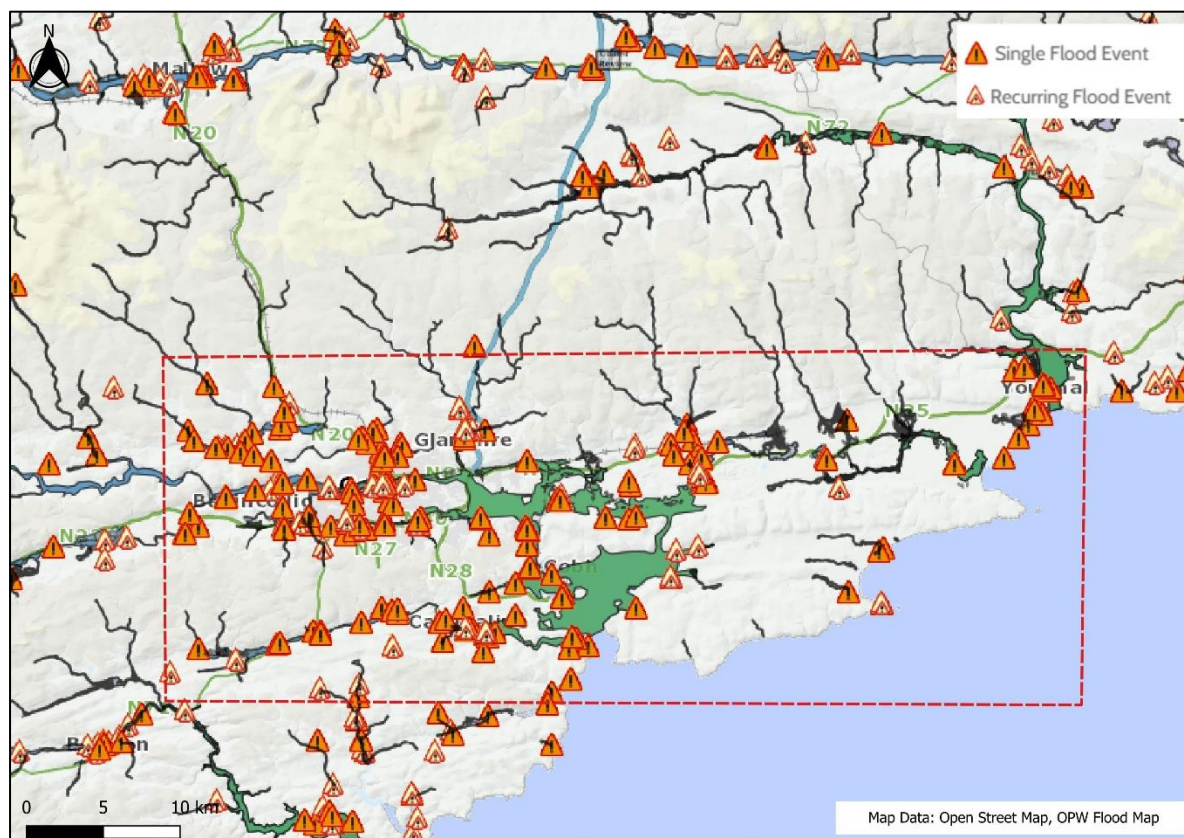
The Office of Public Works (OPW) is the lead State body for flood risk management. As part of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared. As per the SEA for the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, certain areas across the City are at risk from flooding from sources including groundwater, pluvial, fluvial and coastal. There is historic evidence of flooding in various locations across the City, including along the Rivers Blackwater, Bandon and Lee, Glashaboy Estuary, Lee Estuary and Lough Mahon.

The river flood events, coastal flood events and indicative fluvial flood mapping is presented below in Figure 5.12.

Any proposal that is considered acceptable in principle shall demonstrate the use of the sequential approach in terms of the site layout and design and, in satisfying the Justification Test (where required), the proposal will demonstrate that appropriate mitigation and management measures are put in place.

³⁴ GSI Spatial Resources- <https://dcnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aac3c228>

Figure 5.12 Flood events within the study area – coastal flood events in green, river flood events in blue and fluvial flood events in purple³⁵



5.3.4.6 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.
- 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

³⁵ OPW Flood Maps - <https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/>

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

5.3.5.1 Air Quality

Air quality legislation³⁶ in Ireland highlights the need *'to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole'*. In addition, it requires that Local Authorities where appropriate *'shall preserve through appropriate measures the best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development'*.

EU legislation on air quality requires that Member States divide their territory into zones for the assessment and management of air quality. The EPA manages the national ambient air quality monitoring network and measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants. 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. Four national air quality zones have been designated in Ireland, these are:

- Zone A is the Dublin conurbation;
- Zone B is the Cork conurbation;
- Zone C comprises of 23 large towns in Ireland with a population of >15,000; and
- Zone D is the remaining area of 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.

The air quality index for health (AQIH) regions are calculated on an hourly basis at various locations around Ireland. The AQIH is based on measurements of air pollutants which can harm health. The five pollutants are:

- Ozone gas;
- Nitrogen dioxide gas;
- Sulphur dioxide gas;
- PM_{2.5} particles; and
- PM₁₀ particles.

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 (NO₂). There is need to protect and improve (as appropriate), air quality in the study area, particularly in areas zoned for increased urban and transport related development.

³⁶ S.I. No. 739/2022 – Ambient Air Quality Standards Regulations 2022 - <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2022/si/739/made/en/print>

5.3.5.2 Noise

The objectives of EU and Irish noise legislation is ‘to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole’, and this includes noise nuisance. The Noise Directive - Environmental Noise Directive (END) 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing community policy on noise reduction from source. The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to:

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

The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities. 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 strategic noise maps are generated using noise modelling, which are the product of assimilating a collection of digital datasets. Strategic noise maps are available on the EPA website for Round 4 (2022), representing the annual average situation during 2021. The strategic noise maps include noise exposure levels for major roads, major rail, major airports and major cities and are available at EPA website³⁷.

During the implementation of the CDEDP, consideration should be given to protect, where relevant, any designated quiet areas in open country.

5.3.5.3 Climate

Climate Change is a phenomenon that has widespread economic, health and safety, food production, security, and other dimensions. Climate change refers to a long term, large scale change in global or regional climate patterns. In recent years, global temperatures have been rising. Urgent action is needed to address climate change and to move Ireland towards a low carbon, climate resilient economy and society.

The ever increasing rate of carbon dioxide combustion, and the emission of other greenhouse gases (GHG) such as methane and nitrous oxide since the industrial revolution, has resulted in the ‘greenhouse affect’. Most greenhouse gases emissions are related to the energy generation, transport, agriculture, and industry sectors.

In Ireland, the expected effects of Climate Change are increased frequency of extreme weather events within the next century. This will include a 20%-30% increase in precipitation, greater rainfall intensity coupled with flash floods and an average annual temperature increase of ~2°C. The potential impacts of Climate Change could have serious consequences for both people and infrastructure along Ireland’s coastal areas as well as its rivers³⁸.

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

³⁷ EPA Noise Maps - <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

³⁸ GOI (2019).

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 2023* sets out Ireland's national and sectoral targets in this regard. The Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan *provides a strong focus on amenity and recreation use, and the potential for sustainable slow tourism and strategic trails development, unlocking the regenerative and commercial potential within the region*³⁹.

The IPCC Working Group II Report, published in February 2022, assesses the impacts of climate change, looking at ecosystems, biodiversity, and human communities at global and regional levels, and is more relevant to reviewing vulnerabilities, and the capacities and limits of the natural world and human societies to adapt to climate change. The report states that economic damage from climate change has been detected in climate-exposed sectors, with regional effects on agriculture, forestry, fishing, energy, and tourism³⁸.

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.

Future changes in climate and associated impacts on sea level, rainfall patterns/intensity and river flow will influence flooding frequency and extent in the future. Local Authorities in compliance with the *Regional Planning Guidelines* are attempting to adopt sustainable flood risk strategies in areas likely to be at risk of flooding in the future in the context of climate change and changing weather patterns. Changes to climate could lead to an increase in flooding events in Ireland. The OPW has undertaken a number of *Flood Risk Management Studies* for different River Basin Districts (RBDs) in Ireland. These studies have identified the areas which are most at risk and future management plans have been advised; these are adopted by the OPW. In some cases, mitigation measures will involve the construction of physical flood defences.

The *Climate Action Plan* identifies actions to decarbonise electricity generation, the built environment and transport and to move towards carbon neutrality for agriculture, forest and land use sectors.

5.3.5.4 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 NO₂, particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM₁₀), 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.

³⁹ Climate Action Plan 2023 – <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/270956/94a5673c-163c-476a-921f-7399cdf3c8f5.pdf#page=null>

5.3.6 Material Assets

Material assets are resources that are valued and intrinsic to a development and the surrounding area. Material assets may be of either natural or human origin and the value may arise for economic or cultural reasons. Material assets include water supply, wastewater treatment infrastructure, waste disposal including recycling, transport infrastructure, energy, telecommunications and utilities infrastructure. The sustainable growth of the County is dependent on the provision of services and infrastructure.

5.3.6.1 Water Services and Water Supply

There have been significant changes in responsibilities for water supply and wastewater treatment services. As of January 2014 Uisce Éireann (formerly known as Irish Water) replaced local authorities as a single provider of water supply and wastewater services. Uisce Éireann have prepared the Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP), 'A Plan for the Future of Water Services' and it provides for the first time at national level an opportunity to consider the way water services are delivered in Ireland. The WSSP sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services up to 2040.

Uisce Éireann is responsible for providing and developing public water services; and ensuring drinking water quality meets the standards in the Drinking Water Regulations. The EPA is the drinking water quality regulator, responsible for enforcing the Drinking Water Regulations. Private bored wells used as a source of water supply to single dwellings are the responsibility of the householder, and are therefore not regulated and Uisce Éireann has no regulatory function in this regard.

The latest *Drinking Water Quality in Public Supplies 2022*⁴⁰ was published by the EPA in 2023. The report provides a summary of assessment of drinking water quality in public supplies and public group water schemes in Ireland during 2022.

Practical water conservation measures including active leakage detection, demand management and pressure management played and will continue to play a major role in reducing the demand for potable water, thus facilitating additional development and improving the level of service to existing consumers in the County through the existing watermain networks.

5.3.6.2 Wastewater Services

The Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) (amended by Directive 98/15/EEC) aims to protect the environment from the adverse effects of wastewater discharges by ensuring that wastewater is appropriately treated before it is discharged to the environment. Such treatment is essential in order to meet the requirements of the WFD.

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, Middleton, Cloyne, Ballycotton, Castlemartyr, Ladysbridge, Killeagh and Youghal⁴¹.

There have been significant advances in upgrading of wastewater treatment and disposal in recent year. The major project in this regard is the Cork Lower Harbour Main Drainage Scheme and wastewater from the agglomerations of Ringaskiddy-Crosshaven-Carrigaline, Ringaskiddy Village, Passage-Monkstown and Cobh town no longer discharges untreated to Cork harbour. The recently completed

⁴⁰ EPA Drinking Water Quality - <https://www.epa.ie/publications/compliance--enforcement/drinking-water/annual-drinking-water-reports/drinking-water-quality-in-public-supplies-2022.php>

⁴¹ EPA Maps – UWW Plant Locations (>500 p.e.)

Cork Lower Harbour Main Drainage Project will support economic growth and development in the area, increasing the potential for tourism and recreational activities and enhancing the amenity value of the Cork Harbour⁴².

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.

In un-serviced areas and outside the main settlements, the main method of sewage disposal is by means of individual septic tanks and proprietary wastewater treatment systems. For individual on-site wastewater treatment systems, the standards and guidance on design, operation and maintenance of on-site wastewater treatment systems as set out in the EPA Code of Practice for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) (2021), shall be complied with.

5.3.6.3 Waste Management

Waste management in Ireland is regulated by the Waste Management Acts 1996 (as amended), which require Local Authorities to prepare detailed plans for the management of waste. Under the Waste Management Acts, a Development Plan is deemed to include the objectives of the Waste Management Plan (WMP) for its area.

EU and National waste management policy can be summarised by the waste hierarchy of prevention, recycling, energy recovery and disposal. For the purposes of waste management planning, Ireland is now divided into three regions: Southern, Eastern-Midlands and Connacht-Ulster. The study area is located within the Southern Region. 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 Economy⁴³ was published in 2020 and outlines Ireland's National Waste Policy for 2020-2025.

The Council will continue to promote awareness of and promote an increase in the amount of waste that is re-used and recycled to reflect the objectives of the waste hierarchy.

5.3.6.4 Transport

The maintenance and delivery of an efficient, integrated and coherent transport network in line with national and regional policy is essential to the future economic, social and physical development of the County. Land-use planning and transport planning are inextricably linked and their proper integration is a key determinant to sustainable development. The Council's transport policy relates to active travel, road transport (including public transport) and rail transport as well as freight, ports and airport.

⁴² Uisce Éireann – Cork Lower Harbour Main Drainage project - <https://www.water.ie/projects/local-projects/cork-lower-harbour/>

⁴³ DCCA (2020).

'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. This policy sets out 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.

The Policy aims to improve the delivery of sustainable mobility by –

- *Implementing the accompanying action plan to 2025 and a reviewed and updated action plan for 2026 to 2030.*
- *Establishing a Leadership Group to oversee and drive implementation of the Policy and delivery of the action plan, and agree a programme of "pathfinder" projects at local level.*
- *Introducing a new annual National Household Travel Survey to measure progress against the Policy's targets.*
- *Convening a new National Sustainable Mobility Forum to provide a platform for collaborative engagement with national, regional and local stakeholders.*
- *Increasing public engagement around the benefits of sustainable mobility and raising awareness of the availability of alternative options to the private car.*
- *Establishing a new National Transport Authority Advisory Council to engage with the NTA around the discharge of its functions.*
- *Developing a transport research network to support existing research programmes and draw on the sustainable mobility expertise available across academia and industry, both in Ireland and internationally.*

The national road network caters for the efficient and safe movement of long-distance traffic. The network also provides strategic links for the towns within the county and within the South-west region as a whole. The improved provision of alternatives to the private car should bring about a reduction in demand for private car journeys and a commensurate increase in public transport, walking and cycling. Providing public transport and a network of safe, well-lit and convenient footpaths and cycleways within local neighbourhood centres, public transport stops and workplaces will encourage walking and cycling.

The development of public transport is critical in achieving more sustainable travel patterns and a reduced reliance on the car. 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.

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.

It is Council policy to support cycling and walking tourism initiatives, in tandem with the development of greenways and blueways in the County⁴⁴. The development of cycle and walking tourism presents a particular opportunity to bring the economic benefits of tourism to the rural areas of Ireland.

⁴⁴ Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 - <https://www.corkcoco.ie/sites/default/files/2022-06/volume-1-main-policy-material.pdf>

5.3.6.5 Energy

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.

5.3.6.6 Telecommunications

High-speed broadband and telecommunications is core to competitiveness. The National Broadband Plan 2019⁴⁵ (NBP) sets out the strategy to deliver high speed broadband throughout Ireland. Ireland has made significant progress in recent years in terms of broadband connectivity at all levels: international connectivity, backhaul networks, Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) and local access networks. Since its publication, significant investment has been made in upgrading and modernising networks which support the provision of broadband and telecommunications services, with significant additional investment expected over the coming years. The '*Harnessing Digital – The Digital Ireland Framework*' (2022) is intended to assist Ireland in maximising the socio-economic benefits from the digitisation trend.

5.3.6.7 Utilities

Gas and electricity are the energy utilities which have traditionally supported homes and businesses across the County.

ESB Networks and EirGrid are the utility providers responsible for the electricity distribution and transmission systems. EirGrid manages the higher capacity electricity network which supplies power to industry and businesses that use large amounts of energy and electricity, whilst the ESB manages and operates the distribution network supplying electricity to homes, businesses, schools and institutions.

Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) are the utility provider responsible for the supply, transmission and distribution of natural gas. In terms of gas infrastructure in Cork, Bord Gáis Energy (a privately owned company since 2014) owns the 445MW energy efficient Power Generation Plant in Whitegate, Co. Cork which can power up to 400,000 homes. Gas Infrastructure has as an important role to play in the development of renewable energy. It can facilitate future renewable energy development by providing reserve fuel for heat and power facilities otherwise provided by renewable resources, in a local and national context. Cork Harbour is the most significant port outside Dublin's and this infrastructure will support the development and future maintenance of offshore energy resources. Cork Airport also facilitates the support of oil and gas infrastructure off the coast⁴⁶.

