



Tionól Réigiúnach an Deiscirt
Southern Regional Assembly

Natura Impact Report

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
for the Southern Region



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland

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Preface

The Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) has prepared the Southern Regional, Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES).

The purpose of this Natura Impact Report (NIR) is to record the assessment process which has been applied to date as part of the Appropriate Assessment for the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive [92/43/EEC] as transposed through Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

In preparing this NIR, a multi-stage approach has been taken. The purpose of this staged approach has been to align the AA process with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive [2001/42/EC] process which is also required to support the development of the Southern RSES. Art. 3.2(b) of the SEA Directive expressly links to assessments pursuant to Article 6 of Directive 92/43/EEC. The preparation of the SEA and AA reporting comprises an integrated approach, such as sharing of baseline data and mapping of European Sites, sharing of potential ecological effects of the RSES on European Sites and clarification on more technical aspects of the RSES. These processes together have informed and shaped the development of the Southern RSES.

The SEA process requires that an environmental report is prepared to accompany a draft plan (or in this case strategy) for public consultation prior to adoption of the final plan. In the case of land use plans such as the RSES, further stages may be required in the form of material amendments, prior to finalisation, as was the case for the Southern RSES. The SEA process tracks and assesses the changes made throughout the evolution to final plan. The AA assessment and reporting for plans and strategies such as the RSES has developed to inform these key stages of plan development including draft plan, material amendments and final plan.

This NIR records the AA carried out from RSES inception to the making of the final RSES by the SRA. Prior to making of the final RSES, this NIR alongside other relevant information and documentation will be considered by SRA and a determination will be made as to whether the Southern RSES would, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, give rise to adverse impacts on the integrity of any European site. This determination will be provided under separate cover.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) is currently preparing the Southern Regional, Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The main statutory purpose of the RSES is to support the implementation of *Project Ireland 2040 – the National Planning Framework* (hereafter referred to as the NPF), and the economic policies and objectives of the Government by providing a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the region. The Southern Region RSES is a strategic plan which identifies regional assets, opportunities and pressures and will provide appropriate policy, objective and target responses. It will put in place objectives that will better manage regional planning and economic development throughout the region.

By its nature the RSES is a high-level document which is one of a series of building blocks for a tiered planning system. It does not, in and of its own right, confer planning permission for any specific development but rather it funnels the objectives of the National Planning Framework with a view to further guiding the subsequent tiers of planning in their more detailed decision making.

1.1 SCOPE OF THE NIR

RPS, on behalf of the SRA, as the competent authority for the Southern Region RSES, prepared a Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report to inform the AA screening determination in accordance with the requirements of Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The screening report was prepared to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, whether the Southern Region RSES, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. The determination by SRA on the screening for AA is as follows;

‘It cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective scientific information, that the Southern RSES, individually or in combination with other plans and projects will have a significant effect on a European site. As such, it is recommended that an Appropriate Assessment is required and a Natura Impact Report should be prepared.’

Therefore, the project is subject to AA in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive, the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, S.I. No. 477 of 2011, as amended. The responsibility for carrying out the AA lies with the SRA.

This NIR has been prepared in support of the AA process having regard for the legislative requirements of EU and national law. An NIR is defined under section 177T of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended:

177T.— (1) In this Part—

(a) A Natura impact report means a statement for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, of the implications of a Land use plan, on its own or in combination with other plans or projects, for one or more than one European site, in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites.

The NIR comprises an examination, analysis, evaluation, findings and conclusions and will inform the AA determination to be made by SRA prior to finalising and adopting the RSES, as to whether or not

the RSES would adversely affect the integrity of a European site (alone or in combination with other plans and projects). The AA determination will be published alongside the RSES as made by SRA. The responsibility for carrying out the AA lies with the SRA.

1.2 LAYOUT OF THE NIR

As noted in the preface, a multi stage approach has been applied to the preparation of the NIR to align it with the stages of Strategic Environmental Assessment which is being undertaken in parallel under Directive 2001/42/EC. This NIR therefore presents the assessments and mitigation relating to the draft Southern RSES [dated December 2018]; Proposed Material Amendments to the draft Southern RSES [September 2019] and the final version of the Southern RSES which is proposed for adoption. The layout of this material is as follows:

- Chapters 1-6 deal with the description of the RSES, approach and methodology for the NIR, supporting information in relation to the Natura 2000 network and a summary of the AA screening undertaken on the RSES. In the main, these chapters are unaltered from the draft NIR which was prepared to accompany the draft Southern RSES which was the subject of public consultation between December 2018 and March 2019. Where significant changes to text have been made to these chapters, as a result of feedback from the consultation, they are highlighted in **blue text**. New text added in relation to consultation feedback post the publication of the draft RSES is also presented in **blue text** in chapter 2.
- Chapter 7 presents the main assessment chapter in relation to the draft NIR prepared to accompany the draft RSES for public consultation. Again the chapter remains broadly unchanged with the exception of minor changes to reflect stakeholder feedback with such changes highlighted in **blue text**.
- Chapter 8 has been added to address Material Amendments made to the draft RSES following public consultation. All changes were assessed in the context of likely significant effects and their potential to adversely affect the integrity of a European site(s). This chapter is accompanied by Appendix I to the NIR which records the assessment stage.
- Chapter 9 presents the mitigation measures required in relation to implementation of the proposed final RSES and how they have been addressed in the final RSES to be adopted.
- Chapter 10 includes the overall conclusion of the NIR in relation to the Southern RSES as proposed for adoption.

1.3 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as “The Habitats Directive”, provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community Interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as the Natura 2000 Network. In Ireland, the Natura 2000 network of European sites comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) as codified by Directive 2009/147/EC (hereafter referred to as the Birds Directive).

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European Sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

Article 6(4) states:

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [European] site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended). In the context of the draft RSES, the governing legislation is principally Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Regulation 27 of the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations also has relevance as which sets out the general duties of public authorities in relation to the nature directives and nature conservation.

2 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.1 GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS ON AA

The AA requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive follow a sequential approach as outlined in the following legislation, guidance documents and Departmental Circulars, namely:

European and National Legislation:

- Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (also known as the 'Habitats Directive');
- Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, codified version, (also known as the 'Birds Directive');
- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended; and
- Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

Guidance:

- Article 6 of the Habitats Directive – Rulings of the European Court of Justice. Final Draft September 2014;
- EC Natura 2000 and Spatial Planning. European Commission (2017);
- EC study on evaluating and improving permitting procedures related to Natura 2000 requirements under Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (2013);
- Marine Natura Impacts Statements in Irish Special Areas of Conservation. A working Document. DAHG (2012);
- Wind Energy Developments and Natura 2000. European Commission (2011)
- The implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in estuaries and coastal zones with particular attention to port development and dredging. European Commission (2011);
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. DEHLG (2009, revised 10/02/10);
- Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC. Clarification of the concepts of: Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence, Opinion of the Commission. European Commission (2007);
- 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);
- Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (2001);
- Communication from the Commission on the Precautionary Principle. European Commission (2000b); and

- Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC1. European Commission (2000).

Departmental/NPWS Circulars:

- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 and PSSP 2/10.
- Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans. Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08.
- Water Services Investment and Rural Water Programmes – Protection of Natural Heritage and National Monuments. Circular L8/08.
- Guidance on Compliance with Regulation 23 of the Habitats Directive. Circular Letter NPWS 2/07.
- Compliance Conditions in respect of Developments requiring (1) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); or (2) having potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Circular Letter PD 2/07 and NPWS 1/07.

Other Relevant Texts:

- [European Union Biodiversity Strategy 2020](#);
- [National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021](#);
- [River Basin Management Plan 2017-2021](#);
- [All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020](#);
- [Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment Practitioner’s Manual \(EPA, 2013\)](#);
- [National Peatlands Strategy \(2016\)](#);
- [Art. 17 Reporting on the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species \(2007; 2013; 2019\)](#);
- [Article 12 Reporting \(Birds Directive\) 2013](#); and
- [Ireland’s Prioritised Framework for the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive \(2014\)](#).

2.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CASE LAW

Over time, legal interpretation has been sought on the practical application of the legislation concerning AA as some terminology has been found to be unclear. European and National case law has clarified a number of issues and some aspects of the published guidance documents have been superseded by case law. Some relevant publications include:

- Nature and Biodiversity Cases: Ruling of the European Court of Justice. European Commission (2006).
- Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Rulings of the European Court of Justice. Ecosystems Ltd (2014).

Case law has been considered in the preparation of both the screening for AA and this NIR of the RSES for SR.

¹ The Commission has notified its intent to revise this guidance and a draft revised document was published in April 2015. It would appear that this has not been finalised to date, and no revised guidance document is available on the Commissions official website as of September 2016.

2.3 PURPOSE OF THE AA PROCESS

The overall purpose of the AA process is to ensure that the RSES does not result in any adverse effects on the integrity of any European Sites in view of its conservation objectives.

The development of the RSES, SEA and AA process is an iterative one which requires engagement with all parties and consultation with stakeholders. The AA process involves the analysis of the relationship between the proposed elements of the SR RSES and the conservation objectives of European sites. As part of the iterative assessment process RPS were provided with draft policies and objectives of the RSES, which were reviewed, and feedback provided. Where there was potential for adverse impacts to occur, recommendations were made to avoid or mitigate potential impacts which were incorporated into the RSES to ensure no adverse effects on European sites.

2.4 STAGES OF APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government Guidelines (DEHLG, 2009) outlines the European Commission's methodological guidance (EC, 2002) promote a four-stage process to complete the AA, and outlines the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. The four stages are as follows:

- Stage 1 – Screening of the proposed plan or project for AA;
- Stage 2 – An AA of the proposed plan or project;
- Stage 3 – Assessment of alternative solutions; and
- Stage 4 – Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/ Derogation.

Stage 1: Screening for AA

The aim of screening is to assess firstly if the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of European Site(s); or in view of best scientific knowledge, if the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This is done by examining the proposed plan or project and the conservation objectives of any European Sites that might potentially be affected. If screening determines that there is potential for significant effects or there is uncertainty regarding the significance of effects then it will be recommended that the plan is brought forward to the next stage of the AA process. Screening of the draft RSES was undertaken in May 2018 and it was determined by the SRA that a Natura Impact Report is required to inform the AA.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

The aim of Stage 2 of the AA process is to identify any adverse impacts that the plan or project might have on the integrity of relevant European Sites. As part of the assessment, a key consideration is 'in combination' effects with other plans or projects. Where adverse impacts are identified, mitigation measures can be proposed that would avoid, reduce or remedy any such negative impacts and the plan or project should then be amended accordingly, thereby avoiding the need to progress to Stage 3.

As part of this stage, an NIR is prepared to support decision making and this document is the NIR for the RSES. An NIR is described in Section 177T (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), a Natura impact report or a Natura impact statement, as the case may be, shall include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any implications for one or more than one [European site] in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites.

An AA determination will be made by the competent authority prior to finalising and [making of the RSES](#). It is noted that this NIR relates to a plan rather than a project, and as such [a multi-stage approach](#) has been taken, in line with best practice. The first stage of the NIR related to the draft Southern RSES and was subject to consultation alongside the draft RSES and SEA Environmental Report. [Following stakeholder feedback, material amendments are proposed and these amendments are also assessed in the context of AA.](#) [Following a further round of consultation focussed on the material amendments, the final RSES was prepared.](#) [The NIR has been updated to reflect the final RSES.](#) An AA determination will be made by the competent authority prior to [making of the RSES](#).

Stage 3: Alternative Solutions

If it is not possible during Stage 2 of the AA process to conclude that there will be no adverse effects on site integrity, Stage 3 of the process must be undertaken which is to objectively assess whether alternative solutions exist by which the objectives of the plan or project can be achieved. Explicitly, this means alternative solutions that do not have adverse impacts on the integrity of a European Site.

It should also be noted that EU guidance on this stage of the process states that, *'other assessment criteria, such as economic criteria, cannot be seen as overruling ecological criteria'* (EC, 2001). In other words, if alternative solutions exist that do not have adverse impacts on European Sites; they should be adopted regardless of economic considerations. This stage of the AA process should result in the identification of the least damaging options for the plan or project.

Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)

This stage of the AA process is undertaken when it has been determined that a plan or project will have adverse effects on the integrity of a European Site, but that no alternatives exist. At this stage of the AA process, it is the characteristics of the plan or project itself that will determine whether or not the competent authority can allow it to progress. This is the determination of 'over-riding public interest'.