Public lighting is an important component of placemaking and is essential for the operation of the city. While the city is generally an illuminated area, excessive light pollution can arise when external lighting is not properly designed or managed. Insensitive lighting can cause light pollution. Light pollution can have a negative impact on biodiversity by affecting the normal diurnal patterns of plants and animals.

5.3.6.8 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.

⁴⁵ DCCAE, 2019: <https://www.dccae.gov.ie/documents/Delivering%20the%20National%20Broadband%20Plan.pdf>

⁴⁶ Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 - <https://www.corkcoco.ie/sites/default/files/2022-06/volume-1-main-policy-material.pdf>

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 CO₂, 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

The physical traces left in the landscape by previous generations in archaeological monuments and sites and in historic buildings, townscapes and vernacular structures forms part of the tangible cultural heritage linking the past and present. County Cork has a rich and varied built and cultural heritage resource that includes ancient sites, villages and townscapes. Cork's significant archaeological heritage provides a valuable cultural, educational and tourism resource. Cork City is one of the oldest cities in Ireland and has a rich archaeological record.

The archaeological heritage of an area includes structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, moveable objects, monuments of other types as well as their context, whether situated on or under land or water.

The *National Monuments Acts 1930-2014* provide for the protection of archaeological heritage. The *Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)* was established under *Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994* and structures, features, objects or sites listed in this Record are known as Recorded Monuments.

Cork has a wide and magnificent range of archaeological sites that date back over 9000 years ago. These sites include: prehistoric tombs, mines, ritual sites, Early Christian Ringforts and monasteries, medieval castles, churches, and abbeys. There are over 19,000 archaeological sites identified in County Cork and are identified in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). The Sites and Monuments Record is an online database maintained by the National Monuments Services (NMS) of all known or suspected archaeological sites and monuments.

The main method of protection of archaeological heritage is through the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) which was established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. A number of monuments are designated National Monuments, these tend to be in State or Local

Authority ownership/guardianship or are subject to a preservation order. Cork County has 168 sites designated as National Monuments.

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.

Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and it is defined as a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures. ACAs can be entire streetscapes, designed landscape associated with a country house, medieval towns, industrial complexes, designed open spaces, religious complexes and so forth. The special character of an ACA is made up of its architectural features, setting, spatial qualities and land uses.

The 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, Castlevue Terrace 1-11, Lower Glanmire Road, Coburg Street and Saint Patrick's Hill,

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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.

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

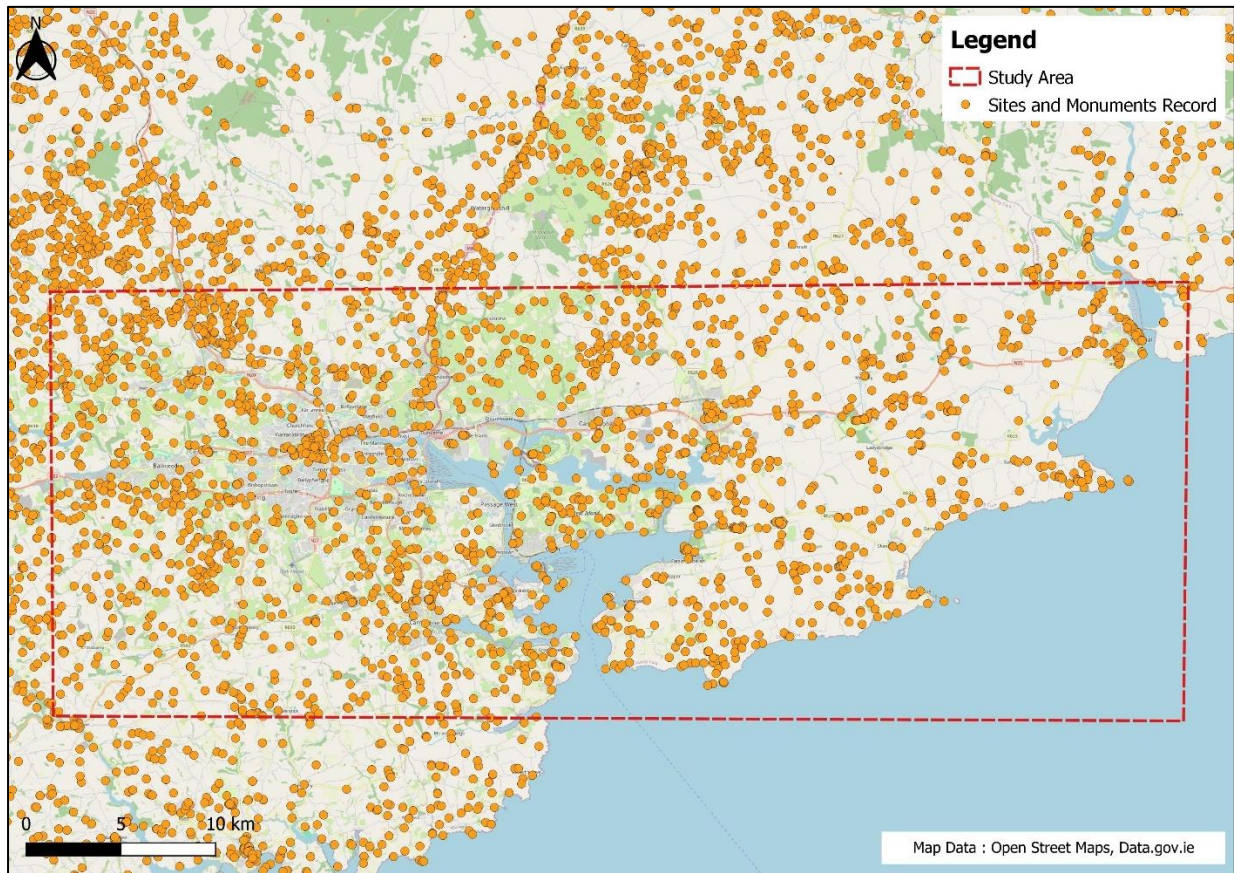
A *Protected Structure*, unless otherwise stated in the RPS, includes:

- the interior of the structure;
- the land lying within its curtilage;
- any other structures within the curtilage, and their interiors; and
- all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any of these structures.

Owners or occupiers of a protected structure may request the Council to issue a declaration as to the type of works, which may or may not be permitted in their structure. The record of protected structures within the study area are presented in **Figure 5.13** and **Figure 5.14** below.

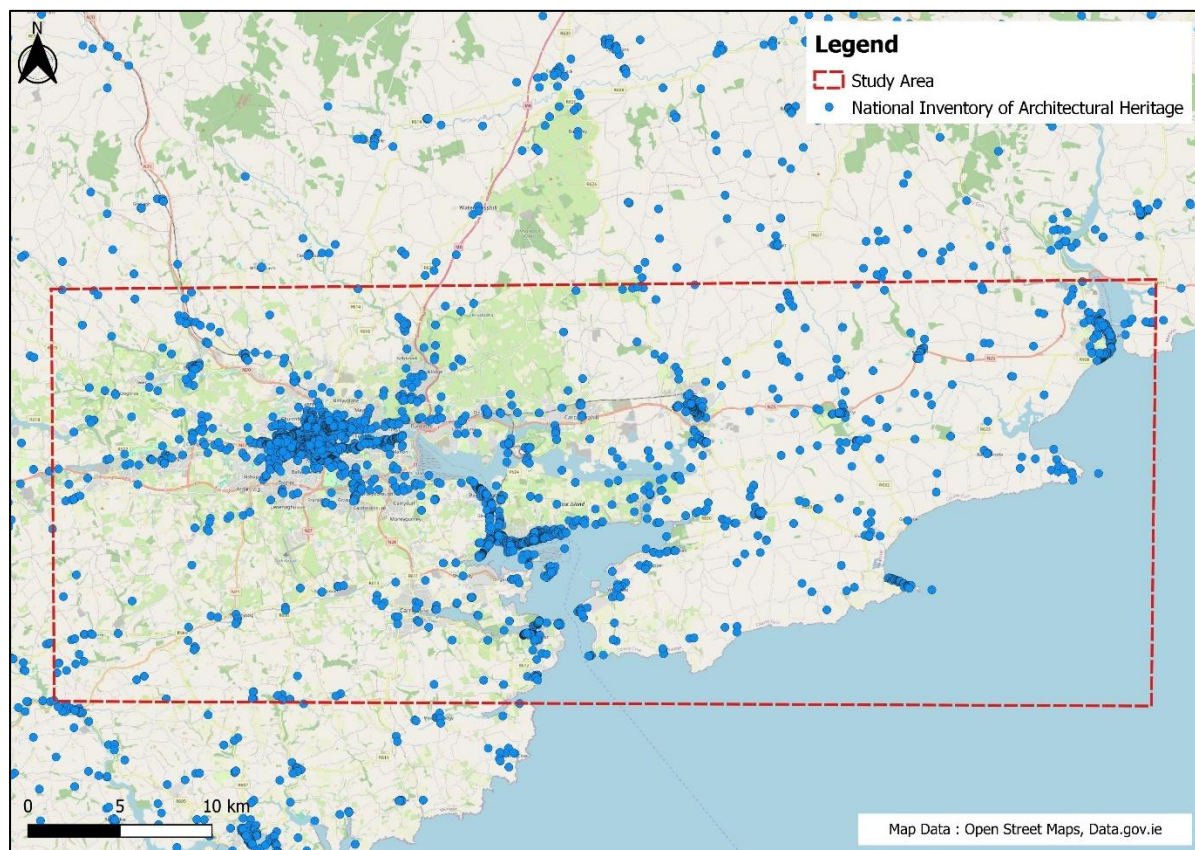
A positive approach to heritage management enhances quality of life and environmental sustainability and ensures that the cultural and natural heritage is a resource that helps the County to compete as a cultural tourism destination.

Figure 5.13 Map of the Sites and Monuments Record within the study area⁴⁷



⁴⁷ National Monuments Service – Archaeological Survey of Ireland - <https://data.gov.ie/dataset/national-monuments-service-archaeological-survey-of-ireland>

Figure 5.14 Map of the Architectural Heritage Sites within the study area⁴⁸



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.

⁴⁸ National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) National Dataset - <https://data.gov.ie/dataset/national-inventory-of-architectural-heritage-niah-national-dataset>

5.3.8 Landscape & Visual

Landscape is defined as an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors (European Landscape Convention). Cork's landscape forms a key aspect of the character of the City, its urban towns, villages and suburbs. The coastal and countryside landscapes of County Cork are a key green infrastructure asset not only for their intrinsic value as places of natural beauty but also because of their importance in terms of recreation, tourism and other uses.

A National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025⁴⁹ was published, in line with Ireland's obligations under the European Landscape Convention. The key objectives of this Strategy are the recognition of landscape in law and the provision of a policy framework to put measures in place for the management and protection of landscape, the production of a national Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) through data gathering and an evidence based description of character assessment, raising awareness and public consultation.

5.3.8.1 Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a process that describes maps and classifies landscapes. Landscape character is defined as '*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse*'. Defining landscape character enables an understanding to be formed of the inherent value and importance of individual landscape elements and the processes that may alter landscape character in the future. The cultural and ecological aspects of the landscape cannot be divorced from its physical and visual characteristics so all of these elements are considered.

Seascape Assessment is an extension of landscape character assessment and with 1,100km of coastline; seascape is a crucial element of the County's history, identity and culture. A number of changes have been occurring along coastlines including the need for coastal protection works, upgrading and proposals for new ports, marinas, proposals for aquaculture schemes and investigation of wind energy and other renewable energy projects offshore.

5.3.8.2 Landscape Character Types

Landscape Character Types (LCT) are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character and are generic in nature in that they may occur in different localities throughout the country. Nonetheless, where they do occur, they commonly share similar combinations of geology, topography, land cover and historical land use, e.g. Hills and Upland Areas.

The LCA for County Cork divides the county into 16 main LCTs. The 7 LCTs included with the study area include⁵⁰:

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

⁴⁹ National Landscape Strategy: <https://www.chg.gov.ie/app/uploads/2015/07/N-Landscape-Strategy-english-Web.pdf>

⁵⁰ Landscape character assessment for Co. Cork- <https://www.corkcoco.ie/sites/default/files/2022-06/volume-1-main-policy-material.pdf>

Landscape Character Areas are units of the landscape that are geographically specific and have their own character and sense of place. Each has its own distinctive character, based upon patterns of geology, landform, landuse, cultural, historical and ecological features. The landscape character areas and types are shown in **Figure 5.15** below.

5.3.8.3 Landscape Character Values

Landscape values can be described as the environmental or cultural benefits (including services and functions) derived from various landscape attributes. The Landscape Character Assessment highlights the special landscape value of several of the Landscape Character Areas—refer to **Figure 5.16** for areas of high landscape value. Areas of High Landscape Value display an intrinsic landscape character and a special amenity value.

Within these High Value Landscapes considerable care will be needed to successfully locate large scale developments without them becoming unduly obtrusive. Therefore, the location, siting and design of large-scale developments within these areas will need careful consideration and any such developments should generally be supported by an assessment including a visual impact assessment which would involve an evaluation of visibility and prominence of the proposed development in its immediate environs and in the wider landscape.

5.3.8.4 Landscape Character Sensitivity

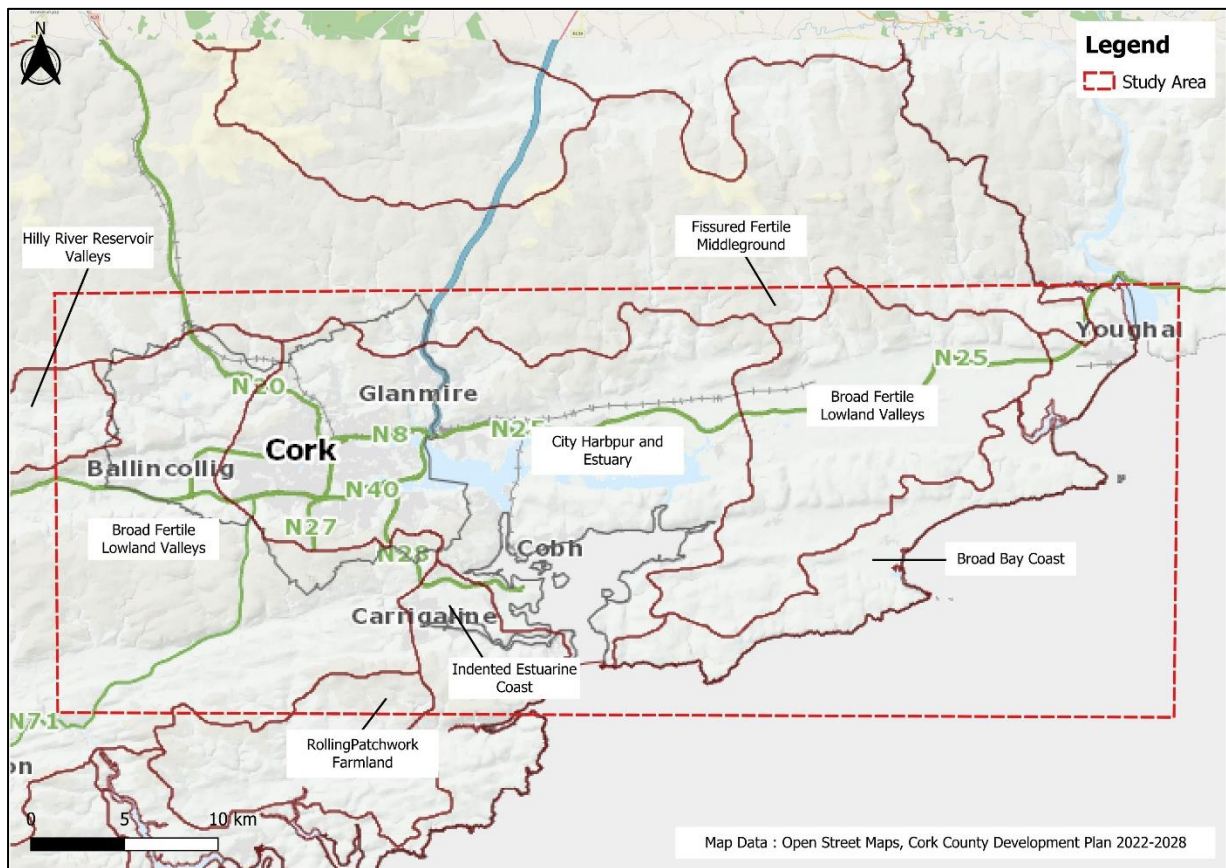
The sensitivity of the Landscape Character Areas is defined as its overall resilience to sustain its character in the face of change and its ability to recover from loss or damage to its components. Sensitivity is evaluated using criteria ranging from ‘Very High’ to ‘Low’ and is based on the interaction of individual components such as landform, amount of evident historical features (time depth) and distribution of viewers. A highly sensitive landscape is likely to be vulnerable, fragile and susceptible to change whereas a landscape with low sensitivity is likely to be more robust and / or tolerant of change. Very high sensitivity landscapes are extra vulnerable landscapes (e.g. seascape area with national importance) which are likely to be fragile and susceptible to change.

5.3.8.5 Protected Views & Prospects

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.

Scenic routes highlight the quality of the overall environment and landscape experienced within Cork County. It is important to protect the character and quality of particular stretches of scenic routes that have special views and prospects particularly those associated with High Value Landscapes. Refer to **Figure 5.16** below for scenic routes within the study area.

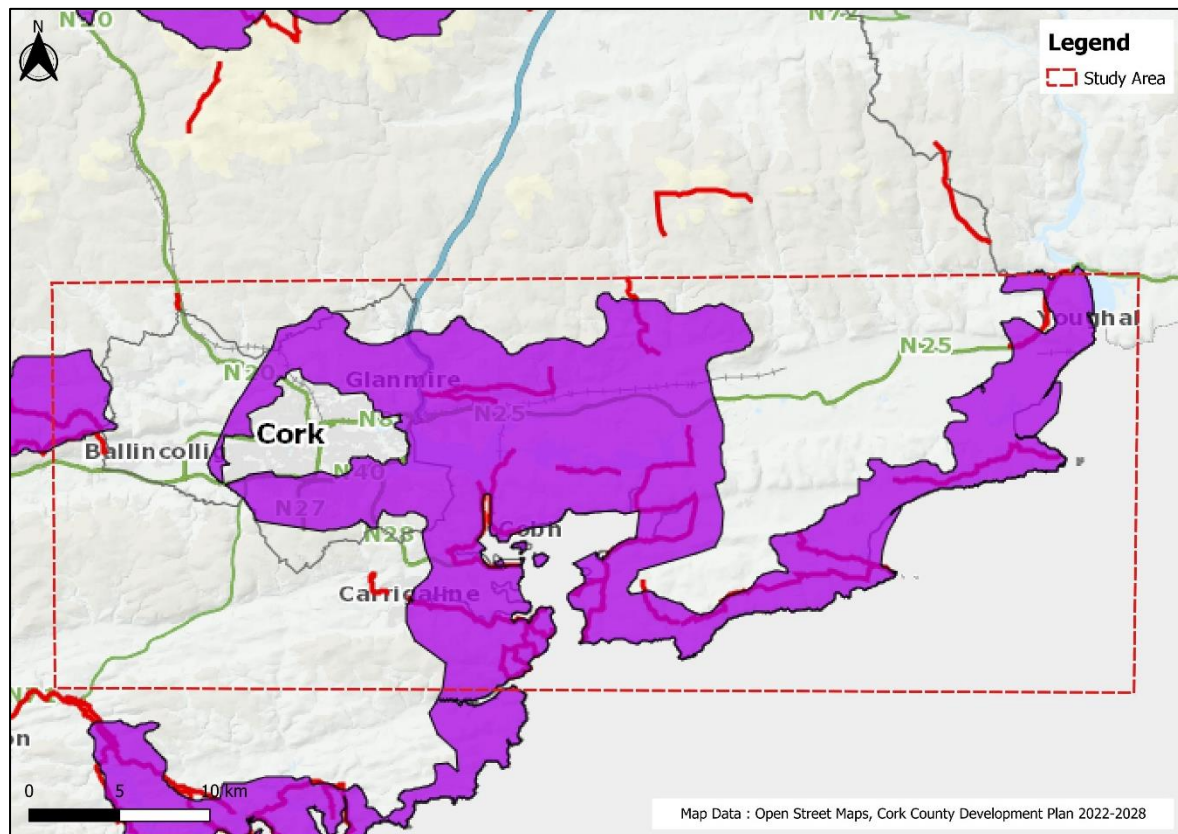
Figure 5.15 Landscape Character Types within the study area⁵¹



⁵¹ Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 -

<https://corkcocoer.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b19f8b17dca5474aa2ce1f961ae0fa8d>

Figure 5.16 Areas of high value landscape (in purple) and scenic routes (in red) within the study area⁵²



5.3.8.6 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.
- 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

⁵² Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 - <https://corkcocoer.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b19f8b17dca5474aa2ce1f961ae0fa8d>

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. These high-level SEOs are paired with specific targets which can be monitored using indicators (see **Section 10** of this Report).

Table 6.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) for Draft 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 ⁵³ 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.

⁵³ ‘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.

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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 Assessment of Alternatives

Three reasonable alternatives for the CDEDP have been identified and assessed as set out in **Table 7.1**. The potential effects of the reasonable alternatives on the SEOs categorised as follows:

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

7.5 Reasoning for Selection of the Preferred Alternative

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

Table 7.1 Assessment of Alternatives for the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork DEDP

Reasonable Alternative	Description	SEO	Environmental Assessment	Environmental Evaluation
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.	All SEOs	+/-	In comparison to other alternatives, this alternative could give rise to potential uncertain or unplanned environmental effects across all environmental factors. It is likely that this alternative will not realise the wider stakeholder benefits that would be achieved with from a coordinated plan approach. In comparison to other alternatives, this approach may generate uncertain or negative environmental effects, which would not be counterbalanced by the positive environmental effects associated with other alternatives.
Alternative 2A Do-something Prepare a Plan with Environmental Considerations	Tourism operations in Cork City and County would be facilitated, promoted, supported and coordinated through the preparation of a Plan, with environmental considerations, that seeks to better manage tourism in Cork City and County	All SEOs	+	In comparison to other alternatives, this alternative could give rise to protection of the environment across all environmental factors. At the same time this alternative will also realise the wider stakeholder benefits that would be achieved with from a coordinated plan approach. In comparison to other alternatives, this approach would generate positive environmental effects.
Alternative 2B Do-something Prepare a Plan without Environmental Considerations	Tourism operations in Cork City and County would be facilitated, promoted, supported and coordinated through the preparation of a Plan, without environmental considerations, that seeks to better manage tourism in Cork City and County	All SEOs	+/- or -	While it is likely that this alternative will realise the wider stakeholder benefits that would be achieved with from a coordinated plan approach, in comparison to other alternatives, this alternative could give rise to potential uncertain, unplanned or negative environmental effects across all environmental factors. In comparison to other alternatives, this approach would generate negative environmental effects.

8 Assessment of Effects of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft 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 – 2028⁵⁴ and Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028⁵⁵, 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 Objectives of the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

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

⁵⁴ Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028- <https://www.corkcity.ie/en/cork-city-development-plan/>

⁵⁵ Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 - <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/resident/planning-and-development/cork-county-development-plan-2022-2028>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Table 8.1 Environmental Assessment of Strategic Objectives of the Draft 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>Vision</p> <p>The Destination Vision (10 year vision) for CDEDP is:</p> <p><i>“Cork City is a year round leisure tourism destination recognised for the energy of its communities, great cultural experiences and Ireland’s Capital of Food. It is home to a world class Cork Harbour experience accessed by the Lee, City and Harbour Way network of trails, greenways and on water experiences. The vibrant tourism towns of East Cork have become the gateways to activity, food and attractions clusters contributing to its profile as a family destination.”</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>PHH (PHH1, PHH2)</p>			<p>B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2), LV (LV_1, LV2)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>RTDS Strategic Objective 1: Motivate the domestic and international consumer to visit Cork and Ireland’s Ancient East</p>						
<p>1.1 Develop the “Lee, City and Harbour Way” Experience Corridors linking the</p>	<p>This goal will result in positive effects on population and human</p>	<p>PHH (PHH1, PHH2)</p>	<p>B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), MA (MA1,</p>	<p>CH (CH1, CH2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2),</p>		<p>Yes</p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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>destination’s cultural, natural and built heritage experiences.</p>	<p>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 & soils, landscape and visual, material assets and air & 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</p>		<p>MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)</p>			

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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>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>					
<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 & soils, landscape and visual, material assets and air & 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</p>	<p>PHH (PHH1, PHH2)</p>	<p>B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)</p>	<p>CH (CH1, CH2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2),</p>		<p>Yes</p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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>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>					
<p>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>	<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</p>	<p>PHH (PHH1, PHH2)</p>		<p>B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)</p>		<p>Yes</p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
	and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.					
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.	<p>This goal will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <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>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2) ANC (ANC1, ANC2), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
1.5 Enhance the cultural visitor experience in Cork to support the continued development of Cork's status as an international city of culture.	<p>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</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		CH (CH1, CH2) B (B1, B2, B3),	LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)	Yes

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
	on the remaining environmental themes and SEOs will be neutral.					
1.6 Contribute to tourism season extension through the existing calendar of events and festivals.	<p>This goal will result in positive effects on population.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the use of visitor attractions and public spaces presents a variety of potentially 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.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
RTDS Strategic Objective 2: Provide the visitor with more reasons to stay, increasing the economic impact of tourism in Cork						
2.1. Grow the capacity of established visitor attractions across the destination to be key contributors to destination recovery and future growth.	<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</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
	both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. This could also result in increased visitor numbers and pressure.					
2.2 Establish the food in tourism opportunity for Cork City to become the national Capital of Food and gateway to the largest concentration of artisan producers in Ireland.	<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>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)	No
2.3 Grow the capacity of Cork City to become a vibrant year-round evening time economy destination.	<p>This goal will result in positive effects on population.</p> <p>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.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
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.	<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 hubs and/or their ancillary infrastructure.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
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>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
RTDS Strategic Objective 3: Ensure the destination is easy to access, navigate and consume						
3.1 Build on the tourism opportunity for local communities and trail heads	The development of new and existing greenways, trails and walking and cycling routes, including	PHH (PHH1, PHH2), MA (MA3)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1,		Yes

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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>through the development of the MY Greenway.</p>	<p>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.</p> <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>LV2), MA (MA1, MA2), CH (CH1, CH2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2)</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</p>	<p>This goal will result in positive effects on population and human health and on material assets by promoting sustainable transportation.</p>	<p>PHH (PHH1, PHH2), MA (MA3)</p>		<p>B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1,</p>		<p>Yes</p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
route and the proposed National Cycle Network.	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 visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.			MA2), CH (CH1, CH2)		
3.3 Conduct feasibility analysis to establish the requirements to create a Cork to Dublin Greenway in partnership with TII and LA's.	This goal will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive or neutral effects on the environmental themes and SEOs. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise and therefore, mitigation is not required.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2), MA (MA3)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), MA (MA1, MA2), CH (CH1, CH2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2)	No
3.4 Create the linkages across the "Lee, City, Harbour Way" to integrate on land and on water exploration of the destination	This goal will result in positive effects on population and human health and on material assets by	PHH (PHH1, PHH2), MA (MA3)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1,		Yes

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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>from the river, harbour to greenways.</p>	<p>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 visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast.</p>			<p>MA2), CH (CH1, CH2)</p>		
<p>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>	<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</p>	<p>PHH (PHH1, PHH2)</p>		<p>B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)</p>		<p>Yes</p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
	also result in increased footfall in sensitive areas.					
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 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>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
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.						
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	<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</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
Harbour and East Cork communities.	potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.					
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.	This goal will support in raising awareness regarding tourism opportunities in Cork and promote collaboration for effective working. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	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.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
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.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
4.5 Develop the community capacity of harbour towns and	This goal will enhance tourism opportunities for the county and	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1,		Yes

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
villages to attract and retain visitors and prepare them for the opportunities arising from current and future capital investment.	<p>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>			WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		
RTDS Strategic Objective 5: Build committed stakeholder and industry partnerships to guide sustainable destination development.						
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.	<p>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.</p> <p>No specific projects are associated with the statement, and therefore the effect on the remaining environmental themes and SEOs will be neutral.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
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.	<p>This goal will enhance tourism opportunities for the county and have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.</p>	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)	No

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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
5.3 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.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)			B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)	No
5.4 Influence sustainable tourism development to become a key element of the Cork visitor experience and the creation of a strong responsible tourism destination proposition.	This goal will result in positive effects across the majority of SEOs for environmental factors. No negative or uncertain environmental effects arise.	B (B1, B2, B3), PHH (PHH1, PHH2), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)				No

8.3 Environmental Assessment of the Catalyst Projects listed within the Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft 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 and destination enablers is detailed in **Appendix 1**.

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** for the detailed assessment of effects of the catalyst projects and destination enablers.

Mitigation measures are presented further in Section 9.

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	✓	✓	✗	✗		✓	✓	✗

Component \ Effect	Biodiversity	Population & Human Health	Land, Soils & Geology	Water Quality	Air Quality, Noise and Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape & Visual
Material Assets	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓		✗	✗
Cultural Heritage	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓		✓
Landscape & Visual	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Legend: 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 have also been 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 or 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 4th 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>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan SEA Environmental Report

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

8.6 Overview

The environmental assessment of the provisions of the CDEDP (**Section 8**) identifies potential uncertain effects on the environment as set out in **Table 8.1**. Much of this relates to uncertainty in the likely outcome of objectives and the potential nature and scope of any development, which may or may not, derive from the implementation of catalyst projects and the Plan. Therefore, measures are detailed in the following which will set the context for the avoidance and / or reduction of any such potential environmental effects.

In working with the SEA process, the Plan acknowledges the requirement for any development to adhere to best practice in terms of environmental governance. Indeed protection and enhancement of the environment is a critical pillar underpinning the core objectives and success of the CDEDP.

In this context any proposals for development arising from the CDEDP must meet the proper planning and sustainable development policies, objectives and development management provisions of the statutory Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 and Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028.

9 Mitigation Measures

9.1 Overview

The finding of the environmental assessment in **Section 8.0** (and Appendix 1) 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**.

As stated in the CDEDP these include:

- **Infrastructure Management** - *With respect to infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, surface water, waste and transport) consideration must be given to the available capacity and the potential impact on existing infrastructure, as well as the potential environmental effects arising from the provision of new infrastructure and / or from a likely increase in tourism-related pressures. Any such environmental effects will be appropriately mitigated. The promotion of developing visitor friendly infrastructure where it is required is encouraged.*
- **Visitor Management** - *Those receiving funding will be requested to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that new projects are located at a suitable setback from ecological sensitivities.*
Research by Fáilte Ireland has shown improved environmental outcomes (including improved attainment of conservation objectives) in areas operating appropriate visitor management strategies. Visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.
- **Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services** - *Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services, taking into account the output of the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services project being undertaken by the NPWS. Proposals for the development of any green infrastructure should demonstrate the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the: provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; the enhancement, protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protection of landscape sensitivities.*

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Consideration and implementation for all environmental mitigation measures as set out in Irelands Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy will also be considered a requirement as appropriate.

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 include the following selected aims / policies / objectives as detailed in **Table 9.1** below.