It is important to note that in the case of European Sites that include in their qualifying features 'priority' habitats or species, as defined in Annex I and II of the Directive, the demonstration of 'over-riding public interest' is not sufficient and it must be demonstrated that the plan or project is necessary for 'human health or public safety considerations'. Where plans or projects meet these criteria, they can be allowed, provided adequate compensatory measures are proposed. Stage 4 of the process defines and describes these compensation measures. The Commission must be informed of the compensatory measures. Compensatory measures must be practical, implementable, likely to succeed, proportionate and enforceable, and they must be approved by the Minister of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

2.5 INFORMATION SOURCES CONSULTED

The following general sources of information have been consulted for background environmental information.

- Information provided by SRA on the RSES;
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government – online land use mapping www.myplan.ie/en/index.html;
- GeoHive online mapping <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html>;
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland – online mapping and aerial photography www.osi.ie;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – online European Site information www.npws.ie;
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency – online European Site information www.daera-ni.gov.uk;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – information on the status of EU protected habitats in Ireland (NPWS, 2013a, 2013b and 2013c);
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – information on the status of EU protected habitats in Ireland (NPWS, 2019a, 2019b and 2019c);
- Ireland’s Article 12 submission to the EU Commission on the *Status and Trends of Bird Species (2008-2012)*;
- Information on the Conservation Status of Birds in Ireland (Colhoun & Cummins, 2013);
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – ENVision maps www.epa.ie;
- CORINE (Co-ORdinated INformation on the Environment) data series was established by the European Community (EC) <http://www.epa.ie/soilandbiodiversity/soils/land/corine/>;
- Information on River Basin Districts – www.wfdireland.ie;
- Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) – geology, soils and hydrogeology www.gsi.ie;
- Forest Cover Datasets
<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests/forests-service/forests-service-general-information/forest-statistics-and-mapping/forest-cover-datasets/>
- *Format for a Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000* (DAHG, 2014) www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/PAF-IE-2014.pdf;
- Birdwatch Ireland Species Action Plans; and
- *National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021*(DCHG, 2017).

2.6 IMPACT PREDICTION

The methodology for the assessment of impacts is derived from the *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites* (EC, 2001). When describing changes/activities and impacts on ecosystem structure and function, the types of impacts that are commonly presented include:

- Direct and indirect effects;
- Short and long-term effects;
- Construction, operational and decommissioning effects; and
- Isolated, interactive and cumulative effects.

Impacts that could potentially occur through the implementation of the RSES can be categorised under a number of impact categories as outlined in the EC 2001 document as follows:

- Loss/Reduction of habitat area;
- Disturbance to key species;
- Habitat or species fragmentation;
- Reduction in species density; and
- Changes in key indicators of conservation value such as decrease in water quality and quantity.

A “source –pathway-receptor” approach has been applied for this assessment. The **source** relates to the policy measures outlined in the RSES which have the potential to adversely impact European Sites e.g. infrastructural developments such as new Waste Water Treatment Plants. The **pathways** by which RSES policy measures can impact European Sites include changes in land use, habitat loss/fragmentation, emissions to air and via hydrological connections. The **receptor** in this instance will be the European sites, potentially including those transboundary sites with Northern Ireland for which there is a pathway of connectivity as a result of the implementation of the RSES.

2.7 CONSULTATION

2.7.1 Screening for AA and SEA Scoping Stage

SEA Scoping was carried out in a coordinated manner for all three RSES’s between December 2017 and February 2018. In line with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC), specific environmental authorities (statutory consultees) were consulted on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Environmental Report. The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) are one of the statutory consultees for SEA. A summary of the issues raised in the scoping submissions from all statutory consultees [including one from the DCHG dated February 2018] are included in **Appendix A**. Key issues of relevance to the NIR are noted below:

- Relevance of the EPA’s Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment (IBIA) Practitioner’s Manual;
- Additional suggestions of data sources and guidance documents;
- Requirement for assessment of amendments to the draft RSES;
- In the context of the MASP, need to consider environmental constraints and challenges in the wider metropolitan areas;
- Need to reference international and national environmental objectives;
- Important to understand the objectives, methodologies, parameters, assumptions, etc. of any existing monitoring programme and clarify responsibilities for same;
- Plan-level mitigation to amend and be reflected in the content and objectives of the final strategy wherever necessary;
- Recognition in the strategy is needed for public authorities to take appropriate steps to avoid in European sites the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species, as well as disturbance of species for which a site has been designated insofar as this disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the Habitats Directive;
- General provisions in relation to IBIA, NIR, AA process;
- Consider a more coherent protection and enhancement of biodiversity as a whole on a regional and local level;

- Consider need to support national level policies at a regional level to protect and enhance natural heritage assets;
- Strategy should include a natural heritage section and refer to all designated sites within or adjoining the strategy area, which should be listed and mapped;
- Should recognise that protected species also occur outside designated sites and should ensure the protection of such species;
- Strategy should be developed to integrate biodiversity considerations in a positive, proactive and precautionary way;
- Strategy should include provisions to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance to wild fauna and flora;
- Protection of the physical environment, hydrological processes and biodiversity; and
- Transboundary effects.

Scoping Consultation was also undertaken with the wider public and these responses have been reviewed and considered in the preparation of the Natura Impact Report.

Further to the statutory SEA scoping consultation, an AA Screening statement was also forwarded directly to the Development Applications Unit in the DCHG, confirming the requirement to proceed to preparation of an NIR. A further submission was received from the DAU in August 2018 referring back to the earlier comments made on SEA scoping in February 2018 which are referenced above and also offering to meet to discuss the draft RSES. This feedback was fully considered in the preparation of the NIR and as relevant by the RSES team.

2.7.2 Draft RSES

The Draft RSES along with the SEA Environmental Report and the Natura Impact Report were put on public display between 18th December 2018 and 8th March 2019. In total 205 responses were received on the draft RSES during this round of consultation. These included submissions from members of the public, government bodies, NGOs, other state bodies/agencies, private companies etc. as well as the statutory consultees [including the DCHG]. A Director's Report on the submissions was prepared for the Elected Members of the Assembly by SRA. The submissions received were reviewed and a Directors Report was prepared to inform the Assembly. [The Directors Report on the draft RSES which reviews and analyses the submissions is available on the SRA website at https://www.southernassembly.ie/regional-planning/public-consultation.](https://www.southernassembly.ie/regional-planning/public-consultation)

A summary of the issues raised in the DCHG submission is presented in **Table 2.1** and other relevant issues raised from other stakeholder responses are presented in **Table 2.2**. It is noted that the responses included information relevant to all consultation documents including the SEA Environmental Report, the RFRA, the NIR and the draft RSES. As such, information on how this has been addressed includes reference to more than the NIR.

A meeting was also held with the NPWS in March 2019 to discuss the draft RSES. This was principally focussed on the EMRA RSES however it was acknowledged that many of the issues raised were relevant to all of the regional authorities and as such a summary of the key cross-cutting issues are included below:

- Role of the assemblies in terms of future development;
- Strategic nature of the strategy;
- Need for biodiversity to be more visible in the RSES

- Ecological issues with greenways and cycleways;
- Monitoring e.g. one off housing
- Support for ecosystem services approach;
- Pressure on peatlands;
- Need for good signposting to other tiers of planning;
- Need for coordination of local authorities in relation to integrated coastal zone management;
- Green infrastructure and the role in relation to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive;
- Ammonia as increasing pressure on Natura sites; and
- Partnership model.

2.7.3 Material Amendments

At an Assembly meeting in 10th May 2019, as required under section 24(8) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000, as amended, the members considered the recommendations of the Director's Report and proposed motions from the members. It was deemed that a number of these amendments were material in nature and as such, would require environmental assessment under SEA, AA and RFRA, in order to determine if significant impacts would arise as a result of their inclusion. The amendments were also subject to a further public display period in accordance with the requirements of section 24(8) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 as amended. The resulting *Proposed Material Amendments to the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region* were put on public display between 12th September and 11th October 2019 along with an environmental assessment report (see **Appendix G**).

96 submissions were received on the proposed material amendments and supporting assessment. A Directors Report was then prepared in response to the material amendments with the Director's recommendations i.e. to accept or reject, including any minor modifications. The decisions were again considered in the context of AA, RFRA and SEA.

As previously, a summary of the issues raised by DCHG submission is presented in **Table 2.3** and other relevant issues raised from other stakeholder responses are presented in **Table 2.4**.

The Directors Report on the Material Amendments to the RSES, which reviews and analyses the submissions is available on the SRA website at <https://www.southernassembly.ie/regional-planning/public-consultation>.

Table 2.1 – Summary of Relevant Comments from DCHG in Relation to the NIR for the Draft RSES

Comment	How this has been addressed
<p>RSES comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes strong individual commitment to safeguarding European sites, protecting and enhancing biodiversity and other aspects of the environment. • Effective delivery will benefit from early consideration of potential implications of individual components for key ecological receptors. • Further consideration needed in relation to integration and cross referencing of the protective measures in Table 7.1 of NIR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPO 1: Environmental Assessment address the RSES comments. • Protective measures as outlined in Table 7.1 are addressed through RPO 1 and relevant Regional Policy Objectives under each chapter. • RPO 126 (former RPO 120) Biodiversity is retained and has been strengthened through the process. • RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M) addresses stakeholder engagement in the

Comment	How this has been addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPO120 welcomed • Strategy needs to identify the role of LA and others have in considering implications of roll out of the strategy. • Commitments to BAP, Art. 10 needed. • Additional text / definition needed in the strategy to aid understanding of Natura 2000 network in the region/ Ireland. • Definition of sustainable in RPO1a should include no adverse effect on N2K and no net loss of biodiversity • Proximity to European sites in RPO 4 should be replaced with ref to no adverse effects. • RPO 63 reference to <i>ecosystem performance</i> [not related to biodiversity] should be amended to prevent confusion of meaning. • RPO 109 should be subject to hydrological and ground/peat stability assessment. • RPO 35 should be expanded to include retrofitting to address adverse effects on biodiversity. • Clear commitment needed to conserve biodiversity in both protected areas and in the wider landscape as per NBP. Sub-objective to encourage inclusion of maps of protected sites and biodiversity sites in DP. • PDA 2000, as amended requires DP to include an objective for protection of European sites and Natural Heritage Areas. Separate objective should be in RSES. • Inclusion of EclA in RPO 1 welcomed. • DCHG provided a list of RPO where it felt the term sustainable would be better used than the draft wording. • Where “subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments” does not take account of the need for assessment at lower tier planning stages. • DCHG provided a list of RPO where the qualification “subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments” should also be included. • RPO 10 Tralee qualification should also apply to RPO 11 Killarney. Similarly for RPO 12d Mallow and RPO 16d Thurles • Waterford MASP Obj 4 should adopt same qualifiers to enablers as presented for Cork MASP obj. 6. • 10. Cork MASP (Obj. 8d) Neither the bullet point relating to the reopening of the Midleton – Youghal railway, nor the draft Environmental Report, mention the implications that the route passes through Ballyvergan Marsh proposed Natural Heritage Area, which holds a population of reed warbler, a migratory species which there is an obligation to protect under the EU Birds Directive. • Cork MASP (Obj. 9m) - This sub-objective seeks delivery of: “Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road Linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh”. While the objective is qualified, and the upgrade may not necessarily require a bridge, it is important that this 	<p>implementation of the RSES. The role of Local Authorities to implement the RPOs of RSES is implicit in the planning hierarchy whereby all lower tiered plans including development plans and local area plans prepared by the Local Authority must comply with the RSES. RPO 1 also applies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitments to the National Biodiversity Action Plan are addressed through RPO 126 (former RPO 120) Biodiversity. • Chapter 1 of the RSES includes a specific sub section Environment and Environmental Appraisal which highlights the importance of the Natura 2000 Network. In addition, Chapter 5 Biodiversity and Chapter 5 Landscape address the network with supporting objective RPO 126 (former RPO 120) Biodiversity. Further, RPO 202 (former RPO 194) Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Built Heritage Assets in Chapter 7. • RPO 5 (former RPO 4): Population Growth and Environmental Criteria includes requirement that increased population growth should be planned with regard to environmental criteria, including the proximity of Natura 2000 sites and potential for adverse effects on these sites. • RPO 66 (former RPO 63) is now titled Monitoring and evaluating our economic ecosystem performance. • RPO 114 (former RPO 109) Flood Risk Management Objectives seeks to ensure that developments in upland areas, such as wind farm developments, roadway construction, peatland drainage and forestry proposals, provide sufficient storm water attenuation to avoid the occurrence of river erosion or flooding downstream subject to hydrological and ground/peat stability assessments. • RPO 38 (former RPO 35) Retrofitting Initiative Priorities includes sub part (c): Support initiatives that retrofit environmental amenities to address adverse effects on biodiversity and the environment. • RPO 126 (former RPO 120) Biodiversity includes sub part (a) to promote biodiversity protection and habitat connectivity both within protected areas and in the landscape through promoting the integration of green infrastructure and ecosystem services, including landscape, heritage, biodiversity and management of invasive and alien species in the preparation of statutory and non-statutory land-use plans. • RPO 1 is clear under part (c) that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken

Comment	How this has been addressed
<p>is fully assessed, as any new bridge development must cross Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel cSAC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for environmental assessment, including ecological impact assessment and appropriate assessment, to inform the development of plans and projects at all levels and this should be reflected in RPO166. • Although most documents referred to in the objectives, as being supported for implementation, will have been subject to SEA and AA where necessary, this is not always clear. For instance, RPO55 supports the National Policy Statement on the Bio-Economy (2018. Cork MASP Obj. 8 (& h) refer to Cork walking and cycling strategies. It needs to be checked that such documents have been fully assessed. • RPO52 and 56 and 138 could be strengthened by a stronger commitment to undertake environmental assessment as appropriate and required by law. • Mitigation Measures - a constraints-led and iterative approach, which seeks to avoid or minimise adverse effects, is key to good project planning, and it is recommended that consideration should be given to incorporating this into the strategy. • Recommended that mitigation is integrated and cross-referenced into the strategy. • sustainability of developments that will have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites is contingent on a number of factors, including the long-term compensation of the Natura 2000 network. It is recommended that this is acknowledged and planned for, where necessary, in the strategy. • Separate RPO to identify accurate collation and dissemination of environmental data across the Assembly area. Greater access to better information can build the foundation for better assessment, risk avoidance and decision making. 	<p>in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required and under (d) that Development Plans shall include an objective for the protection of European sites and Natural Heritage Areas (designated and notified proposed NHAs).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The word environmentally sustainable development is integrated throughout relevant RPOs in addition to RPO 1. • All Key Town RPOs have mitigation integrated within RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns and each relevant RPO including RPO 15 (former RPO 10): Tralee “Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive Lee Estuary”, RPO 18 (former RPO 11) Killarney “Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the downstream freshwater ecosystem in the National Park (River Deenagh, Lough Leane)”, RPO 19 (former RPO 12) Mallow “Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the Local Authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive River Blackwater” and RPO 21 (former RPO 16): Thurles “Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive River Suir”. • Regarding mitigation for all MASP objectives for Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford, RPO 1 applies. Further MASP Objective 1 in each MASP integrates the following mitigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

Comment	How this has been addressed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region. • Cork MASP Objective 8 includes the following specific mitigation “ The development of a greenway from Midleton to Youghal and still allow for future rail use if feasible at a later stage subject to SEA/AA and protection of the Ballyvergan Marsh proposed Natural Heritage Area”. • Cork MASP Policy Objective 9 Strategic Road Network Improvements includes the requirement to seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appropriate project appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA/AA as appropriate. • Regarding walking and cycling infrastructure, RPO 174 (former RPO 166) Walking and Cycling includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivery of the cycle network set out in the three regional cities’ metropolitan area Cycle Network Plans, inclusive of key commuter routes and greenways subject to SEA and AA where required; ▪ Support sustainable pedestrian and cyclist greenway initiatives and the potential for inter connections between greenways subject to robust site selection processes and environmental assessment processes. ▪ A buffer distance shall be maintained between walking, cycling, Greenway and Blueway corridors and from coastal areas, particularly those subject to current and future erosion, as well as rivers and canals to ensure protection of riparian zones and; ▪ Such initiatives shall commit to feasibility and route selection studies with a view to identifying and subsequently avoiding high sensitivity feeding or nesting points for birds and other sensitive fauna. • Regarding the recommendation that although most documents referred to in the objectives, as being supported for implementation, will have been subject to SEA and AA where necessary, this is not always clear, RPO 1 applies. • RPO 54 (former RPO 52) Tourism and the Environment, RPO 58 (former RPO 56) Bio-economy and Rural Areas and RPO 143 (former RPO 138) Ports and Airports integrate mitigation in addition to RPO 1. • Regarding monitoring and environmental data, RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M) includes carrying out regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data (including environmental data), if

Comment	How this has been addressed
	available, from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories.
<p>NIR comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NIR has no explanation for ‘carrying capacity’ of European sites. A clear and through explanation is required for such terms. Such assessments do not replace the need for AA. High status rivers (RPO125) - High ecological status is required in rivers designated (within cSACs) for freshwater pearl mussel, and the promotion of good status would be insufficient for the obligatory protection of these rivers. This objective may need to be reassessed in the NIR. Tourism (RPO51) - The unqualified statement “promote activity tourism” (b), without reference to appropriate sites and to adequate assessment, may result in significant effects on European and other high-nature value sites and requires further assessment. This should be addressed. It is not considered adequate to rely on RPO01, as in the mitigation proposed in the NIR (p. 82): “Any plans relating to the development of new or expansion/renewal of existing facilities and amenities shall be subject to the commitments under RPO 1 and the outcome of appropriate planning and environmental assessment processes.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As noted by the EC, the aim of the Birds and Habitats Directive is not to stop all social or economic activity within European sites. It is acknowledged that much depends on the specific environmental, as well as social and economic circumstances of each site and the precise ecological requirements of the species and habitat types present. This can only be assessed on a case by case basis. The purpose of the reference to carrying capacity is to reflect the need to establish these precise ecological requirements of the species and habitat for which the designation has been made and reflect this in the type and level of activity that can be permitted. This would be aligned with and inform the Appropriate Assessment. Additional text has been added to the assessment of RPO 125 RPO 52 clearly establishes the context for tourism growth stating: Development of new or enhanced tourism infrastructure and facilities should include an assessment of the environmental sensitivities of the area including an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) if required in order to avoid adverse impacts on the receiving environment. Where such tourism infrastructure or facilities are developed, the managing authority/ agency should ensure that effective monitoring protocols are put in place to monitor and assess the ongoing effect of tourism on sensitive features with particular focus on natural, archaeological and built heritage assets.

Table 2.2 – Summary of Relevant NIR Comments from Other Stakeholders in Relation to the Draft RSES

Comment	How this has been addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for integrated framework plan for development of the key harbour /port areas within the region welcomed. In preparing these plans, the requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives should be fully considered. RPO 94 should also consider the requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives and would benefit from being undertaken in tandem with regional landscape and regional green infrastructure and biodiversity action planning, to assist in identifying preferential areas for renewable energy developments, in an environmentally sustainable manner. Renewable energy developments should be required to be carried out in an environmentally sustainable manner and sited at 	<p>The issues raised have been considered as part of the evolution of the draft RSES and have been part of an ongoing iterative assessment process. A series of material and non-material amendments were proposed to address issues raised through consultation and these have in turn been assessed as part of the SEA / AA/ RFRA processes which have been ongoing in parallel throughout.</p>

Comment	How this has been addressed
<p>appropriate locations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RSES should promote the future development / expansion of greenways/blueways that are developed in an environmentally sensitive manner and in accordance with the relevant environmental assessments. The aim should be to maximise the co-benefits of greenways for the environment, economy and society, and avoid damage to sensitive species/habitats etc. Invasive species management and control are particularly important issues for greenways/blue ways and should be addressed in the proposed code of practice. • The intention to develop a separate freight transport strategy for the region is noted. The requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives should be considered, as appropriate in relation to these activities. • The absence of any reference to 'habitat connectivity' is a significant defect in the Strategy. Appropriate measures should be put in place to maintain a network of corridors to ensure the dispersal of plants and animals across the countryside. Rivers in particular play an important role in habitat connectivity. A regional strategy to maintain and restore these biodiversity corridors is required. • There should be specific goals in the Strategy which would aim to maintain and restore ecological connectivity between important habitats and designated areas. • All recommendations and mitigation measures arising from the SEA and AA processes should be reflected in the final RSES. Where any of the mitigation measures or recommendations put forward in the SEA Environmental Report or Natura Impact Report are not incorporated into the final RSES, appropriate justification should be provided. • The reference to natural capital in the title of Section 2 should be expanded to include the definition of natural capital. The connection between natural capital and the provision of ecosystem services should be addressed. • The definitions should be expanded to recognise that the natural capital approach (i.e. measuring, valuing and accounting for natural capital assets and the ecosystem services they provide to people) can support sustainable environmental management, including the achievement of climate resilience and the transition to a low- 	

Comment	How this has been addressed
<p>carbon economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural capital can be seen as a solution to climate change, i.e. natural capital and specific services can be used to mitigate (e.g. carbon sequestration) and adapt to (e.g. flood defences) climate change. 	

Table 2.3 – Summary of Relevant NIR Comments from DCHG Arising from Proposed Material Amendments

Comment	How this has been addressed in the RSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The environmental assessment processes have clearly identified risks, impact pathways and concerns for nature conservation interests that are associated with elements of the draft RSES. These reports, including the updates contained in the Environmental Assessment Report for the proposed material amendments, have proposed a wide range of mitigation measures to address these concerns. All these mitigation measures are fully incorporated in the final RSES to ensure that a high level of protection of the environment is achieved as part of the plan-making process. In this regard, the Department acknowledges and welcomes the positive changes made in a number of the material amendments to incorporate environmental considerations in the RSES. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. The Final Southern RSES has broadly integrated the mitigation from the NIR and SEA Environmental Reporting.

Table 2.4 – Summary of Relevant NIR Comments from Other Stakeholders Arising from Proposed Material Amendments

Comment	How this has been addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regional biodiversity action plan should be developed to contribute to the loss of biodiversity at a regional scale. Opportunities' to protect, maintain and enhance ecological corridors should be considered as part of tourism and amenity related proposals. The need to protect designated sites, protected species and supporting ecological linkages should be a key consideration for tourism initiatives. Also need for consideration of requirements under HD and WFD and potential for cumulative effects. Impact of one off housing on biodiversity. Support for port expansion and development should be conditional on compliance with HD. Recommended support for integrated framework plan similar to Shannon Estuary which can then afforded protection where needed. 	<p>The issues raised have been considered as part of the evolution of the draft RSES and have been part of an ongoing iterative assessment process. A series of non-material amendments were proposed to address issues raised through consultation and these have in turn been assessed as part of the SEA / AA/ RFRA processes which have been ongoing in parallel throughout.</p>

Comment	How this has been addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● RPO 19 – careful assessment needed, in particular AA in relation to development along the Barrow. River Barrow is currently impacted with a crayfish plague, which should also be considered in any proposed developments to avoid spreading it to other areas. Development should be zoned appropriate to the level of flooding identified and appropriate setback and buffer zones need also be considered to avoid impacting designated habitats and protected species. Compliance with Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plan water quality objectives should also be key considerations.● MA 23 & 30 RPO C & D– Recommended that a commitment CEMP be required, as appropriate to ensure any necessary mitigation measures are established and implemented at construction stage.● Support for freight strategy under MA 60 should take account of requirements of SEA and Habitats Directive.	

3 SOUTHERN REGION RSES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the principle functions of the Southern Region RSES will be to practically support and advance the delivery of the national policy objectives contained in the NPF. The SRA will bring forward the NPF in a manner which best reflects the challenges and opportunities of the region. It has been anticipated by the NPF that each of the three regional assemblies will begin to fill out the national policy objectives, in some cases giving them geographic or temporal context and in other cases elaborating on project concepts. The Southern Region RSES will support the delivery of the NPF removing the top-down perception and replacing it with a shared responsibility and understanding.