Table 9.1 Protective objectives as detailed in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 and Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
Protective Objectives	Protective Objectives
Biodiversity (including Flora & Fauna)	
<p><i>SO5 – Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Space and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Manage and enhance green and blue infrastructure, to protect and promote biodiversity, ecology and habitat connectivity, protect natural areas, enhance landscape character and maritime heritage, and manage access to green and blue spaces that provide recreation, amenity and natural areas.</i></p>	<p><i>MCI 7-3 Integrated Coastal Zone Management</i></p> <p><i>(a) Support the development of an integrated approach to coastal zone management in Ireland generally and in particular to foster the application of this concept in appropriate coastal zones throughout the County including Cork Harbour.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 6.1 – Cork City Green & Blue Infrastructure Study and Strategy</i></p> <p><i>To manage, protect and enhance the Green and Blue Infrastructure assets of Cork City in line with the Cork City Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy set out in the Development Plan, and to support the actions, opportunities and projects identified in the Cork City Green and Blue Infrastructure Study 2021.</i></p>	<p><i>MCI 7-5 Marine Leisure</i></p> <p><i>(a) Support the development of rural Cork’s coastal marine leisure facilities, where they are compatible with other objectives and policies in this Plan and any Natura 2000 designations.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Proposals for development of marine leisure facilities will be subject to ecological impact assessment and, where necessary, Appropriate Assessment, with a view to ensuring the avoidance of negative impacts on designated sites, protected species and on-sites or locations of high biodiversity value.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 6.5 Trees & Urban Woodland</i></p> <p><i>a. To protect and enhance the City’s tree and urban woodlands in public and private ownership. Cork City Council will seek to survey, map and maintain existing important individual and groups of trees, using Tree Preservation Orders as appropriate;</i></p> <p><i>b. To encourage the planting of new urban woodlands and trees where appropriate throughout the City and particularly where there are deficiencies</i></p>	<p><i>MCI 7-7 Designated Bathing Areas</i></p> <p><i>Support and protect Designated Bathing Areas as valuable local amenities and as an important tourism and local recreation resource and continue to work with local communities to identify appropriate new Bathing Areas for monitoring. Encourage the provision of the water services infrastructure required to maintain and improve water quality in these areas having regard to water quality, access, environmental and other sensitives when identifying / developing new recreational bathing areas.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>in tree coverage as identified in the Cork City Green and Blue Infrastructure Study;</i></p> <p><i>c. To support the preparation of a City Tree Strategy which provides a vision for long-term planting, protection and maintenance of trees, hedgerows and woodlands;</i></p> <p><i>d. To support retaining existing trees and the planting of new trees as part of new developments subject to care on the species of tree and the siting and management of the trees to avoid conflict with transport safety and residential amenity in particular;</i></p> <p><i>e. To promote the planting of pollinator friendly native deciduous trees and mixed forestry to benefit biodiversity</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 6.6 Rivers, Waterway and Wetlands</i></p> <p><i>a. To protect and maintain the integrity, and maximise the potential, of the natural heritage and biodiversity value of rivers, associated watercourses and wetlands in Cork City, and to</i></p> <p><i>b. To promote an integrated approach to optimising opportunities associated with rivers, waterways and wetlands generate biodiversity, recreation, tourism, and economic benefits.</i></p>	<p><i>EC 8-1 Cork Harbour</i></p> <p><i>b. Guide the sustainable future management of different uses in the Cork Harbour area, through a specific planning framework initiative, including strategic economic uses, while protecting the sensitive ecosystems and designated natural habitats including the Cork Harbour SPA and the Great Island Channel SAC.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 6.22 Natural heritage and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>a. To protect, promote and enhance Cork City’s natural heritage and biodiversity;</i></p> <p><i>b. To support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Plan and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and successor publications in Cork City;</i></p>	<p><i>WM 11-11: River Channel Protection</i></p> <p><i>a) Ensure adequate protection measures along watercourses, keeping them free from development by ensuring development is kept 10m or other appropriate distance from stream and river banks is line with best practice for riparian corridors. Development altering the hydromorphology of a watercourse will not normally be permitted, where it may result in the</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p>c. To support and implement the biodiversity actions from the Cork City Heritage and Biodiversity Plan (2021-2026) in partnership with all relevant stakeholders;</p> <p>d. Cork City Council will seek to establish and use a City biodiversity database, accessible across all council departments for consideration in land management decision-making;</p> <p>e. Cork City Council will work with communities to enhance existing, and the delivery of new, biodiversity-rich areas throughout the City including individual buildings, streets, public and private spaces by supporting the provision of green roofs and walls, rain gardens, biodiversity-rich parklets, rainwater harvesting, natural banks and naturalised SUDS;</p> <p>f. Cork City Council will seek, where appropriate, to enhance the linear habitat connectivity, including the interconnection and enhancement of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodlands, gardens, open spaces, fields and hedgerows. • Coastal habitats, river catchments, lakes, streams, ponds. • Aquatic, marginal and bank side habitats. • Parks, playing fields and recreational areas. • Upstream of mapped flood zones. • City transport routes. 	<p>deterioration in the status of a water body through for example, impacts on water quality, quantity or flow rate, riparian habitat or protected species.</p> <p>b) There will be a presumption against the use of culverts and opportunities to actively remove existing culverts and re-naturalise/ daylighting watercourses will be encouraged in development proposals.</p> <p>c) Where river crossings are considered necessary, clear span river crossing structures shall be used on fisheries waters where possible. The Council will consult with Inland Fisheries Ireland in relation to any such proposals.</p>
<p><i>Objective 6.23 Designated Sites and Protected Species</i></p> <p>To protect and enhance designated sites and areas of natural heritage and biodiversity and the habitats, flora and fauna for which it is designated, and to protect, enhance and conserve designated species.</p>	<p><i>WM 11-12 Surface Water Management</i></p> <p>Manage surface water catchments and the use and development of lands adjoining streams, watercourses and rivers in such a way as to minimise damage to property by instances of flooding and with regard to any</p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>conservation objectives of European sites within the relevant catchments and floodplains.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 6.25 Non-designated Areas of Biodiversity Importance</i></p> <p><i>Cork City Council will seek to map the City’s ecological networks and corridors of local biodiversity value outside of designated areas, and to work with local stakeholders in supporting the effective management of features which are important for wild flora and fauna and habitats.</i></p>	<p><i>WM 11-13 Flood Plains and Wetlands</i></p> <p><i>a) Protect the County’s floodplains, wetlands and coastal areas subject to flooding as vital green infrastructure which provides space for storage and conveyance of floodwater, enabling flood risk to be more effectively managed and reducing the need to provide flood defences in the future.</i></p> <p><i>b) Ensure that development does not impact on wetland sites within river / stream catchments and seek the restoration of degraded wetlands.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 6.26 Alien Invasive Species</i></p> <p><i>To support the implementation of measures to control and prevent the introduction, establishment or spread of ecologically damaging alien invasive species (e.g. Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam).</i></p>	<p><i>GI 14-1 Countywide Green and Blue Infrastructure Objectives</i></p> <p><i>a) Create an integrated and coherent green infrastructure for the County by encouraging the retention and strengthening of substantial networks of green space in urban, urban fringe and the wider countryside to serve the needs of communities now and in the future and as a key contributor to climate mitigation and climate adaptation.</i></p> <p><i>b) Develop the green infrastructure network (including green corridors) to ensure the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, including the protection of Natura 2000 European Sites, the provision of accessible parks, open spaces and recreational facilities (particularly within settlements), the sustainable management of water, the maintenance of landscape character and the protection and enhancement of architectural and archaeological heritage.</i></p> <p><i>c) Capitalise on and highlight the multifunctional benefits/opportunities (ecosystem services) that green and blue infrastructure can present. Seek to advance the use of nature based solutions as an alternative to traditional</i></p>

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>infrastructure. Seek to advance an ecosystem services approach and ecosystem services valuation as a decision-making tool in plans and projects.</i></p> <p><i>d) Recognise rivers and streams (and their wider riparian corridors) as one of the natural foundations for multi-functional green and blue infrastructure corridors. Seek to strengthen ecological linkages which watercourses have with other water dependent habitats as well as with hedges/treelines, woodland and scrub in the wider landscape.</i></p> <p><i>e) Ensure that all settlements have an adequate level of quality green and recreational infrastructure (active and passive) taking into account existing deficits, planned population growth as well as the need to serve their surrounding hinterlands.</i></p> <p><i>f) Achieve a net gain in green infrastructure through the protection and enhancement of existing assets and through the provision of new green infrastructure as an integral part of the planning process. Encourage the provision of different green infrastructure elements, such as trees in urban areas and green roofs in town centres, so that a net gain in green infrastructure is achieved over the lifetime of this Development Plan.</i></p> <p><i>g) Seek to increase investment in green infrastructure provision and maintenance by accessing relevant EU funding mechanisms and national funding opportunities including tourism related funding.</i></p> <p><i>h) Integrate the provision of green infrastructure with infrastructure provision and replacement, including walking and cycling routes, as appropriate, while protecting biodiversity and other landscape resources.</i></p> <p><i>i) Support initiatives and programmes which seek to strengthen the green and blue infrastructure and work with communities and other stakeholders in furthering the green and blue infrastructure concept.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>Objective 6.27 Areas of Geological Importance</i></p> <p><i>To seek the conservation of important features of geological interest in Cork City.</i></p>	<p><i>BE 15-1: Support and comply with national biodiversity protection policies</i></p> <p><i>a) Support and comply with the objectives of the National Biodiversity Plan 2017-2021 (and any future National Biodiversity Plan which may be adopted during the period of this Plan) as appropriate,</i></p> <p><i>b) Implement the current County Biodiversity Action Plan and any future updated Plan;</i></p> <p><i>c) Support and comply with biodiversity policy set out in other national and regional policy documents as appropriate.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 10.20 – The River Lee</i></p> <p><i>a. To ensure that the River Lee is maintained as a defining feature of the City Docks.</i></p> <p><i>b. To secure access to the riverside and provide walkway / cycleways (see Volume 2: Mapped Objectives).</i></p> <p><i>c. To update the Public Realm Strategy for the City Docks to take into account the evolving masterplan for the City Docks (north and south).</i></p> <p><i>d. Measures will be put in place to enhance the River Lee’s biodiversity value.</i></p> <p><i>e. To provide new active recreational infrastructure to improve access to the river, and to repair and enhance steps and slipways.</i></p>	<p><i>BE 15-2: Protect sites, habitats and species</i></p> <p><i>a) Protect all natural heritage sites which are designated or proposed for designation under European legislation, National legislation and International Agreements. Maintain and where possible enhance appropriate ecological linkages between these. This includes Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Marine Protected Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna and Ramsar Sites. These sites are listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.</i></p> <p><i>b) Provide protection to species listed in the Flora Protection Order 2015, to Annexes of the Habitats and Birds Directives, and to animal species protected under the Wildlife Acts in accordance with relevant legal requirements. These species are listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.</i></p> <p><i>c) Protect and where possible enhance areas of local biodiversity value, ecological corridors and habitats that are features of the County’s ecological network. This includes rivers, lakes, streams and ponds, peatland and other wetland habitats, woodlands, hedgerows, tree lines, veteran trees, natural and semi-natural grasslands as well as coastal and marine habitats. It particularly</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>includes habitats of special conservation significance in Cork as listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.</i></p> <p><i>d) Recognise the value of protecting geological heritage sites of local and national interest, as they become notified to the local authority, and protect them from inappropriate development.</i></p> <p><i>e) Encourage, pursuant to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the protection and enhancement of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.</i></p>
	<p><i>BE 15-6: Biodiversity and New Development</i></p> <p><i>Provide for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the development management process and when licensing or permitting other activities by:</i></p> <p><i>a) Providing ongoing support and guidance to developers on incorporating biodiversity considerations into new development through preplanning communications and the Council’s guidance document ‘Biodiversity and the Planning Process – guidance for developments on the management of biodiversity issues during the planning process’ and any updated versions of this advice;</i></p> <p><i>b) Encouraging the retention and integration of existing trees, hedgerows and other features of high natural value within new developments;</i></p> <p><i>c) Requiring the incorporation of primarily native tree and other plant species, particularly pollinator friendly species in the landscaping of new developments;</i></p> <p><i>d) Fulfilling Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment obligations and carrying out Ecological Impact Assessment in relation to development and activities, as appropriate;</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>e) Ensuring that an appropriate level of assessment is completed in relation to wetland habitats subject to proposals which would involve drainage or reclamation. This includes lakes and ponds, watercourses, springs and swamps, marshes, heath, peatlands, some woodlands as well as some coastal and marine habitats;</i></p> <p><i>f) Ensuring that the implementation of appropriate mitigation (including habitat enhancement, new planting or other habitat creation initiatives) is incorporated into new development, where the implementation of such development would result in unavoidable impacts on biodiversity - supporting the principle of biodiversity net gain.</i></p>
	<p><i>BE 15-7: Control of Invasive Alien Species</i></p> <p><i>Implement best practice to minimise the risk of spread of invasive alien species, on Council owned or managed land, and require the development and implementation of Invasive Alien Species Management Plans for new developments where required.</i></p>
	<p><i>BE 15-8: Trees and Woodlands</i></p> <p><i>a) Protect trees the subject of Tree Preservation Orders.</i></p> <p><i>b) Make use of Tree Preservation Orders to protect important trees or groups of trees which may be at risk or any tree(s) that warrants an order given its important amenity or historic value.</i></p> <p><i>c) Encourage the provision of trees for urban shading and cooling in developments in urban environments and as an integral part of the public realm.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>d) Preserve and enhance the general level of tree cover in both town and country. Ensure that development proposals do not compromise important trees and include an appropriate level of new tree planting.</i></p> <p><i>e) Where appropriate, to protect mature trees/groups of mature trees and mature hedgerows that are not formally protected under Tree Preservation Orders.</i></p>
Population and Human Health	
<p><i>Objective 7.25 Sustainable Tourism</i></p> <p><i>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:</i></p> <p><i>a. Working in partnership with Fáilte Ireland, businesses and other stakeholders to support tourism investment, innovation and promotional and marketing strategies;</i></p> <p><i>b. Supporting the implementation of the Cork City Tourism Strategy 2017-2022, the Local Economic and Community Plan-2016-2021 (Pure Cork) and their successor strategies;</i></p> <p><i>c. To support the implementation of the Tourism Destination Plan for Cork City and East Cork;</i></p> <p><i>d. Develop existing tourist attractions and activities, while seeking investment in new attractions that help to diversify the tourism market;</i></p> <p><i>e. Support the development of cultural facilities such as the Crawford Art Gallery and the Cork Events Centre;</i></p> <p><i>f. Support initiatives that improve the sustainability of tourism, and support eco-tourism along with the reduction of the carbon footprint of tourist accommodation, attractions and activities;</i></p>	<p><i>TO 10-1 Promotion of Sustainable Tourism in County Cork</i></p> <p><i>Promote a sustainable approach to the development of the tourism sector within Cork County while;</i></p> <p><i>a) Ensuring the protection of the natural, built and cultural heritage assets of the county, including Natura sites, which are in themselves part of what attracts visitors to the county.</i></p> <p><i>b) Having regard to cumulative impacts increased visitor numbers and visitor facilitates can have on local infrastructure, sensitive areas and sites, water quality, biodiversity, soils, ecosystems, habitats and species, climate change etc.</i></p> <p><i>c) Supporting investment in placemaking and the regeneration of towns and villages in recognition of the role ‘People and Place’ make in attracting visitors to Ireland; encouraging the development of tourism and other facilities within settlements to support such regeneration and compact growth.</i></p> <p><i>d) Work in partnership with public and private sector agencies to implement the key tourism objectives in this Plan, while first ensuring early consultation with landowners around any new proposed routes and facilities.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>g. Support high quality proposals, initiatives and pilot projects that represent opportunities to provide new or enhanced visitor facilities and attractions. This also extends to proposals that utilise technology to improve visitors' experiences and aid interpretation and navigation and seek to better leverage the city's network of green and blue infrastructure as tourism attractions;</i></p> <p><i>h. Seeking to manage, where appropriate, any increase in visitor numbers to semi-natural areas in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, by ensuring that new any projects, such as greenways, are located a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian zones;</i></p> <p><i>i. Seeking to manage, where relevant, any increase in visitor numbers to key habitats and / or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects, including loss of habitat and disturbance, by ensuring that new projects and activities are located a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor / Habitat Management Plans may be required for proposed projects where relevant and as appropriate.</i></p>	<p><i>e) Assist community groups to access funding for appropriate, sustainable and beneficial tourism developments.</i></p>
	<p><i>TO 10-2 Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Ancient East</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
<p>Land, Soils and Geology</p>	
	<p><i>BE 15-10: Soils</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>a) Ensure the protection and conservation of the soils in County Cork by encouraging sustainable management practices and the reuse of brownfield lands.</i></p> <p><i>b) Identify areas of poorer soil in the County acknowledge their potential value for wildlife, and respect their limitations, particularly in terms of their assimilative properties to prevent pollution.</i></p>
Water Quality	
<p><i>Objective 9.4 – Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)</i></p> <p><i>a. To require that all planning applications for new development incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in so far as possible. Such proposals shall be accompanied by a comprehensive SUDS assessment including run-off quantity, run off quality and impacts on habitat and water quality.</i></p> <p><i>b. To encourage the provision of green roofs and green walls as an integrated part of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and which provide benefits for biodiversity, wherever feasible.</i></p> <p><i>c. To investigate the feasibility of preparing Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) guidelines for Cork City during the lifetime of the plan. In the interim The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage document: Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas Water Sensitive Urban Design - Best Practice Interim Guidance Document, will provide guidance in this regard.</i></p>	<p><i>WM 11-1: EU Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan</i></p> <p><i>a) Protect and improve the County’s water resources and ensure that development permitted meets the requirements of the River Basin Management Plan and does not contravene the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive.</i></p> <p><i>b) Promote compliance with the River Basin Management Plan and associated environmental standards and objectives set out in the European Communities (Environmental Objectives) Surface Water Regulations, 2009 and the European Communities (Environmental Objectives) Groundwater Regulations, 2010, to prevent deterioration; restore good status; reduce chemical pollution, and achieve water related protected areas objectives in rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters (as applicable).</i></p> <p><i>c) Secure the objectives and facilitate the implementation of the associated Programme of Measures of the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 and any successor plan for ground, surface, estuarine, coastal and transitional waters in the Plan area as part of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p>d) Support an integrated and collaborative approach to local catchment management in order to assist in the implementation of the River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>e) In acknowledgement of the sustained pressures on ecological status being experienced in Blue Dot catchment waterbodies, additional measures, as deemed necessary to protect and restore these waterbodies to high status may be required for development permitted in such catchments. Measures may include, but are not limited to, a water management plan (including the construction phase), tertiary treatment and appropriate SUDs measures.</p> <p>f) Support the prioritisation of the provision of water services infrastructure in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metropolitan Cork, the Key Towns and Main Towns to complement the overall strategy for economic and population growth while ensuring appropriate protection of the environment. • All settlements where services are not meeting current needs, are failing to meet the requirements of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, and where these deficiencies are – interfering with Councils ability to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive; or – having negative impacts on Natura 2000 sites; and <p>g) Development may only proceed where appropriate wastewater treatment is available which meets the requirements of environmental legislation, the Water Framework Directive and the requirements of the Habitats Directive.</p>
<p>Objective 9.7 – Water Quality</p> <p>a. To ensure the delivery of the relevant policies and objectives of The River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 – 2021 and any subsequent plan, including those relating to protection of water status, improvement of water</p>	<p>WM 11-2: Surface Water Protection</p> <p>a) Protect and improve the status and quality of all surface waters throughout the County, including transitional and coastal waters.</p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>status, prevention of deterioration and meeting objectives for designated protected sites.</i></p> <p><i>b. To support Irish Water in its implementation of Water Quality Management Plans for ground, surface, coastal and estuarine waters as part of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive and in the development of Drinking Water Protection Plans.</i></p> <p><i>c. To support the provision of mitigation and protection measures for all protected areas, including Drinking Water Protected Areas and associated Source Protection Plans in line with the Water Framework Directives and River Basin Management Plans.</i></p> <p><i>d. To have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU’s Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Documents No. 20 and 36 which provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.</i></p>	<p><i>b) At least secondary treatment should be provided to all wastewater discharges from any new development, to surface waters.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 9.8 Flood Protection</i></p> <p><i>To protect, enhance and manage the City’s floodplains, wetlands and coastal habitat areas that are subject to flooding as vital ‘green infrastructure’ which provides space for storage and conveyance of floodwater, enabling flood risk to be more effectively managed and reduce the need to provide flood defence infrastructures. Cork City Council will also require that all proposed flood protection or alleviation works will be subject to Appropriate Assessment to ensure there are no likely significant effects on the integrity, defined by the structure and function, of any European Sites and that the requirements of Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive are met.</i></p>	<p><i>WM 11-3: Groundwater Protection</i></p> <p><i>a) Preserve and protect groundwater and surface water quality throughout the County.</i></p> <p><i>b) Prevent or limit, as appropriate, the input of pollutants into groundwater and prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater.</i></p> <p><i>c) Protect, enhance and restore all bodies of groundwater and ensure a balance between abstraction and recharge of groundwater with the aim of achieving good groundwater quantitative status and good groundwater chemical status.</i></p> <p><i>d) Reverse any significant and sustained upward trend in the concentration of any pollutant resulting from the impact of human activity in order to progressively reduce pollution of groundwater.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>e) Achieve compliance with any standards and objectives established for a groundwater dependant protected area included in the register of protected areas.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 12.1 – Land Use and Flooding</i></p> <p><i>To Facilitate the appropriate management and sustainable use of Flood Zones A & B identified by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.</i></p>	<p><i>WM 11-14 Strategic Flood Risk Management</i></p> <p><i>a) Support the implementation of</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• the EU Flood Risk Directive (20010/60/EC) on the assessment and management of flood risks,</i> <i>• the Flood Risk Regulations (SI No 122 of 2010),</i> <i>• the Guidelines on ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ (2009) and</i> <i>• the recommendations of the South Western CFRAM study.</i> <p><i>b) Application of the flood policies of this Plan shall be fully informed by the recommendations contained in the updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (June 2022) accompanying the Plan, including the conclusions of Justification Tests contained therein.</i></p>
	<p><i>WM 11-15: Flood Risk Assessments</i></p> <p><i>To require flood risk assessments to be undertaken for all new developments within the County in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and the requirements of DECLG Circular P12/2014 and the EU Floods Directive.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- For sites within Flood Zone A or B, a site specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required.</i> <i>- For sites within Flood Zone C, an examination of all potential sources of flooding, and consideration of climate change (flood risk screening</i>

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>assessment), will be required. In limited circumstances where the 'Flood Risk Screening assessment' identifies potential sources of flood risk, a site specific flood risk assessment may also be required.</i></p> <p><i>- All proposed development must consider the impact of surface water flood risks on drainage design through a Drainage Impact Assessment. The drainage design should ensure no increase in flood risk to the site, or the downstream catchment.</i></p>
	<p><i>WM 11-16: Flood Risks – Overall Approach</i></p> <p><i>Take the following approach in order to reduce the risk of new development being affected by possible future flooding:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding; and</i> <i>• Apply the sequential approach to flood risk management based on avoidance, substitution, justification and mitigation of risk.</i> <i>• Where development in floodplains cannot be avoided, applications for development must meet the definition of Minor Development or have passed the Justification Test for Development Plans in the updated SFRA and can pass the Justification Test for Development Management to the satisfaction of the planning authority.</i> <i>• Consider the impacts of climate change on the development.</i> <p><i>In areas where the Justification Test for Development Plans has not been applied, or has been failed, the sequential approach should be applied as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• In areas where there is a high probability of flooding - 'Flood Zone A' - avoid highly and less vulnerable development as described in Section 3 of 'The</i>

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued in November 2009 by DoEHLG.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In areas where there is a moderate probability of flooding - ‘Flood Zone B’ - avoid ‘highly vulnerable development’ described in section 3 of ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued in November 2009 by DoEHLG.</i> • <i>In areas where there is low probability of flooding – ‘Flood Zone C’ all uses may be considered subject to a full consideration of all flood risks.</i>
	<p><i>WM 11-17: Development in Flood Risk Areas</i></p> <p><i>When considering proposals for development, which may be vulnerable to flooding, and that would generally be inappropriate as set out in Table 3.2 of the Guidelines, the following criteria must be satisfied:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. The subject lands have been zoned or otherwise designated for the particular use or form of development in an operative development plan, which has been adopted or varied taking account of these Guidelines.</i> <i>2. The proposal has been subject to an appropriate flood risk assessment that demonstrates:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. The development proposed will not increase flood risk elsewhere and, if practicable, will reduce overall flood risk;</i> <i>b. The development proposal includes measures to minimise flood risk to people, property, the economy and the environment as far as reasonably possible;</i> <i>c. The development proposed includes measures to ensure that residual risks to the area and/or development can be managed to an acceptable level as regards the adequacy of existing flood protection measures or the design,</i>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>implementation and funding of any future flood risk management measures and provisions for emergency services access; and</i></p> <p><i>d. The development proposed addresses the above in a manner that is also compatible with the achievement of wider planning objectives in relation to development of good urban design and vibrant and active streetscapes.</i></p> <p><i>The acceptability or otherwise of levels of residual risk should be made with consideration of the type and predicted future use of the development and the local development context.</i></p> <p><i>The development is assessed not to have the potential to give rise to negative or adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites or Natural Heritage Areas or proposed Natural Heritage Areas.</i></p>
Air Quality, Noise and Climate	
<p><i>SO4 – Climate & Environment</i></p> <p><i>Transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable future. Implement climate mitigation and adaptation measures that reduce our carbon footprint including sustainable energy consumption, sustainable transport, circular economy, green construction and flood risk mitigation and adaptation.</i></p>	<p><i>CS 2-8: Climate Change</i></p> <p><i>Promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas, including the promotion of measures to;</i></p> <p><i>a) Reduce energy demand in response to the likelihood of increases in energy and other costs due to long term decline in non-renewable resources,</i></p> <p><i>b) Reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, and address the necessity for adaptation to climate change, in particular, having regard to location, layout and design of new development.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Address climate change with particular emphasis on transport provision, by implementing the policies and objectives of this CDP.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 2.11 Low Carbon City</i></p>	<p><i>ET 13-27: Carbon Emissions Reduction</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>Put in place mechanisms to support the delivery of a lower carbon, sustainable city where development avoids, mitigates and adapts to the effects of climate change while protecting and enhancing Cork City's environmental assets.</i></p>	<p><i>a) To reduce carbon emissions in the county by achieving national, regional and any potential county targets to progress the national targets as set out in the Climate Action Plan (2021).</i></p> <p><i>b) To seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy sources utilising the natural resources of County Cork in an environmentally sustainable manner consistent with best practice and planning principles.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 5.1 – A Climate Resilient City</i></p> <p><i>To create a more climate resilient, low carbon and environmentally sustainable City where our stakeholders and communities participate in, and benefit from integrated climate and environment action measures which also offer other social, economic and biodiversity benefits.</i></p>	<p><i>BE 15-12: Air Quality</i></p> <p><i>a) Monitor air quality and air quality trends in accordance with EU policy directives, preserve good air quality where it exists, and take appropriate action, where required, including the provision of additional air quality monitoring infrastructure in urban areas and along major roads.</i></p> <p><i>b) Radon barriers should be provided in all new developments in compliance with best practice and relevant Building Regulations.</i></p> <p><i>c) Air emissions associated with all new development are to be in line with Environmental Quality Standards as set out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011, or any updated/superseding documents.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 9.18 – Air Quality</i></p> <p><i>a. To protect and improve air quality in Cork City in accordance with the provisions of EU Directives and national legislation on air pollution and support the actions of the City Council's Air Quality Strategy 2021-2026, and its successors.</i></p> <p><i>b. To continue to monitor air quality results submitted from selected locations throughout the City in co-operation with the Environmental Protection</i></p>	<p><i>BE 15-13: Noise and Light Emissions</i></p> <p><i>a) Seek the minimisation and control of noise pollution associated with activities or development, having regard to relevant standards, published guidance and the receiving environment.</i></p> <p><i>b) Ensure noise-sensitive developments are adequately protected from potential sources of noise (e.g. national roads). New developments should take account of, and mitigate against, any existing noise sources.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p>Agency and support the creation of a regional air quality and greenhouse gas emissions inventory.</p>	<p>c) Support the implementation of Noise Action Plans prepared for the Cork County area.</p> <p>d) Seek the minimisation and control of light pollution associated with activities of development, having regard to relevant standards, published guidance and the receiving environment and Dark Sky principles.</p> <p>e) Review and update Cork County Council Policy Guidelines for Public Lighting to take account of impacts of public lighting on wildlife and night skies.</p>
<p><i>Objective 9.20 – Noise</i></p> <p>To support the implementation of the objectives of The Cork Agglomeration Noise Action Plan 2018 – 2023 and promote the pro-active management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life.</p>	<p>Climate Action</p> <p>CA 17-1: Support national and local climate change objectives set out in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Planning Framework • Southern Region Spatial and Economic Strategy • Climate Action Plan (2021 or any successor plan). • National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 or any successor framework). • National Mitigation Plan (2017 or any successor plan). • Cork County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.
	<p>CA 17-2: In order to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, an increase in renewable energy production, an increase in energy efficiency and enhanced biodiversity, support the transition to a low carbon, competitive, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050 through implementation of the policies of this plan that seek to deliver the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compact growth, • integrated land use and transport,