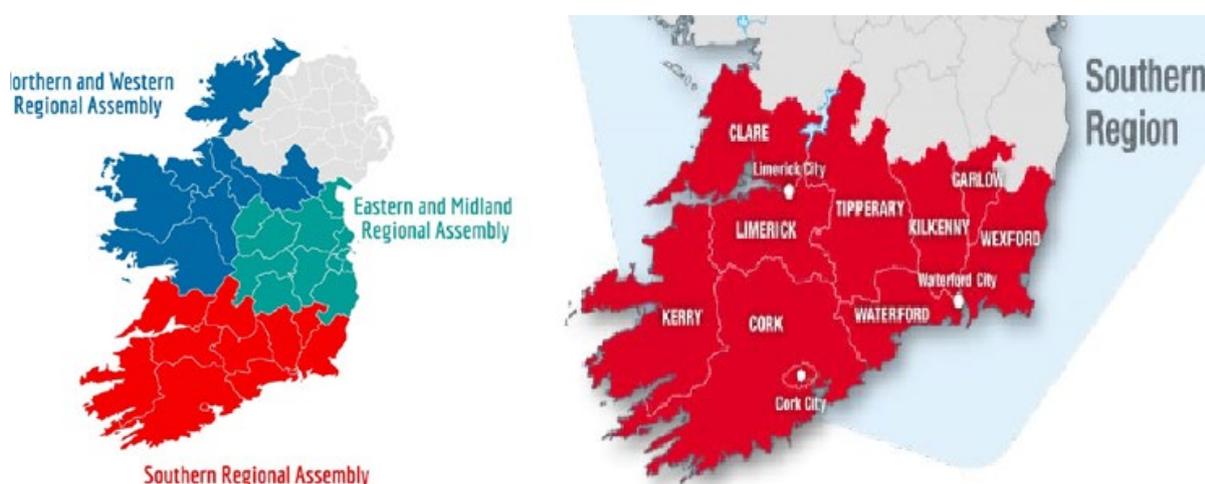


Figure 3-1 - Regional Assemblies and the Southern Region²

3.2 STRATEGIC VISION FOR THE SOUTHERN REGION

The vision statement for the Southern Region RSES is:

“Nurture all our places, realise their full potential, achieve economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all our citizens, promote the region’s international reputation as one of Europe’s most creative, innovative, greenest and liveable regions.”

3.3 KEY ASPECTS OF THE DRAFT SR RSES

The RSES seeks to determine at regional scale how best to achieve the shared goals set out in the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) of the National Planning Framework. To this end, the draft Strategy sets out 10 Regional Strategic Outcomes (RSOs), which are aligned with the NSOs of the NPF, international, EU and national policy and which in turn set the framework for City and County Development Plans, in turn the RSES can assist Local Authorities in aligning with EU priorities to leverage funding and partnership opportunities. The 10 RSO’s are also aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The NSO’s have also been developed in iteration with the Key Principles and Strategic Environmental Objectives of the parallel Environmental Assessment processes.

² SRA (November 2017) Consultation Issues Paper

The Southern Region's Regional Strategic Outcomes are set out as follows:

Table 3-1 – Southern Region's Regional Strategic Outcomes

 <p>Compact Growth</p>	<p>Support investment in the sustainable development, regeneration and retrofitting of infrastructure across our region's cities, towns and villages and support communities who will drive opportunities within our place based assets forward.</p>
 <p>Enhanced Regional Accessibility</p>	<p>To have high quality inter-regional and intra-regional transport systems that improve connectivity and journey times between centres of population of scale and our region's international port and airport gateways.</p>
 <p>Sustainable Mobility</p>	<p>To have multiple sustainable mobility choices for all our citizens, in urban and rural communities, delivered through well-functioning integrated public transport, walking and cycling facilities that reduce our dependency on private car journeys and transitions the Southern Region to a low carbon future.</p>
 <p>High-Quality International Connectivity</p>	<p>To achieve delivery of high speed and future proofed mobile and digital connectivity throughout all locations in the Southern Region and leverage maximum opportunity from the capacity and potential of our region's collective sea ports and airport assets as gateway windows from the Southern Region and State to the world.</p>
 <p>A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills</p>	<p>Build and strengthen a sustainable, resilient, innovative, connected, competitive and inclusive region on the global stage which has ready to go capacity and facilities and a strong collaborative culture across academia, industry, public sector and communities to encourage indigenous and international enterprise growth in the Southern Region,</p>
 <p>Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities</p>	<p>To strengthen the role and improve quality of life in the Southern Region's diverse rural places and communities and value our rural region as a dynamic, resilient and outward looking areas of potential, integral to a competitive multi-sectoral economy in the Southern Region.</p>
 <p>Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services</p>	<p>Achieve improved access to a range of accessible childcare, education and health and other social services for all citizens, relative to</p>

	the scale of the region, city, town, neighbourhood and community.
 <p>Enhanced Culture, Amenity and Heritage</p>	Value our region's diverse culture recreation, natural heritage, biodiversity and built heritage as key enablers to an enhanced quality of life for existing citizens and assets that distinguish our region as unique location on a national and global stage.
 <p>Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and Other Environmental Resources</p>	Enable growth in our region and development of infrastructure and services in a sustainable, plan and infrastructure led manner while preserving, improving and valuing the quality of our region's environmental resources and natural heritage areas as unique assets that contribute to the attractiveness, success and competitiveness of our region.
 <p>Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society</p>	Transform behavioural change across all sectors and maximise the opportunities of technology change to position the Southern Region as one of the greenest regions in Europe, a leader in achieving a low carbon economy and climate change resilience.

4 OVERVIEW OF THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

Ireland has obligations under EU law to protect and conserve biodiversity. This relates to habitats and species both within and outside designated sites. Nationally, Ireland has developed a Biodiversity Plan (DCHG, 2017) to address issues and halt the loss of biodiversity, in line with international commitments. The overall vision in the National Biodiversity Plan is that *“biodiversity and ecosystems in Ireland are conserved and restored, delivering benefits essential for all sectors of society and that Ireland contributes to efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems in the EU and globally.”* The NBP includes seven headline objectives cross referenced as appropriate to both the relevant Aichi Biodiversity targets and also the UN sustainability goals. Objective 6 specifically addresses the Natura 2000 network. It states: *Expand and improve management of protected areas and species.* The three related sub-objectives are:

- Natura 2000 network designated and under effective conservation management by 2020;
- Sufficiency, coherence, connectivity, and resilience of the protected areas network substantially enhanced by 2020; and
- No protected species in worsening status by 2020; majority species in, or moving towards, favourable status by 2020.

4.1 IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES

The DEHLG (2009 rev. 2010) guidance on the zone of influence (Zoi) to be considered during the AA process states the following: *“A distance of 15km is currently recommended in the case of plans, and derives from UK guidance (Scott Wilson et al., 2006). For projects, the distance could be much less than 15km, and in some cases less than 100m, but this must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in combination effects”.*

The RSES does not detail geographic specificity for the implementation of many of the RSES measures, and it must be assumed that these measures could be applied anywhere within the Southern Region. The Zoi of the RSES is therefore considered to include all European Sites within the Southern Region and considers transboundary impacts to SACs and SPAs with direct connectivity e.g. rivers flowing into or out of the Southern Region.

The Natura 2000 Network of sites is designated owing to its ecological importance in a European context. Sites within the Natura 2000 Network are referred to as European Sites and comprise SACs and SPAs. SACs are concerned with the protection of specific QIs and SCIs and the legal basis for their designation is the EU Habitats Directive. In the Republic of Ireland, 433 SACs (with a further 6 offshore sites) have been designated covering 58 habitat types recognised in Annex I of the Directive, with 16 habitats designated as “priority” habitats owing to their ecological vulnerability. In addition, the same Directive recognises 26 Annex II species. Of the 58 habitats, 44 are considered to be water dependent habitats, and 22 species are considered to be water dependent. The habitats covered extend across the country and cover a range of ecological features from coastal to grassland to woodland. Priority habitats include active bogs, turloughs and fixed dunes. Annex II species include Lesser Horseshoe bats, Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), among others. Through the Birds Directive, SPAs designated for the protection of endangered species of wild birds including listed rare and vulnerable species, regularly occurring migratory species as well as wetland habitats that support such species. Currently there are 165 SPAs designated within the Republic of Ireland [all SAC and SPA numbers are downloaded from NPWS datasets as of August 2018].

It is acknowledged that Qualifying Interest (QIs)/ Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of European Sites have different sensitivities and therefore a set distance of 15km is not appropriate to assess the potential effects on all QIs/ SCIs that may be impacted by the objectives of the RSES. For example QI fish species could be affected by changes to water quality at more than 15km distance, SCI bird species might be most significantly affected by disturbance within 1km of their habitat.

Therefore, the impact assessment considers the sensitivities to European Sites in light of their generic Conservation Objectives (COs, which encompass the spirit of the site specific COs in the context of maintaining and restoring favourable conservation condition) and how they may be connected to and subsequently impacted by the RSES through abiotic and biotic vectors. To this end, the ZoI extends to European Sites to include ecological receptors connected to the RSES through overlap / intersection, proximity and connectivity through features such as surface water and groundwater interactions. As the objectives give rise to more concrete plans and projects down through the planning hierarchy, the site specific conservation objectives (SSCO) will be more appropriate to present.

Figure 4.1 outlines the role of AA through the planning hierarchy as it relates to plans and projects informed by the RSES.

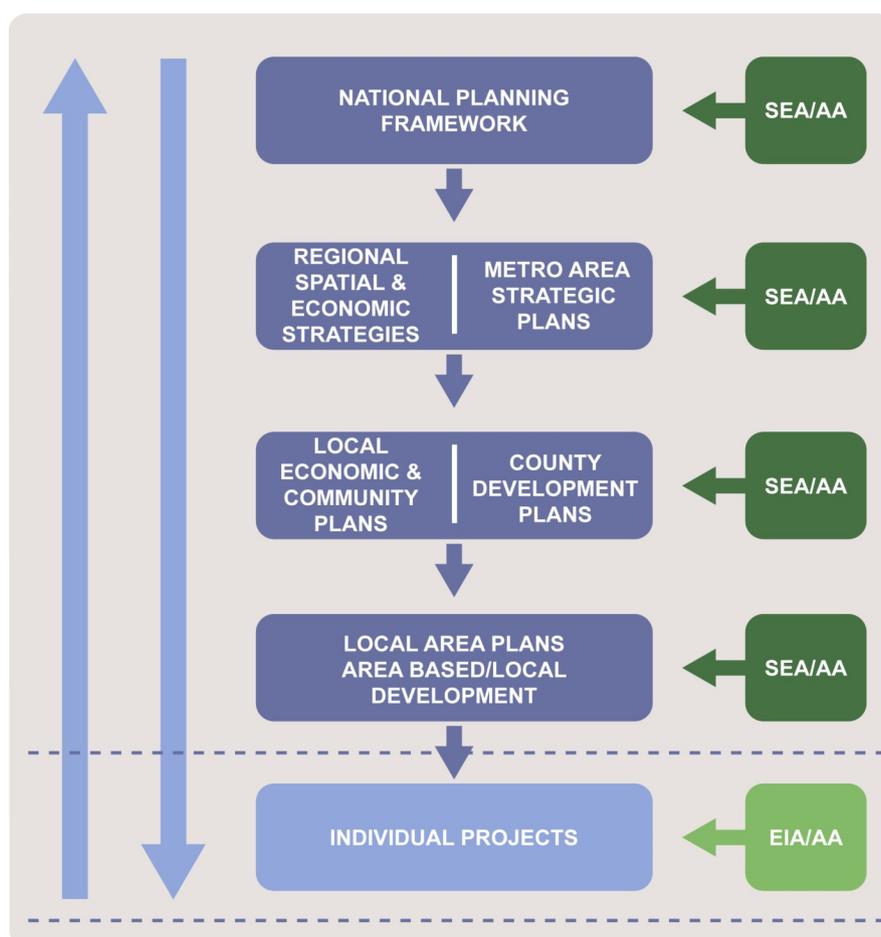


Figure 4-1 – AA within the Planning Hierarchy of the RSES

A breakdown of the European Sites within or partially within the Southern Region is presented in **Table 4.1**. **Figure 4-2** shows the distribution of the SACs and SPAs listed in **Table 4.1**. A full listing of the European Sites are included in **Appendix B & C**. It is acknowledged that the number of European

Sites designated, and their boundaries, are subject to change over time and must therefore be verified on an ongoing basis.

Table 4-1 – European Sites within the Zone of Influence of the RSES

European Sites*	Southern Region	Eastern and Midland	Northern and Western
SAC	145	86	217
SPA	61	39	82

*NPWS data revision as of Dec 2019. Note counts include any intersection within a RA area and some sites occur in more than one RA.

It is acknowledged that European sites which are within or partially within SRA may originate in one of the other regions, especially where there may be surface or groundwater connectivity upstream. To consider this further, **Figure 4-3** shows the water connectivity between the three regions. This will be considered during the assessment process for all three regions.

4.2 CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

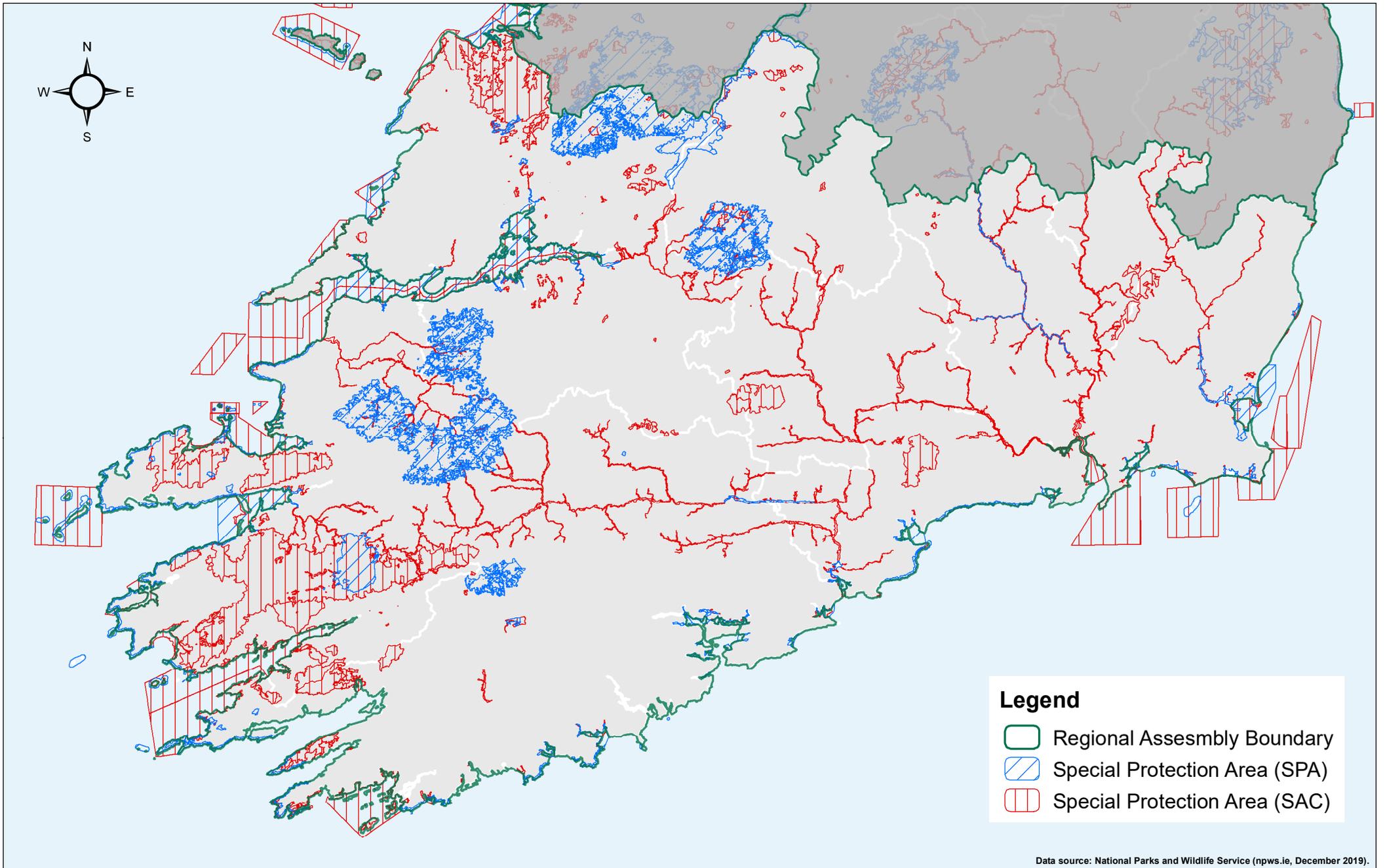
Site-specific conservation objectives (SSCO) aim to define favourable conservation condition for a particular habitat or species at a European site. Maintaining habitats and species in a favourable conservation condition then contributes to the wider objective to maintain those most vulnerable habitats and species at favourable status throughout their range within the Natura 2000 network.

At an individual site level, SSCOs specify whether the objective is to maintain or to restore favourable conservation condition of the habitat or species, and they set out attributes and targets that define the objectives. It is the aim of the DCHG to produce SSCOs for all European sites in due course³. Qualifying interests (QI) and Special conservation Interests (SCIs) are annexed habitats and annexed species of community interest for which an SAC or SPA has been designated. The SSCOs for European Sites are set out to ensure that the QIs/ SCIs of that site are maintained or restored to a favourable conservation condition/ conservation status.

A full listing of the COs and QIs/ SCIs that each European Site is designated for, as well as the attributes and targets to maintain or restore the QIs/ SCIs to a favourable conservation condition are available from the NPWS website www.npws.ie.

It is noted that the existing conservation condition of some habitats and species is unfavourable at present for various reasons, including because of exceedance in environmental quality parameters. This is discussed further in the next section.

³ https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/



Legend

- Regional Assesbly Boundary
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Special Protection Area (SAC)

Data source: National Parks and Wildlife Service (npws.ie, December 2019).

Figure 4-2 – European Sites in the Southern Region



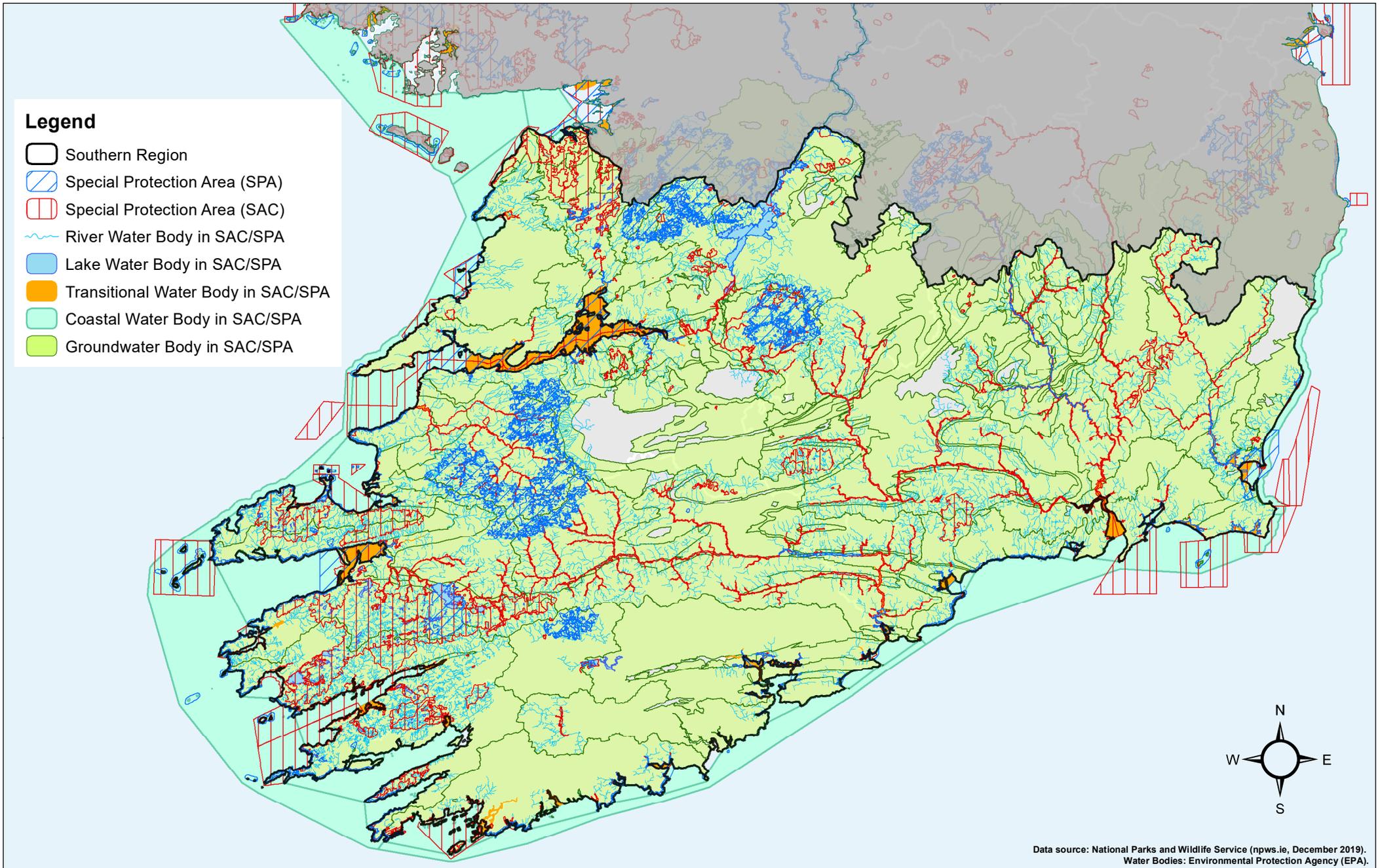


Figure 4-3 – European Sites and Hydrological Connectivity

4.3 CONSERVATION STATUS OF EU PROTECTED HABITATS AND SPECIES

In 2007, 2013 and again in 2019 the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) published a report detailing the conservation status in Ireland of habitats and species listed in the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), often referred to as “*the Article 17 Report*”⁴. Under the Habitats Directive, each Member State is obliged to undertake surveillance of the conservation status of the natural habitats and species in the Annexes and under Article 17, to report to the European Commission every six years on their status and on the implementation of the measures taken under the Directive. **Appendix F** sets out a summary of the conservation status of each habitat and species from 2007 to 2019.

For the 2019 submission, Ireland’s Article 17 Report recorded 15% of habitats as “*favourable*”, 46% as “*inadequate*” and 39% as “*bad*”. Among the key findings were:

- Many Irish habitats are in unfavourable status. Many are still declining albeit with some positive actions underway while almost half are demonstrating ongoing declines;
- The main pressures to habitats are from grazing; pollution of watercourses; drainage / cutting of peatlands and wetlands; invasive species; recreation; [urbanisation; fertilizer application; and road building among others;]
- Some of the marine habitats are considered to be improving, and to have better prospects, due in part to implementation of other EU environmental directives;
- The status of raised bogs in Ireland is “*bad*”; and the trend is for an ongoing decline as restoration is necessary to cause improvement, notwithstanding the cessation of cutting on SAC bogs. However, The National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation Management Plan 2017- 2022 sets out a commitment for protection and restoration activities within all raised bog SACs while Bord na Móna will cease the supply and use of peat by 2020;
- Grasslands, such as orchid-rich grasslands and hay meadows, have undergone significant losses over the last decade, with 31% and 28% of the area monitored reported as being lost. Some improvements have been associated with the Burren Programme and Aran LIFE;
- Blanket bog is also assessed as “*bad*”; the report notes that, as one of the main impacts on this habitat is grazing, an improving trend might be expected due to the implementation of Commonage Framework Plans. However, this improvement appears to be offset and even exceeded by on-going deleterious effects such as peat cutting, erosion, drainage and burning;
- Although some of our woodlands are rated as “*bad*” because they are patchy and fragmented, improvements have been noted due to afforestation, the planting of native species, the removal of alien species and control of overgrazing. Improvements noted from 2013 are now recorded as stable in 2019;
- Many freshwater habitats are considered unfavourable due to nutrient loading within the catchment, however the RBMP (2018-2021) will aim to ensure improved targeting of mitigation measures.

⁴ The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland, NPWS 2007 (Vol 1-3), 2013 (Vol 1 -3) and 2019 (Vol 1-3).

- Losses of limestone pavement has been recorded outside the SAC network, however the BurrenLIFE and Burren Farming for Conservation Programme have significantly improved the quality of pavement and its associated habitats.

From the 2019 report, 57% of species were assessed as “favourable”, 15% as “inadequate”, 15% as “bad” and 13% as “unknown” or considered to be vagrant species. Among the key findings are:

- Otter, pine marten and many bat species have also been assessed as “favourable” with evidence of an expanding range;
- The Natterjack toad is not exhibiting adequate positive results but has gone from “bad” in 2013 to stable in 2019.
- Salmon (*Salmo salar*) is showing signs of improvement and the Killarney shad (*Alosa killarneyensis*) is still assessed as “favourable”, but some other fish remain at “bad” status; and
- Freshwater pearl mussel is “bad” and declining.