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustainable transport choices, • liveable settlements, • renewable energy production and reduced energy consumption, • enhanced ecological biodiversity and • climate adaptation measures such as through flood risk management, sustainable urban drainage systems and high quality placemaking and design.
Cultural Heritage	
<p><i>SO7 – Heritage, Arts and Culture</i></p> <p><i>Protect and enhance the unique character and built fabric of the city, its neighbourhoods, urban towns and settlements by caring for Protected Structures, archaeological monuments and heritage, Architectural Conservation Areas and intangible heritage. Identify, protect, enhance and grow Cork’s unique cultural heritage and expression in an authentic and meaningful way. Ensure Cork’s heritage, culture and arts are celebrated and developed to create an attractive, vibrant and inclusive place to live, work, study and visit.</i></p>	<p><i>TO 10-5 Protection of Natural, Built and Cultural Features</i></p> <p><i>Protect and conserve those natural, built, and cultural heritage features that form the resources on which the County’s tourist industry is based. These features will include areas of important landscape, coastal scenery, areas of important wildlife interest, historic buildings and structures including archaeological sites, cultural sites including battlefields, the Gaeltacht areas, arts and cultural sites, the traditional form and appearance of many built up areas and promote access and interpretation of archaeological sites in State and Local Authority ownership.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.1 Strategic Archaeology Objective</i></p> <p><i>a. To protect and preserve archaeological monuments as listed in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Wreck Inventory of Ireland Database (WIID). All sites can be accessed on the Historic Environment Viewer (www.archaeology.ie). The National Monuments Service will be informed of all development proposals which relate to Sites and Zones of Archaeological Interest.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-1: County Heritage Plan</i></p> <p><i>Continue to implement the current County Heritage Plan (2005) in partnership with relevant stakeholders and any successor of this document.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>b. Cork City Council will have regard to the relevant national statutory policies and guidelines, including Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage and to best practice guidance documents published by the Heritage Council and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland.</i></p> <p><i>c. To preserve the character and setting of the medieval city wall and defences, which is a National Monument, according to the recommendations of the Cork City Walls Management Plan (2007) and the National Policy on Town Defences (2008).</i></p> <p><i>d. To promote the retention, reuse, and enhancement of buildings and other elements of architectural, archaeological and other significance.</i></p> <p><i>e. To ensure that development reflects and is sensitive to the historical importance and character of the city and its hinterland, in particular the street layout and pattern, plot sizes, building heights and scales.</i></p> <p><i>f. To improve and encourage access to and understanding of the architectural and archaeological heritage of the city.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 8.2 Protection of the Archaeological Resource</i></p> <p><i>a. Cork City Council will protect and enhance the archaeological value of the sites (and their settings) listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Historic Environment Viewer.</i></p> <p><i>b. Cork City Council will ensure that development proposals will protect and preserve archaeological sites discovered since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP).</i></p> <p><i>c. To ensure the preservation of archaeological remains in-situ, in accordance with national policy (and in the interests of sustainability), impacts on the buried archaeological environment should be avoided where possible.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-2: Protection of Archaeological Sites and Monuments</i></p> <p><i>Secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in situ or in exceptional cases preservation by record) of all archaeological monuments and their setting included in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) (see www.archaeology.ie) and the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and of sites, features and objects of archaeological and historical interest generally.</i></p> <p><i>In securing such preservation, the planning authority will have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as outlined in the Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage policy document or any changes to the policy within the lifetime of the Plan.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>Objective 8.4 Protection of the Medieval Historic Core</i></p> <p><i>a. Where development is proposed within the medieval historic core a policy of minimising the impact on the archaeological resource will be promoted. Any proposed development will be assessed on the level and amount of undisturbed archaeology present on the site.</i></p> <p><i>b. Cork City Council will seek to protect Cork’s medieval street pattern, and in particular, seek to conserve and enhance the laneways within the setting of the streetscape.</i></p> <p><i>c. Development proposals will seek to retain historic building lines and traditional plot widths where they derive from medieval origins. The physical integrity of the medieval core should be respected through the retention of plot sizes which can be achieved by the refurbishment of existing buildings.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-3: Underwater Archaeology</i></p> <p><i>Protect and preserve the archaeological value of underwater archaeological sites and associated underwater and terrestrial features. In assessing proposals for development, the development will take account of the potential underwater archaeology of rivers, lakes, wetlands, intertidal and sub-tidal environments through appropriate archaeological assessment by a suitably qualified archaeologist.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.5 Protection of Cork’s Medieval City Wall and Defences</i></p> <p><i>a. Cork City Council will ensure preservation insitu of the Medieval City Wall and Defences and will have regard to the preservation and enhancement of the line of the City Wall when considering development proposals in its vicinity. Disturbance, removal and alteration of the line of the City Wall will not be permitted. An appropriate buffer zone between the City Wall and the development will also be required.</i></p> <p><i>b. Cork City Council will seek to improve public awareness and increase knowledge and appreciation of the medieval city walls.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-4: Zones of Archaeological Potential in Historic Towns and Settlements</i></p> <p><i>Proposed development works in Historic Towns and settlements, Zones of Archaeological Potential, Zones of Notification and the general historic environs in proximity to the zones, should take cognisance of the impact potential of the works, and all appropriate archaeological assessments employed to identify and mitigate the potential impacts.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.8 Underwater Archaeology</i></p> <p><i>Cork City Council requires that all development proposals which will impact on marine, riverine, lacustrine, intertidal/sub-tidal environments, and areas</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-5: Zones of Archaeological Potential</i></p> <p><i>Protect the Zones of Archaeological Potential (ZAPs) located within historic towns, urban areas and around archaeological monuments generally. Any development within the ZAPs will need to take cognisance of the upstanding</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>of former reclaimed land, shall be subject to appropriate archaeological assessment.</i></p>	<p><i>and potential for subsurface archaeology, through appropriate archaeological assessment.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.9 Preservation of Archaeology within Open Space in Developments</i></p> <p><i>In development proposals where archaeology is to be retained in-situ the archaeological remains will be protected, safeguarded and, where suitable, be interpreted in an accessible manner. Where the archaeology being preserved is located in open space, then this will be in addition to the overall open space provisions.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-6: Industrial and Post Medieval Archaeology</i></p> <p><i>Protect and preserve industrial and post-medieval archaeology and long-term management of heritage features such as mills, limekilns, forges, bridges, piers and harbours, water-related engineering works and buildings, penal chapels, dwellings, walls and boundaries, farm buildings, estate features, military and coastal installations. There is a general presumption for retention of these structures and features. Proposals for appropriate redevelopment including conversion should be subject to an appropriate assessment and record by a suitably qualified specialist/s.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.10 – Archaeological Management Strategy for the City</i></p> <p><i>a. Cork City Council will seek to prepare and implement conservation and management plans for National Monuments and Recorded Monuments in Cork City Council ownership.</i></p> <p><i>b. Cork City Council will seek to develop an archaeological strategy for the city, to include management and protection of strategic research locations.</i></p> <p><i>c. Cork City Council will seek to develop an archaeological GIS for archaeological investigations undertaken in the city.</i></p> <p><i>d. Cork City Council will seek to ensure that the tourism strategy within the medieval historic core and in areas/setting of historic monuments should draw on its archaeological heritage and should reflect a strong and authentic sense of place.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-7: Battlefield, Ambush and Siege Sites and Defensive Archaeology</i></p> <p><i>Protect and preserve the defensive archaeological record of County Cork including strategic battlefield, ambush and siege sites, and coastal fortifications and their associated landscape due to their historical and cultural value. Any development within or adjoining these areas shall undertake a historic assessment by a suitably qualified specialist to ensure development does not negatively impact on this historic landscape.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.17 Conservation of the City’s Built Heritage</i></p> <p><i>a. To seek to ensure the conservation of Cork City’s built heritage.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-8: Burial Places</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>b. To ensure that Cork’s Built Heritage contributes fully to the social and economic life of the city and to pursue actions that ensure Cork’s built heritage will benefit from good custodianship and building occupation.</i></p>	<p><i>Protect all historical burial places and their setting in County Cork and encourage their maintenance and care in accordance with appropriate conservation principles.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.18 Reuse & Refurbishment of Historic Buildings</i></p> <p><i>a. The City Council will actively encourage the re-use of historic buildings in the interests of conservation and environmental sustainability to minimise waste and optimise on the embodied energy in existing buildings.</i></p> <p><i>b. Uses which will have a minimal impact on the character of historic structures will be encouraged.</i></p> <p><i>c. Alterations will adhere to best practice conservation standards.</i></p> <p><i>d. The reinstatement of lost features and removal of unsympathetic additions will be encouraged where appropriate. e. It is recognised that the protection and retention of historic buildings within the medieval city, has the dual advantage of protecting the rich archaeological resource and the Recorded Monument of the City Wall.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-11: Archaeological Landscapes</i></p> <p><i>To protect archaeological landscapes and their setting where the number and extent of archaeological monuments are significant and as a collective are considered an important archaeological landscape of heritage value.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.19 Record of Protected Structures</i></p> <p><i>To maintain a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) which shall include structures or parts of structures which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, and which it is an objective to protect.</i></p> <p><i>a. Any changes or alterations to the character of a Protected Structure which would in the opinion of Cork City Council, have a material effect on the character of the structure, will require planning permission;</i></p> <p><i>b. Cork City Council will have regard to the relevant statutory guidance issued by the central government department responsible for the built heritage,</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-13: Undiscovered Archaeological Sites</i></p> <p><i>To protect and preserve previously unrecorded archaeological sites within County Cork as part of any development proposals. The Council will require preservation in situ to protect archaeological monuments discovered. Preservation by record will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>including the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities;</i></p> <p><i>c. Proposals for demolition of a Protected Structure shall not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be shown that a greater public interest will be served which outweighs the loss to the architectural heritage;</i></p> <p><i>d. Any alteration or demolition of a Protected Structure shall require the preparation of a full drawn and photographic record to Best Conservation Practice;</i></p> <p><i>e. A broad range of uses will be considered for the regeneration / reuse of protected structures that are derelict / underutilised;</i></p> <p><i>f. Where the planning authority accepts the principle of demolition a detailed written and photographic inventory of the building will be made and sent to the Cork City & County Archives and the Irish Architectural Archive for record purposes;</i></p> <p><i>g. Where a planning application is being granted for development within the curtilage of a Protected Structure, the conservation of the protected structure will be prioritised as the first phase of the development to prevent endangerment, abandonment and dereliction.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 8.20 Historic Landscapes</i></p> <p><i>Cork City Council will ensure that the designated and undesignated historic landscapes and gardens throughout the city are protected from inappropriate development and enhanced where possible.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-14: Record of Protected Structures</i></p> <p><i>a) The identification of structures for inclusion in the Record will be based on criteria set out in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011).</i></p>

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>b) Extend the Record of Protected Structures in order to provide a comprehensive schedule for the protection of structures of special importance in the County during the lifetime of the Plan as resources allow.</i></p> <p><i>c) Seek the protection of all structures within the County, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. In accordance with this objective, a Record of Protected Structures has been established and is set out in Volume Two Heritage and Amenity, Chapter 1 Record of Protected Structures.</i></p> <p><i>d) Ensure the protection of all structures (or parts of structures) contained in the Record of Protected Structures.</i></p> <p><i>e) Protect the curtilage and attendant grounds of all structures included in the Record of Protected Structures.</i></p> <p><i>f) Ensure that development proposals are appropriate in terms of architectural treatment, character, scale and form to the existing protected structure and not detrimental to the special character and integrity of the protected structure and its setting.</i></p> <p><i>g) Ensure high quality architectural design of all new developments relating to or which may impact on structures (and their settings) included in the Record of Protected Structures.</i></p> <p><i>h) Promote and ensure best conservation practice through the use of specialist conservation professionals and craft persons.</i></p> <p><i>i) In the event of a planning application being granted for development within the curtilage of a protected structure, that the repair of a protected structure is prioritised in the first instance i.e. the proposed works to the protected structure should occur, where appropriate, in the first phase of the</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<i>development to prevent endangerment, abandonment and dereliction of the structure.</i>
<p><i>Objective 8.22 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)</i></p> <p><i>Cork City Council will have regard to Ministerial recommendations to the City Council to consider the designation of the buildings and gardens listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage as Protected Structures. Cork City Council will consider the structures listed in the NIAH for protection, by designation of Protected Structures; by the adoption of Architectural Conservation Areas to protect groups of buildings; or by whatever other means the Council considers will most effectively protect the architectural heritage of the city. These Ministerial Recommendations will be taken into account when the Cork City Council is considering proposals for development that would affect the historic or architectural interest of these structures. Cork City Council will seek to engage with key stakeholder groups, including public representatives, building owners and the public to develop the most appropriate response for the protection of specific buildings, groups of buildings and historic areas.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-15: Protection of Structures on the NIAH</i></p> <p><i>Protect where possible all structures which are included in the NIAH for County Cork, that are not currently included in the Record of Protected Structures, from adverse impacts as part of the development management functions of the County.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 8.27 - Elements of Built Heritage</i></p> <p><i>Cork City Council will ensure the protection of important elements of the built heritage and their settings as appropriate.</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-16: Protection of Non-Structural Elements of Built Heritage</i></p> <p><i>Protect non-structural elements of the built heritage. These can include designed gardens/garden features, masonry walls, railings, follies, gates, bridges, shopfronts and street furniture. The Council will promote awareness and best practice in relation to these elements.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 10.22A – City Docks Built Heritage</i></p> <p><i>It is an objective of Cork City Council to</i></p> <p><i>a. Conserve and enhance designated and, where possible, undesignated built heritage assets of the City Docks in accordance with the policies set out in</i></p>	<p><i>HE 16-18: Architectural Conservation Areas</i></p> <p><i>Conserve and enhance the special character of the Architectural Conservation Areas included in this Plan. The special character of an area includes its</i></p>

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>Chapter 8: Heritage Culture and Arts and Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development;</i></p> <p><i>b. Utilise conservation strategies to ensure that built heritage assets are integrated into the urban design, architecture and public realm strategies for developments;</i></p> <p><i>c. Require inventories for each development proposal to ensure that undesignated heritage assets are recorded, understood and conserved, where possible.</i></p>	<p><i>traditional building stock, material finishes, spaces, streetscape, shopfronts, landscape and setting. This will be achieved by;</i></p> <p><i>(a) Protecting all buildings, structures, groups of structures, sites, landscapes and all other features considered to be intrinsic elements to the special character of the ACA from demolition and nonsympathetic alterations.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Promoting appropriate and sensitive reuse and rehabilitation of buildings and sites within the ACA and securing appropriate infill development.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Ensure new development within or adjacent to an ACA respects the established character of the area and contributes positively in terms of design, scale, setting and material finishes to the ACA.</i></p> <p><i>(d) Protect structures from demolition and non sympathetic alterations.</i></p> <p><i>(e) Promoting high quality architectural design within ACAs.</i></p> <p><i>(f) Seek the repair and re-use of traditional shopfronts and where appropriate, encourage new shopfronts of a high quality architectural design.</i></p> <p><i>(g) Ensure all new signage, lighting advertising and utilities to buildings within ACAs are designed, constructed and located in such a manner they do not detract from the character of the ACA.</i></p> <p><i>(h) Protect and enhance the character and quality of the public realm within ACAs. All projects which involve works within the public realm of an ACA shall undertake a character assessment of the said area which will inform a sensitive and appropriate approach to any proposed project in terms of design and material specifications. All projects shall provide for the use of suitably qualified conservation architects/ designers.</i></p> <p><i>(i) Protect and enhance the character of the ACA and the open spaces contained therein. This shall be achieved through the careful and considered strategic</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>management of all signage, lighting, utilities, art works/pieces/paintings, facilities etc to protect the integrity and quality of the structures and spaces within each ACA.</i></p> <p><i>(j) Ensure the protection and reuse of historic street finishes, furniture and features which contribute to the character of the ACA.</i></p>
	<p><i>HE 16-19: Vernacular Heritage</i></p> <p><i>a) Protect, maintain and enhance the established character, forms, features and setting of vernacular buildings, farmyards and settlements and the contribution they make to our architectural, archaeological, historical, social and cultural heritage and to local character and sense of place.</i></p> <p><i>b) Cork County Council encourages best conservation practice in the renovation and maintenance of vernacular buildings including thatched structures through the use of specialist conservation professionals and craft persons. Development proposals shall be accompanied by appropriate documentation compiled by experienced conservation consultant.</i></p> <p><i>c) There will generally be a presumption in favour of the retention of vernacular buildings and encouragement of the retention and re-use of vernacular buildings subject to normal planning considerations, while ensuring that the re-use is compatible with environmental and heritage protection.</i></p>
	<p><i>HE 16-20: Historic Landscapes</i></p> <p><i>a) Recognise the contribution and importance of historic landscapes and their contribution to the appearance of the countryside, their significance as archaeological, architectural, historical and ecological resources.</i></p> <p><i>b) Protect the archaeological, architectural, historic and cultural element of the historic/heritage landscapes of the County of Cork.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p><i>c) All new development within historic landscapes should be assessed in accordance with and giving due regard to Cork County Councils 'Guidance Notes for the Appraisal of Historic Gardens, Demesnes, Estates and their Settings' or any other relevant guidance notes or documents issued during the lifetime of the Plan.</i></p>
	<p><i>HE 16-23: Cultural Heritage</i></p> <p><i>Protect and promote the cultural heritage of County Cork as an important economic asset and for its intrinsic value to identity of place and the well being of people within the County.</i></p>
	<p><i>HE 16-26: The Arts</i></p> <p><i>a) Provide for balanced development of arts infrastructure in County Cork that meets the cultural and artistic needs of communities, supports creative activity and enhances cultural, economic and social life in communities.</i></p> <p><i>b) Consider proposals for development of arts spaces and facilities including performance, exhibition, studio and other arts related facilities in appropriate locations, where proposals are in accordance the other policies and objectives of this Plan.</i></p> <p><i>c) Encourage the provision of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities, the commissioning of new works of art for the public realm in association HE proposals, where appropriate and having regard to Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme, General National Guidelines" (2004), as amended in 2019.</i></p> <p><i>d) Promote and facilitate sustainable development and the creation and display of art and heritage works in public areas while complying with the planning and environmental criteria and development management standards.</i></p> <p><i>e) Acknowledge and support the implementation of objectives set out in the Arts Plan and Culture and Creativity Strategy (and any plan / strategy</i></p>