Similarly, the requirements for reporting under Article 12 of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) are every 6 years. Ireland’s Article 12 submission to the EU Commission on the *Status and trends of bird species (2008-2012)*⁵ covers 196 species which includes breeding, wintering and passage species. The report details that some species have had significant increases in population over the long term, including raven (*Corvus corax*), collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) and blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*). However, other species have undergone significant declines in their long-term breeding population trend: corncrake (*Crex crex*) (85%), curlew (*Numenius arquata*) (98%), lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) (88%) and redshank (*Tringa totanus*) (88%). The hen harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) shows a long-term population trend decrease of 27%. The results confirm that there is a need for measures to halt the declines noted above, most of which are due largely to changes in farming practices and intensity, and also the increase of activity in extensively farmed uplands through forests and wind farm construction. **Appendix E** sets out a summary of the conservation status of each bird species from both 2007 and 2013.

4.4 ARTICLE 10 OF THE HABITATS DIRECTIVE AND EX-SITU IMPACTS

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive refers to features of the landscape outside designated sites which are of importance for wild flora and fauna, as follows:

Member States shall endeavour, where they consider it necessary, in their land-use planning and development policies and, in particular, with a view to improving the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network, to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora.

Such features are those which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (such as rivers with their banks or the traditional systems for marking field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones (such as ponds or small woods), are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/rep_birds/index_en.htm [Accessed September 2016]

The requirements of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive are not specifically considered under the AA process (except in so far as they support a qualifying feature) but it is noted that the SRA includes the following objective: **RPO 1** - . The inclusion of this policy will have indirect positive impacts on the Natura 2000 network as ecological connectivity within the Plan area is maintained or improved, which will in turn improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

4.5 EXISTING THREATS AND PRESSURES TO EU PROTECTED HABITATS / SPECIES

Under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, member states are obliged to identify threats and pressures to QIs/SCIs using a standard set of criteria. A threat is defined as an “Activity expected to have an impact on a species/habitat type in the future”, and a pressure is defined as an “Activity impacting a species/habitat type during the reporting cycle”⁶.

Threats and pressures considered to be most relevant and linked either directly or indirectly to the RSES were extracted from the full list of threats and pressures⁷. The headline categories considered relevant to the RSES are presented below, with a more detailed breakdown of the threats and pressures under each headline category presented in **Appendix F**.

- Agriculture;
- Forestry;
- Mining, quarrying and energy production;
- Biological resource other than agriculture & forestry;
- Transportation and service infrastructure;
- Urbanisation, residential and commercial development;
- Disturbance due to human activities;
- Pollution;
- Invasive and introduced species;
- Modification of natural conditions; and
- Climate change.

A general lack of environmental awareness, especially regarding ecosystem services was cited by the EPA in the 2012 State of the Environment Report as a pressure on national biodiversity. In their updated 2016 report⁸, the future challenges for biodiversity were cited as:

- Land use changes and the planned intensification of agriculture may lead to further habitat loss;
- Climate change is intensifying and the current underlying issues will persist;
- The mainstreaming of biodiversity into economic and development decisions would be of benefit to nature protection;
- There is room for improved co-ordination on nature issues across linked directives and regulatory bodies;

⁶ Reference Portal for reporting under the Article 17 of the Habitats Directive *Explanatory Notes & Guidelines for the period 2007-2012* http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Reporting/Article_17/reference_portal

⁷ Accessed on the Reference Portal for reporting under the Article 17 of the Habitats Directive http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Reporting/Article_17/reference_portal

⁸ http://www.epa.ie/media/Chapter4_Nature.pdf

- Robust baseline monitoring systems and comprehensive services mapping systems are needed to highlight and protect nature in Ireland, and
- Increased public awareness is vital.

An updated National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 was published in May 2017. It lists seven key objectives as follows:

- Mainstream biodiversity into decision-making across all sectors.
- Strengthen the knowledge base for conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside.
- Conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the marine environment.
- Expand and improve management of protected areas and species.
- Strengthen international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy has a significant role to play in achieving these seven objectives, together with others policy documents such as the Climate Mitigation Plan, the River Basin Management Plan and the National Planning Framework.

Ireland's Prioritised Action Framework was published by the DAHG in November 2014 and this was based upon the *EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020* (2011). It identified a range of actions needed to help improve the status of Ireland's habitats and species. The key priorities outlined in the framework are outlined below:

- Restoration of raised bogs;
- Better protection for blanket bogs and Ireland's uplands generally;
- Better management of Ireland's dunes and machair systems;
- Better protection for turloughs;
- Measures to protect Ireland's remaining freshwater pearl mussels; and
- New measures to protect birds in decline such as the hen harrier, corncrake and waders.

In addition, there is a growing awareness and recognition of importance of ecosystem services supported at policy level. Target 2 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Strategic Plan 2011-2020 requires that: *"By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems"*. This is mirrored in both the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (Target 5) and Ireland's National Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016/ 2017-2021 (Target 3).

5 STAGE 1 SCREENING FOR AA

In order to comply with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive, the process of screening for AA was undertaken at an early stage in the drafting of the RSES. The screening for AA assessed in view of best scientific knowledge whether the draft RSES, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have a significant effect on any European Site.

5.1 POTENTIAL FOR LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Screening for AA was undertaken before the detailed policy objectives were developed and therefore the potential likely significant effects were largely unknown. Given the strategic nature of the plan, the current stage of preparation; the range of potential policy objectives that could have been utilised in the RSES once drafted, e.g. potentially including construction of infrastructure, land use changes or behavioural changes, potential for impact pathway; and uncertainties relating to the implementation and zone of influence of the plan going forward, it was concluded that the potential for likely significant effects could not be ruled out given the uncertainty as to what the policy objectives might include.

5.2 SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT CONCLUSION

On completion of the screening AA, the following was determined by SRA:

'It could not be excluded, on the basis of objective scientific information, that the SR RSES, individually or in combination with other plans and projects will have a significant effect on a European site. As such, it is recommended that an Appropriate Assessment is required and a Natura Impact Report should be prepared.'

The report detailing the screening for AA is provided in **Appendix D**.

6 STAGE 2 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT OF THE DRAFT RSES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The NIR to inform the AA for the draft SR RSES considers the potential impacts of the draft strategy and whether the strategy would adversely affect the integrity of a European site. EC guidance (MN2000) states that the integrity of a site involves its ecological functions and the decision as to whether it is adversely affected should focus on, and be limited to, the site's conservation objectives.

This section considers and sets out the elements of the draft SR RSES that have potential to adversely affect European sites. The potential effects have been assessed in the absence of any mitigation measures, and taking account of the precautionary principle. It is noted that the development of the draft SR RSES has benefited from an integration of SEA/ AA expertise to highlight and address concerns on an ongoing basis as the strategy has evolved. This is in line with the Habitats Directive which promotes a hierarchy beginning with avoidance before considering mitigation and compensatory measures. Through iterative discussion during the preparation of the draft SR RSES, avoidance of impacts as a result of implementing the draft SR RSES has therefore been to the forefront of discussions with SRA.

It is noted that the draft SR RSES is a strategic framework document which will be supported by a robust tiering of regional and local level plans within the overall proposed hierarchy. As detail is developed down through the hierarchy, further opportunity for focussed assessment will be required to inform decision making at a granularity which cannot be undertaken at the regional scale.

6.2 ASPECTS OF THE RSES TO BE ASSESSED

Aspects of the SR RSES setting out proposals for growth, settlement, transport, infrastructure, employment and economy were considered in this assessment. **Table 6.1** sets out the various elements of the SR RSES and identifies those to be assessed as part of this assessment.

Table 6-1 – Elements of RSES assessed in NIR

Element of RSES	Assessed in NIR
1. Introduction from Director	No – sets out what the RSES is and the key issues, the functions of the SRA and National Policy
2. Strategic Vision	Yes – sets out overall vision for the region. Formal assessment of overarching regional goals completed.
3. People & Places	Yes – Regional growth centres and key growth settlements analysed in the context of European site sensitivities generally in the absence of specific spatial proposals.
4. A Strong Economy – Innovative & Smart	Yes – policy base assessed
5. Environment- Creating a Clean Environment for a healthy society	Yes – policy base assessed

Element of RSES	Assessed in NIR
6. Connectivity	Yes – policy base assessed
7. Quality of Life	Yes – policy base assessed
8. Water & Utilities	Yes – policy base assessed
9. Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation	Yes – policy base assessed
10. Cork MASP	Yes – Settlement strategies and enablers assessed
11. Limerick-Shannon MASP	Yes – Settlement strategies and enablers assessed
12. Waterford MASPs	Yes – Settlement strategies and enablers assessed

6.3 APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT

In line with the relevant guidance and case law, this stage of the Appropriate Assessment consists of three main steps:

- **Impact Prediction** – identify the aspects of the draft RSES likely to affect the conservation objectives of European sites, the types of impacts include direct and indirect effects; short and long-term effects; construction, operational and decommissioning effects; and isolated, interactive and cumulative effects. A source-pathway-receptor model has been used to assess potential for impact;
- **Assessment of Effects** - where the effects of the draft RSES are assessed as to whether they have any adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites as defined by conservation objectives; and
- **Mitigation Measures** - where mitigation measures are identified to ameliorate any adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site.

6.4 IMPACT PREDICTION

A description of the main potential ecological impacts that could arise from the implementation of the draft RSES are outlined in **Section 2.6** with reference to those categories outlined in the EC 2001 *Methodological Guidance on the Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites*.

As discussed in **Chapter 2 Section 2.6**, in considering the potential for impacts from implementation of the Draft RSES, a “source –pathway-receptor” approach has been applied.

6.4.1 Impact Identification

A summary of the main potential ecological impacts that could arise from the implementation of the RSES are presented below and are used in the impact prediction.

- **Permanent and/or temporary habitat loss or fragmentation:** Habitat loss or destruction is caused where there is complete removal of a habitat type, for example arising from the development of new infrastructure or via change of land use which alters the existing habitat. Habitat fragmentation results from the incremental loss of small patches of habitat within a larger landscape. Fragmentation can also result from

impediments to the natural movements of species. This is relevant where important corridors for movement or migration are disrupted. Habitat degradation results in the diminishment of habitat quality and a loss of important habitat functions. It can arise from the introduction of invasive species, toxic contamination from spillages or physical alteration (e.g. arising from poor management during construction and subsequent operation of new infrastructure). Increases in population in the region whether focussed at metropolitan areas, large or small towns, all has the potential for habitat loss or fragmentation. While the RSES has a specific focus on infill and brownfield development there is nonetheless potential for greenfield development to ensure the population increases proposed can be accommodated. There is also the potential for increased disturbance from new populations or increased densities in sensitive locations.

Indirectly, it can be caused by hydrological disturbance of groundwater dependent sites resulting in loss of habitat function and integrity. Coastal SACs are vulnerable in this regard, given the high proportion of sites that are designated for habitats sensitive to changes in groundwater flow or surface water run-off.

- **Disturbance or damage to breeding, roosting, feeding areas:** Disturbance to habitats or species is likely to increase where there is an increase in activity or noise levels from developments in proximity to sensitive areas such as ports. It is particularly important that known sensitive areas, such as those supporting breeding birds, otter, salmonids and others are taken into consideration during the design stage of any development prior to approval. As the RSES deals with strategic infrastructure including roads, rail, airports and ports this is an important consideration. Species mortality can result from direct mortality of species, for example as a result of collision. Species mortality can also occur via direct alteration to breeding/resting habitat during construction leading to changes to species distribution and/or changes that affect productivity or breeding success. In addition, species mortality can occur when conditions/habitat underpinning survival of the species are altered e.g. water quality, ecological corridors removed, and these are discussed under the other relevant headings in this section.

The importance of ex-situ habitat must also be considered i.e. where a protected species uses habitat outside the footprint of the relevant designation. This is often an issue for birds such as Brent geese which can use certain managed grassland away from the relevant SPA for resting and feeding purposes. This can lead to competing interests, particularly with regard to land use planning.

Coastal Areas: Birds are especially vulnerable to disturbance from tourism and recreation. Such activities are linked to new or improved visitor access and/or facilities which can significantly increase the risk of habitat loss and disturbance and species disturbance. Other developments including housing, coastal defenses and cycleways also add to the pressure in coastal areas.

Species Mortality: Species mortality can result from direct mortality of species, for example as a result of collision by birds or bats with energy infrastructure. Species mortality can also occur via direct alteration to breeding/resting habitat during construction. In addition, species mortality can occur when conditions/habitat underpinning survival of the species are altered e.g. water quality, ecological corridors removed, and these are discussed under the other relevant headings in this section.

Changes in key indicators of conservation value, including the following:

- **Changes to ecosystem services:** Ecosystems (multifunctional communities of living organisms) provide direct and indirect services which contribute to the wellbeing of the wider community. In the context of the RSES this includes pollination, water attenuation

flood mitigation, climate change mitigation and adaptation e.g. carbon storage can have direct and indirect impacts on European sites. [Ecosystem services are interlinked with the status of biodiversity and where this is degraded it will lead to a loss of key ecosystem services. This is particularly relevant for habitats such as peatlands which can give rise to social and environmental conflicts, particularly where they offer a source of employment through exploitation. The cost of conserving biodiversity and healthy ecosystems often outweighs the costs of neglect and restoration. It is therefore important to properly integrate biodiversity considerations into planning to avoid later conflict.](#)

- **Changes to water quality and/or water movement:** This is relevant where there could be an impact on the hydrological/hydrogeological connection to a European Site or on water quality. This could be via point source or diffuse pollution from developments or via developments that alter surface or subsurface water flow. In terms of potential for alteration of water quality, the impact(s) may be in-situ or ex-situ (i.e. downstream and outside the immediate area) and can include the release of suspended solids, increased nutrient run-off from land such as forestry or agricultural land, increased acidification/eutrophication and spillages during construction activities. Alterations to surface or subsurface flow can result in impact to surface and groundwater dependent habitats such as petrifying springs and fens. Introduction or expansion of barriers and changes to natural sedimentation / erosion processes can also impact on life cycles for important species such as salmon and freshwater pearl mussel. [Coastal European Sites in particular are vulnerable to changes in surface and ground water quality.](#)
- **Alterations to air quality:** Burning of fossil fuels, whether for transport or energy generation, results in emissions to air. The key effects on European Sites associated with fuel combustion are; nitrogen/sulphur deposition leading to acidification and eutrophication of soils/water, deposition of particulate matter leading to vegetation damage and increased atmospheric CO and CO₂ accelerating climate change.
- **Introduction or spread of invasive species:** Invasive species can have serious negative consequences on their environment and cause damage to native ecosystem functions and service e.g. by outcompeting native species. This would be of particular concern for any works within European Sites, but also any works with connectivity to a European Site e.g. hydrological connectivity. Machinery and personnel can act as vectors to inadvertently cause the introduction or spread of invasive species, in particular invasive plant species. Importation of materials e.g. soil contaminated with invasive species can also result in the introduction/spread of invasive species. In addition, climate change could result in range expansion for some invasive species, which could potentially be further facilitated through the range contraction of native species. [Pathways for the spread of IAS can include increased or expanded port activities, expansion of greenways/blueways etc. and may go beyond the RA jurisdiction and indeed outside the state where connectivity \[rivers, coastal waters\] exists.](#)
- **In-combination impacts:** A series of individually modest impacts may, 'in-combination' produce a significant impact. The underlying intention of this in-combination provision is to take account of combined impacts, and these will often only occur over time. In that context, one must consider plans or projects which are completed; in preparation; or approved but uncompleted. Where there is a series of small, but potentially adverse impacts occurring within or adjacent to a European Site, consideration should be made as to their combined impacts.

6.4.2 Impact Prediction

It is acknowledged that the RSES is a regional strategy and as such prediction of effects at individual European sites is not always practical as the strategy lacks spatial detail in some cases to give context to the extent or significance of any potential effects. As such the potential for such effects is raised within the confines of the RSES with a view to appropriately informing lower levels of planning where the necessary spatial detail is available and identifying the mitigation measures that must be in place for lower tier plans and projects to ensure the protection of the Natura 2000 network.'

Table 6-2 – Potential Ecological Effects Associated with the Policy Objectives Outlined in the RSES

Impact Source	Impact Identification	Impact Prediction
Strategic Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cumulative Impacts where proposed objectives influence developments that could contribute to cumulative or in-combination effects with other developments.
People & Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential direct impacts where developments (residential, infrastructure, commercial etc.) overlap or intersect with European Sites; ▪ Indirect impacts where developments (residential, infrastructure, commercial etc.) adjoin, are proximal to or support connectivity with European Sites; ▪ Cumulative Impacts where proposed objectives influence developments that could contribute to cumulative or in-combination effects with other developments.
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential direct Impacts where developments (residential, infrastructure, commercial etc.) overlap or intersect with European Sites; ▪ Indirect impacts where developments (residential, infrastructure, commercial etc.) adjoin, are proximal to or support connectivity with European Sites; ▪ Potential direct and indirect impacts associated with multi-sectoral growth to enable SRA achieve objectives under this discipline. ▪ Potential impacts could be associated with objectives that afford greater tourist access to areas designated as or

Impact Source	Impact Identification	Impact Prediction
		supporting connectivity with European Sites. Development of the Agri-Food, Bio-Economy and Marine Economy sector which may comprise direct and indirect impacts, depending on the development scale, size, location, duration etc.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential direct and indirect impacts associated with citing and development of Natural Networks, such as Greenways, Blueways, interpretive signage and access associated with areas of scenic, historic and cultural beauty – where these areas overlap adjoin, are proximal to or support connectivity with European Sites.
Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential direct and indirect impacts associated with the development of infrastructural projects such as roads, railways, greenways, blueways etc. where these developments overlap adjoin, are proximal to or support connectivity with European Sites.
Quality of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential direct and indirect impacts associated with citing and development such as Greenways, Blueways, interpretive signage and access associated with areas of scenic, historic and cultural beauty – where these areas overlap adjoin, are proximal to or support connectivity with European Sites.
Water & Energy Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential direct and indirect impacts associated with the development of infrastructural projects such as, water, wastewater, energy and technology where these developments overlap adjoin, are proximal to or support connectivity with European Sites.

Impact Source	Impact Identification	Impact Prediction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	
Implementation, & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential direct and indirect impacts associated with implementation of the above policy base,
Cork, Limerick-Shannon, Waterford MASPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Loss of key supporting ;habitats and ecosystem complexes; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alternations due to climate change; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential direct Impacts where developments (residential, infrastructure, commercial etc.) overlap or intersect with European Sites; ▪ Indirect impacts where developments (residential, infrastructure, commercial etc.) adjoin, are proximal to or support connectivity with European Sites; ▪ Cumulative Impacts where proposed objectives influence developments that could contribute to cumulative or in-combination effects with other developments.

6.4.3 Land Use Planning and Biodiversity

A view of European Sites as static features which require protection from development first and foremost has historically led to conflicts between developers and nature conservationists with the stand-off resulting in *wins and losses* for both sides. Effective spatial planning can instead act as a first line of defence for maintaining the integrity of the Natura 2000 network in Ireland and as a consequence protect biodiversity.

A spatial planning view that sees nature as part of a wider landscape and seeks to integrate and enhance biodiversity is likely to result in better outcomes for all stakeholders. Examples of spatial planning led initiatives which seek to integrate biodiversity are evident in Ireland and provide evidence base and lessons learned for a more national approach. Some local authorities, for example, have developed Green Infrastructure networks to support, integrate and enhance significant European Sites with development areas. This includes strategies for integration of networks of natural habitat/biodiversity locations, parkland for low intensity recreational uses,

heritage features, green routes, surface water and flood risk management with development areas. The approach does not pit one sector against another but instead sees the interconnectedness between different elements of a spatial plan. By recognising this early in the plan making process, strategies can be developed which plan for integration rather than react to conflict.

A further challenge for spatial planners is to understand and plan for a future with climate change, where adaptation and mitigation will be required to provide resilience not only for citizens but also for habitats and species. Global warming and climate change are recognised threats to biodiversity, and hence to European Sites and pose complex problems for planning and particularly nature conservation policy and practice. In 2007, the EPA published a study investigating the impacts of climate change on the nature conservation resources of Ireland, through the use of ecological modelling (Coll *et al.*, 2012). The results of this study suggested that the habitats most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in Ireland are:

- Upland habitats (siliceous and calcareous scree, siliceous and calcareous rocky slopes, alpine and subalpine heath);
- Peatlands (raised bog, blanket bog); and
- Coastal habitats (fixed dunes, etc.).

The report concluded that:

It is projected that many species in Ireland will experience significant changes to their ranges under future climate scenarios. Species with disjunct and narrow distributions are projected to experience the largest range changes, contracting and expanding, respectively.

The key messages from the research indicate that we are already seeing changes in natural systems in Ireland and these are likely to continue, accelerating in scope and scale into the future. This scope and scale will continue into the future if greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated or increase. GHG emissions in Ireland originate from many sources but transport is one of the highest emitting sectors. The future transport needs for Ireland must therefore align with national climate adaptation and mitigation objectives and to do this smarter travel policies must be fully supported by smarter land use planning objectives which connect public transport with higher density housing in cities while also maximising opportunities to develop more public transport options for larger and smaller towns around Ireland.

In 2017, the European Commission published a study into Natura 2000 and spatial planning. The study acknowledged the challenges associated with incorporating Natura 2000 in spatial planning but also acknowledged the important role it has in protecting and managing Natura 2000 areas. Box 1 reproduces the elements which were reported in the study as being required at the Member State level.

BOX 1: Towards an Integrated Spatial-planning Approach for Natura 2000 [From EC Report on Natura 2000 and Spatial Planning, 2017].

- Natura 2000 needs to be an integral part of long-term strategies for spatial planning and territorial development. These strategies should address the relationship between sectoral developments and the need for improving and maintaining the functional connectivity of Natura 2000 areas;
- The spatial-planning systems of the Member States need to be further enhanced with regard to the implementation of the Nature Directives. Natura 2000 provisions should be more explicitly embedded as a priority objective within long-term spatial plans (e.g. 5-10 years) at regional and local level;

- The preparation of spatial plans and projects for specific sectoral developments needs to be based on ecological principles and knowledge. These plans should therefore ideally be developed by interdisciplinary teams of experts;
- SEA, EIA and appropriate assessment instruments are key instruments for ensuring knowledge-based prevention, mitigation and compensation of sector-specific impacts on Natura 2000 areas. These instruments need to be further enhanced with specific ecological knowledge and assessment criteria, for specific sectoral developments (e.g. sectoral guidelines);
- Early stakeholder participation and consultation in the spatial-planning process is a key factor for ensuring the quality and legitimacy of, and public support for spatial plans;
- The use of expert-based tools such as new GIS technologies can be effective in integrating Natura 2000 issues in the spatial planning process.

7 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS OF DRAFT RSES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive states that:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications of the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

The impact prediction and assessment of potential effects of the mitigation measures outlined in the RSES on the Natura 2000 Network has considered the potential to impact on the achievement of the COs of the European Sites and is presented in the following sections.

The purpose of the RSES is to provide a focal point for spatial plans throughout the planning hierarchy. The RSES will co-ordinate the strategic planning of urban and rural areas in a regional development context to secure overall proper planning and development as well as co-ordination of the RSES's and city/county development plans in addition to local economic and community plans as well as local area plans and local development.

The assessment of the RSES has been developed in the context of the full policy base contained within the SR RSES which includes environmental protection policies, introduced as a result of iterative feedback on early draft material to identify issues and as far as possible avoid adverse effects in the first instance, in line with recognised mitigation hierarchy. Of specific relevance to the potential for impact on European sites, the following environmental commitments and objectives as set out in **Table 7.1**, are contained within the S RSES and underpin the assessment which follows.