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
	<p>hereafter), which will be supported through effective collaboration with the County Arts Office.</p> <p>f) Undertake an evidence based ‘needs’ approach during the lifetime of the Development Plan in collaboration with the Arts Office to identify the spatial distribution/concentration of arts and culture ‘assets’ across the county, and to inform future/area needs provision including the co-location of services and activities. This may inform the pursuit of specific arts and arts infrastructure projects in association with the County Arts Office, through the National URDF funding programme or, such other funding programmes during the lifetime of the Development Plan.</p>
Landscape & Visual	
<p><i>Objective 6.9 Landscape</i></p> <p>a. To preserve and enhance Cork’s landscape character, key landscape assets and views and prospects of special amenity value;</p> <p>b. Landscape will be an important factor in all development proposals, ensuring that a proactive view of development is undertaken while maintaining respect for the environment and heritage generally in line with the principle of sustainability;</p> <p>c. To ensure that new development meets the highest standards of placemaking, siting and design;</p> <p>d. To protect those prominent open hilltops, valley sides and ridges that define the character of the Cork City Hinterland and those areas which form strategic, largely undeveloped gaps between the main Hinterland settlements from development;</p>	<p><i>GI 14-9 Landscape</i></p> <p>a) Protect the visual and scenic amenities of County Cork’s built and natural environment.</p> <p>b) Landscape issues will be an important factor in all land-use proposals, ensuring that a pro-active view of development is undertaken while protecting the environment and heritage generally in line with the principle of sustainability.</p> <p>c) Ensure that new development meets high standards of siting and design.</p> <p>d) Protect skylines and ridgelines from development.</p> <p>e) Discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments.</p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>e. To discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments;</i></p> <p><i>f. To support, as appropriate, any relevant recommendations contained in the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 6.11 Landscape and Development</i></p> <p><i>To ensure that the management of development throughout Cork City will have regard for the value of the landscape, its character, distinctiveness and sensitivity in order to minimize the visual and environmental impact of development, particularly in designated areas of high landscape value where higher development standards (layout, design, landscaping, materials) are required.</i></p>	<p><i>GI 14-12: General Views and Prospects</i></p> <p><i>Preserve the character of all important views and prospects, particularly sea views, river or lake views, views of unspoilt mountains, upland or coastal landscapes, views of historical or cultural significance (including buildings and townscapes) and views of natural beauty as recognized in the Draft Landscape Strategy.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 6.12 Landscape Preservation Zones</i></p> <p><i>To preserve and enhance the character and visual amenity of Landscape Preservation Zones through the careful management of development. Development will be considered only where it safeguards the value and sensitivity of the particular landscape and achieves the respective site-specific objectives.</i></p>	<p><i>GI 14-13: Scenic Routes</i></p> <p><i>Protect the character of those views and prospects obtainable from scenic routes and in particular stretches of scenic routes that have very special views and prospects identified in this Plan. [...].</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 6.13 Areas of High Landscape Value</i></p> <p><i>To conserve and enhance the character and visual amenity of Areas of High Landscape Value</i></p> <p><i>(AHLV) through the appropriate management of development, in order to retain the existing characteristics of the landscape, and its primary landscape assets. Development will be considered only where it safeguards to the value and sensitivity of the particular landscape. There will be a presumption against development where it causes significant harm or injury to the intrinsic character of the Area of High Landscape Value and its primary landscape</i></p>	<p><i>GI 14-14: Development on Scenic Routes</i></p> <p><i>a) Require those seeking to carry out development in the environs of a scenic route and/or an area with important views and prospects, to demonstrate that there will be no adverse obstruction or degradation of the views towards and from vulnerable landscape features. In such areas, the appropriateness of the design, site layout, and landscaping of the proposed development must be demonstrated along with mitigation measures to prevent significant alterations to the appearance or character of the area.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>assets, the visual amenity of the landscape; protected views; breaks the existing ridge silhouette; the character and setting of buildings, structures and landmarks; and the ecological and habitat value of the landscape.</i></p>	<p><i>b) Encourage appropriate landscaping and screen planting of developments along scenic routes</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 6.14 Cork City View Management Framework</i></p> <p><i>a. To protect the strategic panoramic, linear, river prospect or scenic route views identified in this Plan and ensure that development proposals do not have an undue detrimental impact on these views;</i></p> <p><i>b. Development proposals will be assessed against their impact on the designated view if it falls within the foreground, middle ground or background of that view. New development should not harm, and where possible should make a positive contribution to, the characteristics and composition of the designated views and their landmark elements. It should also preserve or enhance viewers' ability to recognise and to appreciate Strategically Important Landmarks in these views;</i></p> <p><i>c. Development proposals that could affect a designated view should be accompanied by an assessment that explains, evaluates and justifies any visual impact on the view affected. The scoping process for determining whether a development proposal is likely to affect a designated view should be completed in consultation with Cork City Council. The assessment should demonstrate that the proposal is consistent with the relevant objectives of this Plan. The assessment should form part of a design statement or townscape and visual impact assessment submitted with a planning application;</i></p> <p><i>d. Development in the foreground and middle ground of a designated view should not be overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent to the detriment of the view. Most designated views are seen in a 120 degree field of view. It is not</i></p>	<p><i>GI 14-16: Prominent and Strategic Metropolitan Greenbelt Map</i></p> <p><i>Protect those prominent open hilltops, valley sides and ridges that define the character of the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt and those areas which form strategic, largely undeveloped gaps between the main Greenbelt settlements.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>expected that the view outside of this field of vision should be assessed unless specified by Cork City Council;</i></p> <p><i>e. Strategic and local landmark buildings will need to be considered in the scoping of views to identify the potential impacts of development proposals.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 10.98 – Protection of Natural Landscape</i></p> <p><i>a. Protect the visual and scenic amenities of the Hinterland’s built and natural environment.</i></p> <p><i>b. Landscape is an important consideration in all development proposals, ensuring that a proactive view of development is undertaken while maintaining respect for the environment and heritage generally in line with the principle of sustainability.</i></p> <p><i>c. Ensure that new development meets high standards of siting and design.</i></p> <p><i>d. Discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments.</i></p>	<p><i>ZU 18-13: Green Infrastructure</i></p> <p><i>Three subcategories of Green Infrastructure zonings have been identified to</i></p> <p><i>a) Retain and provide for open space and recreational amenities within Green Recreational (Open Spaces/ Park) areas;</i></p> <p><i>b) Retain and generally protect appropriate areas for their landscape, amenity or nature conservation value or their current or future flood management role, within Green Conservation (Landscape amenity/ nature conservation) area; and</i></p> <p><i>c) Retain and provide for active recreational facilities within Green Active (Active Open Space) areas.</i></p> <p><i>No development other than development which supports Green Infrastructure will be considered in these areas. Any proposals in Green Infrastructure areas will need to ensure the protection and enhancement of the integrity of biodiversity and to recognise the importance of wildlife corridors and sites of nature conservation and be in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</i></p>
Material Assets	
<p><i>SO3 – Transport & Mobility</i></p> <p><i>Integrate land-use and transportation planning to increase active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport usage. Enable the key transport</i></p>	<p><i>TM 12-2 Active Travel</i></p> <p><i>TM 12-2-5: New paths and cycleways/ greenways and upgrades to existing paths and cycleways/greenways will be sensitively designed having regard to environmental, nature conservation, landscape and other heritage</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>projects in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) delivering multi-modal usage and smart mobility, accessible for all.</i></p>	<p><i>considerations, and committing, in particular to providing appropriate set-backs from water courses where new paths and cycleways/greenways are proposed along rivers, streams, lakes or other sensitive areas. The development of a greenway strategy for the County is required to guide consideration of future greenway identification and development in a plan-led approach.</i></p>
<p><i>SO8 – Environmental Infrastructure</i></p> <p><i>Ensure efficient and sustainable use of water services, enhance water quality and resource management. Manage waste generation and treatment and support the principles of the circular economy. Improve air quality and promote pro-active management of noise. Enable the sustainable delivery of digital infrastructure, renewable energy and environmental improvements.</i></p>	<p><i>BE 15-14: Waste Prevention and Management</i></p> <p><i>a) Support the policy measures and actions outlined in</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- ‘A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy Ireland’s National Waste Policy 2020-2025’, and</i> <i>- Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021, or any successor plans</i> <p><i>b) Support circular and climate resilient economy principles and associated strategic infrastructure, prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery, and to sustainably manage all types of waste by ensuring the provision of adequate waste recovery, recycling and disposal facilities for the county.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 4.4 – Active Travel</i></p> <p><i>To actively promote walking and cycling as efficient, healthy, and environmentally friendly modes of transport by securing the development of a network of direct, comfortable, convenient, and safe cycle routes and footpaths across the city.</i></p> <p><i>To support the 15-minute city concept and walkable neighbourhoods with adequate walking and cycling infrastructure connected to high-quality public realm elements, including wayfinding and supporting amenities (benches, water fountains, bike stands).</i></p>	<p><i>BE 15-17: Waste Prevention and Management</i></p> <p><i>a) Planning applications for infilling of marginal land through soil importation will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the developments accord with proper planning and sustainable development, ensuring that they are compatible with the protection of environmental resources including water quality, Natura 2000 sites, biodiversity, archaeological and landscape resources.</i></p> <p><i>b) Support will be provided for locating suitable sites within the county for the safe disposal of construction and demolition waste in conjunction with the Southern Waste Region.</i></p>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>To support the expansion of the Cork Bikes scheme. To accommodate other innovations such as electric bikes, public car hire, and other solutions that will encourage active travel. To support the rollout of the NTA 5 Year Cycle Plan. To support and engage with the Safe Routes to School programme.</i></p>	<p><i>c) Construction and Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs)/ Construction and Demolition Management Plans shall be prepared for larger scale projects as set out in paragraph 15.12.24 and this requirement shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis as part of the development management process.</i></p> <p><i>d) Support the implementation of the recommendations and policies of the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2014-2020.</i></p>
<p><i>Objective 5.7 Sustainable Energy Community</i></p> <p><i>To support SEAI Sustainable Energy Community initiatives and Energy Cork in working with local communities to deliver energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 5.10 Energy Conservation and Efficiency</i></p> <p><i>To support and help create high levels of energy conservation and energy efficiency in both new and existing buildings.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 5.11 Energy Efficiency Considerations</i></p> <p><i>New development proposals are expected to maximise energy efficiency through location, siting, orientation, layout, design, stormwater drainage and landscaping. This includes seeking to optimise energy efficiency through thermal insulation, passive ventilation and cooling and passive solar design.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 5.12 Energy Use Management</i></p> <p><i>Development proposals are encouraged to incorporate best practice in technologies that help reduce energy use or enables the monitoring and management of energy use.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 9.1 – Irish Water</i></p>	

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>a. To work with Irish Water to ensure the efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure in the City.</i></p> <p><i>b. To work with Irish Water to identify and facilitate the timely delivery of water and wastewater projects in order to facilitate development in accordance with the Core Strategy.</i></p> <p><i>c. To work with Irish Water in promoting water conservation and demand management measures among users and support the implementation of measures such as leakage reduction and network improvements.</i></p> <p><i>d. To support Irish Water in the development and implementation of the National Water Resources Plan and Drinking Water Safety Plans.</i></p> <p><i>e. To support Irish Water in the promotion of effective management of trade discharges to sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing sewer networks and minimise detrimental impacts on sewage treatment works.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 9.12- Waste Management</i></p> <p><i>a. To support the sustainable management of waste in line with the objectives of the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 and the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy (NWMPC) when published, which will replace the existing Regional Waste Management Plans.</i></p> <p><i>b. To facilitate the transition to a circular economy facilitating the value recovery and recirculation of resources in order to generate minimal waste.</i></p> <p><i>c. Continue to fulfil duties under the Waste Management (certification of historic unlicensed waste disposal and recovery activity) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No 524 of 2008), including those in relation to the identification and registration of closed landfills.</i></p>	

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
<p><i>d. To encourage the recycling of construction and demolition waste and the reuse of aggregate and other materials in future construction projects. Applications for large infrastructure projects shall be accompanied by a Construction and Environmental Management Plan that includes details of how construction and demolition waste generated is to be managed and, where reuse/recycling is not practicable, disposed of, in line with legislative requirements.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 9.13-Energy</i></p> <p><i>To support a safe, secure and reliable supply of energy in association with the appropriate service providers including EirGrid, the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) and Bord Gáis Energy. It is also aimed to facilitate expansion in order to ensure satisfactory levels of supply (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) and support the safeguarding of strategic energy corridors from encroachment by other developments that could compromise the delivery of energy networks.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 9.16 - Digital Strategy</i></p> <p><i>To support the implementation of the Digital Strategy for the City and work with the Southern Regional Assembly and other stakeholders to seek investment in the delivery of accessible and improved high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and rollout of the National Broadband Plan.</i></p>	
<p><i>Objective 9.19 - External Lighting</i></p> <p><i>To require that external lighting proposals minimise the harmful effects of light pollution, are energy efficient, and do not have an excessive impact on residential or visual amenity, biodiversity or result in the distraction of road users.</i></p>	

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, clear resolution plan will be produced with assigned responsibilities, timelines and monitoring to address environmental damage and cause of the same. It is recommended that the monitoring for the CDEDP is undertaken utilising the outputs of monitoring and reviews of the Cork City & County Development Plans for efficiency and given that similar data sets will be used to measure the progress of each plan.

Environmental indicator assessment during monitoring can show positive / neutral impacts or negative impacts on the environment. Where an indicator value highlights a positive / neutral impact on the environment, it is likely that the objectives of the 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.

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Table 10.1 Environmental Monitoring Programme

SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)				
B1	Ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annex habitats and species ⁵⁶ and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.	Conservation status of habitats and species protected under European and International legislation.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for habitats and species protected under European and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.	<p>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years)</p> <p>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years)</p> <p>Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) data.</p> <p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p> <p>Lower tier environmental assessment and decision making by local authorities.</p>
B2	Preserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, including internationally, EU and nationally designated sites, habitats and protected species.	Conservation status of habitats and species protected under International and National legislation.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under International and National legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.	<p>EPA State of the Environment reporting.</p> <p>Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.</p>

⁵⁶ '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.

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
B3	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.
Population & Human Health (PHH)				
PHH1	Promote sustainable high quality tourism within the County that supports economic development and maximises potential for employment and investment.	To comply with the tourism and economic development policies and objectives of the 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.
PHH2	Improve health and wellbeing by provision of recreational and tourism-related activities.	Occurrence of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from the 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.
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG)				

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

SEO Ref.	SEO Description	Indicators	Targets	Data Sources and Monitoring Frequency
LSG1	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.
Water Quality (WQ)				
WQ1	Protect, maintain and where necessary improve water quality and the management of watercourses, groundwater and the marine environment, in compliance with the requirements of the WFD objectives and measures.	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.
WQ2	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.

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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.
Air Quality, Noise & Climate (ANC)				
ANC1	Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality and noise emissions through the reduction of emissions.	Demonstration of compliance with air quality and noise provisions. Number of exceedances of ambient air quality standards in the County, as monitored under the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network.	To maximise the amount of measures relating to air quality and noise minimisation being implemented.	EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes. Review of Cork City Air Quality Dashboard for air quality monitoring data results and EPA data for air quality monitoring.
ANC2	Contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with National targets, including Ireland's commitment to realising a climate neutral economy by 2050.	Demonstration of compliance with provisions relating to climate adaptation and mitigation.	To maximise the amount of measures relating to climate adaptation and mitigation being implemented.	EPA State of the Environment reporting. Input from any other relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programmes.
Material Assets (MA)				
MA1	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, ensure new developments are served with adequate and appropriate critical 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.

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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.
MA2	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>
MA3	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>

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

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.*
- EPA (2023b). *SEA of Local Authority Land-Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources.*
- EPA (2020). *Ireland’s Environment – An Integrated Assessment.*
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12 Appendices

Appendix 1: Detailed Assessment of Environmental Effects of the Catalyst Projects and Destination Enablers listed within the Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Table 8.1A Environmental Assessment of the Catalyst Projects and Destination Enablers of the Draft 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)

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
CATALYST PROJECTS							
1	CATALYST PROJECT 1 : LEE, CITY, HARBOUR WAY EXPERIENCE CORRIDORS						
1.1	Lee, City, Harbour Way (LCH) Greenway Masterplan	Develop a Lee, City, Harbour Way, Greenway Masterplan to create a signature cycling and walking trail animated by ‘Experience Corridors’ integrating the Greenways, Blueways and Culture Trails. It will also reflect the opportunities identified by the Green Blue Infrastructure Study to support improved Connectivity including delivery of new and enhanced walking and cycling routes.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		ANC (ANC1, ANC2)	B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)	Yes
1.2	Cork Lido	Undertake a site options appraisal and feasibility analysis for a Cork Lido aligned with the objective of creating more visitor engagement opportunities with the water.					
1.3	Meitheal Mara	Examine the potential for Meitheal Cois Abhainn to deliver river based experiences and activities.					
1.4	Water Activity Hubs	Explore the potential to develop sustainable water activity access hubs to correspond with the Lee, City, Harbour Greenway route integrating Carrigaline, Ballincollig Regional Park, Fitzgerald Park, Lee Fields, Blackrock Village, Crosshaven and privately Owned sites on the route.					
1.5	Marina Park	Progress the development of Marina Park Phase 2 between Blackrock and Pairc Ui Chaoimh and the creation of a boating activity in the area of Pairc Ui Chaoimh.					

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
1.6	Crosshaven Trail head	Examine the requirements to develop the outdoor activity opportunity in Crosshaven maximising the Greenway and potential future linkages with an extended Active Travel trails network. This will also include an examination of the requirements to develop a water activity hub in Crosshaven.					
1.7	Cork Public Museum	Undertake an assessment of the visitor experience in the Cork Public Museum and future opportunities to become an orientation hub for the Lee, City, Harbour Way Experience.					
1.8	Pairc Ui Chaoimh	Examine the potential to develop a visitor attraction in Pairc Ui Chaoimh and the development a range of saleable experiences in the stadium. This will also leverage the proximity of the stadium to the Greenway and river access.					
<p>SEA Evaluation: The listed projects and associated actions will result in positive effects on population and human health. While the overall intention is positive, resulting actions (e.g. water-based activities) could have negative or uncertain effects for biodiversity, water, land & soils, landscape and visual, material assets and air & noise. The development of new and existing greenways and blueways 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.</p> <p>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. 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>							
2. CATALYST PROJECT 2: CORK HARBOUR TOURISM PLAN							
2.1	Cork Harbour Tourism Plan	Develop a Cork Harbour Tourism Plan to grow the value of tourism in Cork Harbour and masterplan a sustainable tourism development approach. The plan will examine all aspects of the visitor experience including access, water transport opportunities, visitor experience development, facilities to create an integrated roadmap for the harbour and it's islands.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1,		Yes

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
2.2	Fota House	Examine the potential of developing the Courtyard space (covered and uncovered) and future use of units to provide a new visitor experience or linked to the destination story e.g. artisan producers, artists in residence, specialist retail.			LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		
2.3	Fota House	Undertake a review of the requirements to transition the management of Fota House Gardens into the management of Fota House.					
2.4	Spike Island Experience	Undertake an independent assessment of the immediate product / experience development opportunities and visitor service investment priorities for Spike Island to grow annual visitor numbers as identified in the adopted Spike Island Business Plan.					
2.5	Spike Island Access	Assess the opportunity to increase the frequency and levels of access to Spike Island to drive demand from existing and new locations without causing any displacement to the service from Cobh.					
2.6	Camden Fort	Examine the potential of developing Camden Fort Meagher as a visitor attraction under the Cork Harbour Tourism Plan.					
2.7	Haulbowline Island	Examine the opportunity to create a national maritime visitor experience located at Haulbowline Island.					
2.8	Haulbowline Naval Base	Examine the potential for Haulbowline to open elements of the base for visitor experiences incorporating the operational naval base with a visitor experience comparable to other international maritime and military site experiences.					
2.9	Roches Point	Examine the possibility of re-opening the Roches Point Lighthouse as a visitor experience.					
2.10	National Maritime College of Ireland	Support the experience development for outreach programme tours at the National Maritime College of Ireland at scheduled times. This will also explore the opportunity to develop an AR / VR Cork Harbour experience located at Camden Fort in partnership with the Cork County Council.					
SEA Evaluation: The listed projects and associated actions will result in positive effects on population and human health.							

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
	However, in the absence of mitigation, the actions 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.						
3.	CATALYST PROJECT 3: CORK DOCKLANDS VISION PLAN						
3.1	Cork Docklands Vision Plan	Develop a Cork Docklands Vision Plan to deliver a coordinated approach to tourism development linked with the regeneration programme for the Docklands and Tivoli Docks. The vision plan will integrate tourism into the regeneration programme including opportunities such as visitor attractions, greenways, outdoor activities and active travel.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		ANC (ANC1, ANC2), CH (CH1, CH2)	B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2)	Yes
3.2	Attraction of Scale	Following the identification of the need for an Attraction of Scale for Cork, undertake an assessment of the most appealing theme and experience and site options to enable the attraction become a key contributor to destination growth.					
3.3	Odlum's Building	Examine the potential for an enhanced tourism offering through food and retail experiences as part of the regeneration of the Odlum's Building.					
3.4	National Sculpture Factory	Examine the potential to expand the capacity of the National Sculpture Factory to deliver a visitor experience as part of the Cork Dockland's cultural experience.					
3.5	Outdoor, Event Space	Examine the opportunity to develop a multi purpose outdoor space in the Docklands to incorporate family activity, playground, culture and arts provision.					
3.6	Creative Hub Space	Examine the potential to develop a creative industry hub as part of the Docklands regeneration and the development of immersive cultural experiences.					
3.7	River Cruise Activity	Examine how the future development of Cork Docklands can increase the level of leisure and river cruise activity to and from the area.					

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
	<p>SEA Evaluation: This objective will enhance tourism opportunities and will have positive effect on population and human health.</p> <p>However, the new attraction and 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>						
4. CATALYST PROJECT 4: MY GREENWAY							
4.1	MY Greenway	Complete the Midleton to Youghal Greenway to open in 2024 and maximise the economic opportunity for communities on route. Support the development of added value elements to the Greenway including placemaking and bio-diversity initiatives with a commitment to continuous maintenance and improvement.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2) MA (MA3)				Yes
4.2	Greenway Communities	Deliver a programme of training and capability building to enable the communities and local businesses along the Greenway develop new visitor experiences and services.					
4.3	City to My Greenway	"Complete the key projects that will link the city boundary to the Midleton to Youghal Greenway to include the completion of the following phases; Dunkettle to Carrigtwohill (4 Phases, Part 8 planning in place) · Phase 3 - Bury's Bridge to Fitzpatrick's (Under Construction) · Phase 4 - The Elm Tree to Carrigtwohill (Detailed Design) Carrigtwohill to Midleton · Phase 1 - Carrigtwohill to Ballyadam (Part 8 in place and detailed design on-going) · Phase 2 - Ballyadam to Water rock (Outline design on-going. Part 8 to commenced in 2023)"					
4.4	Active Travel	Examine the linking of Fota Island Resort to the active travel network based on the outputs of the design stages of a spur off the Dunkettle to Carrigtwohill interurban route.					

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
4.5	National Cycling Network	Examine the requirements create an eastern cycling trail from Dublin to Cork. This will also examine the requirements to connect Youghal and Dungarvan to extend the greenway network.					
	<p>SEA Evaluation: 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.</p> <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>						
5.	CATALYST PROJECT 5: CULTURAL QUARTERS						
5.1	Cultural Quarter Experiences	Develop clusters of new day and evening time visitor experiences across Cork's Cultural Quarters.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)				Yes
5.2	Cork Cultural Trail	Develop a Cork Cultural Trail to encourage culture-based exploration of the city. Support the development of the trail by building the capabilities of the Cork creative and artistic community to develop experiences to animate the Cork Cultural Trail.					
5.3	Visitor orientation	Undertake a tourism signage audit in the city to improve the city centre orientation and visitor way finding infrastructure.					
5.4	City Library Investment	Undertake a review of the opportunity to incorporate day and evening time cultural experiences within the City Library.					
5.5	Cork Playful Trail	Build on the success of the Cork Playful Trail to create a family focused cultural activity trail.					
5.6	Music City Experience	Leverage Cork's reputation as a music city building on the established Cork music network, music festivals, music venues and the School of Music.					
5.7	Creative Placemaking	Develop a creative urban place making approach supporting new cultural and public realm investment e.g. Crawford Gallery area, City Library, Event Centre, Docklands.					

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
5.8	Cultural Plaza	Assess the requirements to deliver an extended cultural plaza and imaginative public realm enhancements following the Crawford Gallery refurbishment.					
5.9	Riverside public realm	Examine the opportunities to re-imagine public realm investment in opening the river by creating more boulevard and riverside streetscapes to develop a vibrant riverside city experience.					
5.10	City Galleries Network	Develop a strategy for a co-ordinated approach between the city galleries linking the Glucksman, Crawford Gallery and Cork Public Museum and other related sites.					
5.11	UCC	Examine the potential to create a University College Cork tourism experience.					
5.12	UCC	Develop the planned programme for the Boole Library to include new multimedia facilities, signature treasures gallery and the development of cultural, educational and social spaces on the ground floor of the Library.					
5.13	Elizabeth Fort	Assess the requirements to enhance the Elizabeth Fort visitor experience.					
5.14	Living History Experiences	Examine the potential of creating story based trails for the family market based on hysterical histories linking key attractions across Cork such as Elizabeth Fort in the telling of the Cork story through living history.					
5.15	Shandon Masterplan	Prepare a master plan to develop a co-ordinated tourism development approach for the Shandon area linked with the wider vision for the area.					
5.16	Heritage Sites Presentation	Undertake an audit of requirements to enhance the presentation of cultural and heritage sites supported by a programme of maintenance e.g. Church Spires in key cultural quarters					
5.17	Cultural Sites Usage	Examine the capacity and usage of cultural buildings across Cork City to identify opportunities to create new evening time experiences.					

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
5.18	Flood Defence Scheme	Explore opportunities to interpret the heritage of the River Lee through investment in future flood defence schemes.					
5.19	National Sculpture Factory	Examine the potential of developing a permanent range of digital sculptures linked to key heritage sites across Cork to contribute to the ongoing urban animation of Cork City.					
5.20	Public Art	Support the development of the installation of public art around the city in partnership with Glucksman Art Gallery and the City Council.					
5.21	Nano Nagle Place	Implement the development plan for Nano Nagle Place and enhance the visitor experience.					
<p>SEA Evaluation: The listed projects and associated actions will result in positive effects on population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the actions 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.</p>							
6.	CATALYST PROJECT 6: FOOD CAPITAL						
6.1	Food Capital of Ireland	Implement the actions identified in the Food in Tourism Plan to develop Cork as Ireland’s Capital of Food by growing the experience base, enhancing existing experiences and leveraging Corks food and drink heritage.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2),		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2), ANC		Yes
6.2	Midleton Distillery Experience	Maximise the impact of the investment in Midleton Distillery through the development of premium and added value experiences in Midleton Distillery.					

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
					(ANC1, ANC2)		
<p>SEA Evaluation: The listed projects and associated actions will result in positive effects on population and human health.</p> <p>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.</p>							
DESTINATION ENABLERS							
7. DESTINATION ENABLER 1: ENHANCING ATTRACTIONS							
7.1	Visitor Attractions	Undertake an assessment of current visitor attraction experiences to benchmark the requirements to develop new, improved and collaborative visitor experiences.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), LV (LV_1, LV2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
7.2	Barryscourt Castle	Examine the requirements to re-open Barryscourt Castle, including future management and site partnership options and develop a quality visitor experience on site.					
7.3	Blarney Castle & Gardens	Support the development of a new vision for Blarney Castle & Gardens and the delivery of new visitor experiences across the site.					
7.4	Maritime Museums	Develop the capabilities of existing local maritime heritage centres to enhance their visitor experiences e.g. Cobh Museum and Passage West Museum.					
7.5	Cork Attractions Network	Enhance the cross promotion of attractions and examine new ways of attractions working together through co-created experiences and commercial initiatives such as single ticketing.					
7.6	Butter Museum	Undertake an assessment of visitor experience development opportunities in the Butter Museum.					
<p>SEA Evaluation: The listed projects and associated actions will result in positive effects on population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the actions 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</p>							

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
	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.						
8.	DESTINATION ENABLER 2: FESTIVAL CAPITAL						
8.1	Festival of Scale	Develop a new international festival of scale building on the potential of existing events or the identification of new festival opportunities in the city and county. This will also assess the potential for an international river or Harbour themed festival.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
8.2	Growing Event Impact	Maximise the potential of existing festivals and events by growing the numbers of cultural sites, attractions, activities and local experiences incorporated into event programming.					
8.3	Niche Events	Examine new approaches to packaging festivals and events with the Cork accommodation sector to maximise the year round programme of events.					
	<i>SEA Evaluation:</i> These action will enhance tourism opportunities for the county, raise awareness 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.						
9.	DESTINATION ENABLER 3: TOURISM GROWTH TOWNS & COMMUNITIES						
9.1	Accomodation Base	Grow the hotel accommodation base in key tourism growth towns.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2),		Yes
9.2	Accomodation Base	Grow the capacity of the destination to grow its alternative accommodation base.					
Cobh							

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
9.3	Cobh - International Destination	Secure the funding and implement the regeneration roadmap for Cobh to develop the town and Great Island as an international tourism destination. Enhance the supporting visitor experiences in Cobh to maximise the investment for the local community.			ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)		
9.4	Industry Network	Grow the linkages with Cobh and the Cork City tourism industry to maximise the opportunity presented by increased rail services between Cork and Cobh.					
Youghal							
9.5	Platforms for Growth Activity Centre	Maximise the opportunity for activity-based tourism through the investment in the Platforms for Growth Activity Centre at Clay Castle, Youghal. Build on the potential for Youghal to develop and position itself as a year-round training base for Ironmen and Triathlons (Triathlon Capital of Ireland).					
9.6	Youghal Lighthouse	Continue with the phased development of the Youghal Lighthouse experience to maximise its potential as a viewing platform and visitor orientation role guiding visitors to other sites in the town.					
9.7	Youghal Courthouse	Review the experience development requirements for Youghal Courthouse following the refurbishment programme.					
9.8	Visitor Orientation	Undertake a review of the orientation and wayfinding requirements to link the town heritage sites with its coastal amenities to influence visitor flow.					
Blarney							
9.9	Blarney	Undertake an assessment of the requirements to develop the tourism opportunity for Blarney to create reasons for visitors to Blarney Castle & Gardens to explore the local community.					
Midleton							
9.10	Food Story Gateway	Examine the opportunity to develop the food destination positioning of Midleton as an access hub to the East Cork food and drink story.					
Passage West							
9.11		Support the development of the town framework and maximise its					

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
		potential with the inclusion of strategic tourism development projects.					
9.12	Ballycotton Cliff Walk	Assess the requirements and feasibility of expanding the Cliff Walk to link to Roche's Point, developing a coastal pathway linking Ballycotton to Cork Harbour, integrating the Knockadoon Coastal Walk and Gyleen.					
9.13	Ballycotton Lighthouse	Develop the potential of Ballycotton Lighthouse / Island for the delivery of new visitor experiences and opportunities to repurpose the island buildings for activities or accommodation.					
<p>SEA Evaluation: The listed projects and associated actions will result in positive effects on population and human health.</p> <p>However, in the absence of mitigation, the actions 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.</p>							
10.	DESTINATION ENABLER 4: TOURISM COMMUNITIES						
10.1	Developing tourism communities	Deliver a training programme for tourism communities groups to understand the tourism opportunity and how to develop local experiences to attract visitors to explore East Cork and the Harbour communities.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)	B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1,			No

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
				LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)			
<p>SEA Evaluation: These actions 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>							
11. DESTINATION ENABLER 5: INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT							
11.1	Industry development	Develop the capacity and capabilities of tourism industry to create motivational itineraries and new approaches to collaboration and packaging that will attract visitors to Cork City, Cork Harbour and East Cork.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)	B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)			No
<p>SEA Evaluation: These actions 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>							
12. DESTINATION ENABLER 6: MAXIMISE MOBILITY INVESTMENT							

Cork City, Harbour and East Cork Draft Destination Experience Development Plan

SEA Environmental Report

No.	Project	Action	Likely Positive Effects	Likely Neutral Effects	Likely Uncertain Effects	Likely Negative Effects	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
12.1	Maximise Mobility Investment	Develop the capacity of tourism industry and local communities to maximise the commercial and community opportunities provided by Greenways, Blueways and Active Travel investment.	PHH (PHH1, PHH2)		B (B1, B2, B3), LSG (LSG1), WQ (WQ1, WQ2), ANC (ANC1, ANC2), MA (MA1, MA2, MA3), LV (LV_1, LV2), CH (CH1, CH2)		Yes
<p>SEA Evaluation: The listed projects and associated actions will result in positive effects on population and human health.</p> <p>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.</p>							

Appendix 2: Screening Determination for Strategic Environmental Assessment

**Screening Determination for Strategic Environmental Assessment under SEA Directive 2001/42/EC
as transposed into Irish law under S.I. 435/2004, as amended**

**Concerning the proposed Cork City, Harbour & East Cork Destination and Experience Development
Plan**

Fáilte Ireland as the Competent Authority for the proposed Cork City, Harbour & East Cork Destination and Experience Development Plan has undertaken screening for SEA under Directive 2001/42/EC as transposed into Irish law under S.I. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011.

The screening assessment was carried out using the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects as set out in Schedule 1 of S.I. 435/2004, as amended and having regard to Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08¹, which directs that:

“In any case where, following screening, it is found that the draft plan or amendment may have an impact on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site or that such an impact cannot be ruled out, adopting a precautionary approach-

- an appropriate assessment of the plan must be carried out and

- in any case where a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) would not otherwise be required, it must also be carried out.”

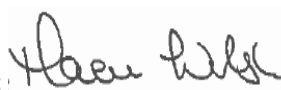
Following assessment of the criteria and having regard to the nature of the Plan and the potential for likely significant environmental effects from implementation of the Plan, including on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site, Fáilte Ireland has determined that the Plan will require SEA.

This determination has been made following consideration of the information contained in the SEA Screening Report, the criteria set out in Schedule 1 to S.I. 435/2004, as amended, the conclusion of the AA Screening Report, and following consultation with the statutory Environmental Authorities for SEA, from whom responses were received from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI).

The principal reason the Plan does require SEA is as follows:

- As directed under Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08: because the potential for likely significant environmental effects on 12no. European sites could not be ruled at Appropriate Assessment screening stage.

Signed on behalf of Fáilte Ireland:



Dated: June 2024

¹ <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

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