Table 7-1 – Protective Policy Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
Chapter 1	<p>RPO 1: Environmental Assessment</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft RSES should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b.) The RSES seeks to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c.) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken, in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p>	<p>Wording updated to strengthen RPO.</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
Chapter 2 Strategic Vision	<p>8 - Strengthen and protect our regions diverse Culture Recreation, Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Built Heritage</p> <p>9 - Provision of Infrastructure and services in a sustainable, plan and infrastructure led manner to ensure the sustainable management of water waste and other environmental resources</p> <p>10 - <i>Safeguard and enhance our environment through sustainable development, transitioning to a low carbon and climate resilient society</i></p>	Included (small changes to wording and numbering)
Chapter 3 People and Places	<p>RPO 4 - Population Growth and Environmental Criteria Increased population growth should be planned having regard to environmental criteria including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The assimilative capacity of the receiving environment. ▪ The proximity of European Sites and the potential for impact on the conservation objectives and qualifying interests. ▪ Areas that have potential to flood. <p>RPO 7 - Holistic Approach to Delivering Infrastructure (a) Ensure investment and delivery of comprehensive infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF objectives to include the following: Water services, digital, green infrastructure, transport and sustainable travel, community and social, renewable energy, recreation, open space amenity, climate change adaptation and future proofing infrastructure including Flood Risk management measures, environmental improvement, arts and culture, public realm.</p> <p>RPO 9 – Key Towns (a) It is an objective to seek investment in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, climate change adaptation and future proofing infrastructure including Flood Risk management measures, recreational, arts and cultural that will deliver sustainable growth in Key Towns, subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments; (b) It is an objective that all Key Towns will be subject to a Local Transport Plan, as per transport objectives provided in Chapter 6. (c) It is an objective to support and promote vibrant, culturally-rich and revitalised Key Towns with enhanced social inclusion, sustainable neighbourhoods and a high level of environmental quality to ensure an</p>	<p>Included as RPO 5 (former RPO 4): Population Growth and Environmental Criteria</p> <p>Included as RPO 9 (former RPO 7): Holistic Approach to Delivering Infrastructure</p> <p>Wording updated to strengthen RPO. Included as RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
	<p>excellent quality of life for all.</p> <p>(d) It is an objective to support and promote Placemaking in all Key Towns to include public realm, regeneration and urban renewal initiatives.</p> <p>(e) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(f) Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>(g) Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network</p> <p>(h) In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p>	
<p>Chapter 4</p> <p>A strong Economy – Innovative and smart</p>	<p>RPO 37: Support the development of Social Enterprise – To develop social enterprises and the circular economy within local communities to benefit environmental protection, employment generation and community development.</p>	<p>Included as RPO 60 (former RPO 37): Social Enterprise</p>
	<p>RPO 41: Common Agricultural Policy – To deliver sustainable actions under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020 and beyond in priority areas of innovation, biodiversity restoration, water and soil management, renewable energy and waste management, carbon conservation and sequestration, diversification, job creation and ICT development in rural areas.</p>	<p>Included as RPO 44 (former RPO 41): Common Agriculture Policy</p>
	<p>RPO 52 Tourism & the Environment-</p> <p>Development of new or enhanced tourism infrastructure and facilities should include an assessment of the environmental sensitivities of the area including an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic</p>	<p>Included as RPO 54 (former RPO 52) Tourism and the</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES	Status in Final RSES
<p>Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) if required in order to avoid adverse impacts on the receiving environment. Where such tourism infrastructure or facilities are developed, the managing authority/agency should ensure that effective monitoring protocols are put in place to monitor and assess the ongoing effect of tourism on sensitive features with particular focus on natural, archaeological and built heritage assets.</p> <p>RPO 54: Low Carbon Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is an objective to accelerate the transition towards low carbon economy and circular economy through mechanisms such as the Climate Action Competitive Fund. ▪ It is an objective to develop enterprises that create and employ green technologies. ▪ Local Authorities should ensure that the development of green industry and technologies incorporates careful consideration of potential environmental impacts at project level including the capacity of receiving environment and existing infrastructure to serve new industries. ▪ Local Authorities shall include objectives in statutory land use plans to promote high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock and energy efficiency in traditional buildings. ▪ It is an objective to support investments in energy efficiency of existing commercial and public building stock with a target of all public buildings and at least one-third of total commercial premises upgraded to BER Rating 'B'. Local Authorities shall report annually on energy usage in all public buildings and will achieve a target of 33% improvement in energy efficiency in all buildings in line with the requirements of the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP). <p>RPO 76 - First Mover under Marine Spatial Planning</p> <p>It is an objective to support the sustainable development of the potential of the marine environment, foster opportunities for innovation in the maritime Economy and drive forward the Region as a first mover under Marine Spatial Planning while preserving the environmental and ecological conservation status of our marine natural resource. Initiatives arising from this objective shall be subject to robust feasibility and site selection, which includes undertaking flood risk assessment and explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European Sites and potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites in advance of any development.</p>	<p>Environment</p> <p>Small wording changes. Included as RPO 56 (former RPO 54): Low Carbon Economy</p> <p>Wording updated. Included as RPO 78 (former RPO 76) First Mover under the National Marine Planning Framework.</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
	<p>RPO 83 - Renewable offshore energy</p> <p>To promote regional cooperation in terms of offshore renewable energy development, environmental monitoring and awareness of the benefits of realising the region's offshore energy potential. Initiatives arising from this objective shall be subject to robust feasibility and site selection, which includes explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European Sites and potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites in advance of any development.</p> <p>RPO 84 - Marine Cluster</p> <p>It is an objective to develop a research driven marine cluster in the Southern Region to support development of Marine ICT and Biotechnology. Initiatives arising from this objective shall be subject to robust feasibility and site selection, which includes flood risk assessment and explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European Sites and potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites in advance of any development.</p>	<p>Included as RPO 85 (former RPO 83): Renewable offshore energy</p> <p>Included as RPO 86 (former RPO 84): Marine Cluster.</p>
Chapter 5 Environment	<p>RPO 112 - Flood Risk Management and Biodiversity</p> <p>It is an objective to avail of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and amenity and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats, including where flood risk management measures are planned. Plans and projects that have the potential to negatively impact on Natura 2000 sites and are subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>RPO 118 Green Infrastructure</p> <p>a) It is an objective to promote the concept of connecting corridors for the movement of wildlife and encourage the retention and creation of features of biodiversity value, ecological corridors and networks that connect areas of high conservation value such as woodlands, hedgerows, earth banks, watercourses and wetlands. The RSES recognises the necessity of protecting such corridors and to necessity to encourage the management of features of the landscape that support the Natura 2000 network</p> <p>b) Green Infrastructure shall be integrated into the preparation of statutory land use plans in the region, which will include identifying Green Infrastructure and strengthening this network.</p> <p>c) All Development Plans and Local Area Plans shall protect, enhance, provide and manage Green Infrastructure in an integrated and coherent manner addressing the themes of biodiversity protection, water management and climate action; and should also have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species.</p> <p>d) Any future development of greenways, blueways,</p>	<p>Included as RPO 117 (former RPO 112) Flood Risk Management and Biodiversity</p> <p>Included as RPO 124 (former RPO 118) Green Infrastructure</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
	<p>peatways, cycleways or walkways will include an assessment by the relevant authorities of any impacts that may arise from increased visitor pressures, in particular, on sensitive European sites and the design of the network will consider the provision of protective measures on sites sensitive to disturbance/visitor pressure.</p> <p>RPO 120 - Biodiversity</p> <p>a) It is an objective to promote biodiversity protection through promoting the integration of Green Infrastructure (GI) and ecosystem services including landscape, heritage and biodiversity and management of invasive and alien species in the preparation of statutory and non-statutory land use plans.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to support Local Authorities in implementing measures designed to identify, conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Southern Region.</p> <p>c) The Local Authorities are required to carry out screening of proposed projects and any draft land-use plan or amendment/variation to any such plan for any potential ecological impact on areas designated or proposed for inclusion as Natura 2000/European Sites and shall make a determination if an Appropriate Assessment is necessary, of the potential impacts of the project or plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000/European Site.</p> <p>d) It is an objective to support Local Authorities to carry out, monitor and review biodiversity plans throughout the region. Planning authorities should set policies in their development plans to implement and monitor the actions as set out in the National and County Biodiversity Plans, as the conservation of biodiversity is an essential component of sustainable development. Local Authorities should address the issue of fisheries protection and invasive introduced species and encourage the use of native species for landscape planting in rural areas, in the review of their biodiversity plans.</p> <p>e) It is an objective to support Local Authorities to work with all stakeholders to conserve, manage and where possible enhance the regions natural heritage including all habitats, species, landscapes and geological heritage of conservation interest and to promote increased understanding and awareness of the natural heritage of the region.</p>	<p>Wording strengthened. Included as RPO 126 (former RPO 120) Biodiversity.</p>
<p>Chapter 6 Connectivity</p>	<p>RPO 137 - Our Region's Strategic Port and Harbour Assets</p> <p>To strengthen investment to deliver actions under National Ports Policy and investment in sustainable infrastructure projects that:</p> <p>(a) Strengthen and develop the strategic international, national and regional economic roles of our Tier 1 Ports (Port of Cork and Shannon-Foynes Port) and Tier 2 Ports (Port of Waterford and Rosslare Europort);</p>	<p>Wording updated. Included as RPO 142 (former RPO 137) Ports.</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES	Status in Final RSES
<p>(b) Support the achievement of Tier 1 status for the Ports of Waterford and Rosslare Europort.</p> <p>(c) Strengthen and develop the strategic regional economic role of other regional fishery harbours, ports and harbours.</p> <p>(d) Development proposals will be subject to environmental assessment and feasibility studies to establish that any expansions can be achieved without adverse effects on any European sites and within the carrying capacity of the receiving environment of the ports.</p> <p>RPO 138 - Airports</p> <p>The critical role of the Region's port and airport assets will be protected by ensuring that local land-use policies facilitate and do not undermine their functions, and their landside access capacity, subject to consideration of environmental concerns including water quality, flood risks, human health, natural and built heritage-.</p> <p>RPO141: High Quality International Connectivity – Ports :</p> <p>To achieve NSO: High Quality International Connectivity, the following port development actions are identified (subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes) while ensuring the protection of sensitive natural environments and the protection of natura sites, the protection of other harbour interests including recreation, tourism and residential amenity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development and improvement of ports by the relevant responsible commercial State-Owned Enterprises consistent with sectoral priorities defined through National Ports Policy; • Continued support for capital infrastructure projects in the Port of Cork's Strategic Development Plan including redevelopment of existing port facilities in Ringaskiddy and preparing City Docks and Tivoli for future regeneration; • Continued support for the capital infrastructure projects in the Shannon-Foynes Port Company Infrastructure Development Programme including capacity extension works; • Continued support for Rosslare Europort and Port of Waterford to maintain and strengthen linkages with EU markets; • Strategic Review of Rosslare Europort; • Strengthening and maintaining access to ports through enhanced transport networks and improved journey times including support for M11 and N80 improved connectivity to Rosslare, N28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Road and N21/N69 Limerick to Adare to Foynes; • Investment in maritime services programmes to support 	<p>Included as RPO 143 (former RPO 138) Ports and Airports</p> <p>Wording updated. Included as RPO 146 (former RPO 141) High Quality International Connectivity – Ports</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES	Status in Final RSES
<p>aids to navigation, Coast Guards and pollution prevention activities.</p> <p>RPO142: economic opportunities of ports : For all ports in the Southern Region, seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the marine related functions of ports in the region including landside accessibility to ensure the future role of ports as strategic marine related assets is protected from inappropriate uses. • Harness economic opportunities from the ocean economy and the role of Ports in the region in realising the full potential of the ocean economy. Particular regard should be had to the Government’s integrated plan for the marine industry – Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (2012), the National Marine Research and Innovation Strategy 2017-2021 (Marine Institute Ireland, 2017), and Ireland’s Ocean Economy (NUIG, 2017), as well as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Ireland’s Programme of Measures; and Ireland’s forthcoming Maritime Spatial Plan (due 2021). • Support the role of ports, where appropriate, in facilitating the sustainable development and operation of off-shore renewable energy development; and • Support appropriate enabling infrastructure development to harness our ocean wealth at regional and local levels including grid, pier and port facilities to support renewable energy and export potential. • Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC. • Port development in the region must adhere to the European Commission guidelines on the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones in order to protect the European Sites around them. • Any economic activity which utilises the marine resource shall also have regard to Ireland’s obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) which requires achieving and maintaining Good Environmental Status (GES) of coastal and marine waters (comprising both the water column and the seabed beneath it). <p>RPO 146: Integration of land use and transport integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following principles of land use and transport integration will guide development: • For urban-generated development, the development of lands, within or contiguous with existing urban areas should be prioritised over development in less 	<p>Included as RPO 147 (former RPO 142) Economic opportunities of ports</p> <p>Wording strengthened. Included as RPO 151 (former RPO 146) Integration of</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
	<p>accessible locations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the extent practicable, residential development should be carried out sequentially, whereby lands which are, or will be, most accessible by walking, cycling and public transport– including infill and brownfield sites – are prioritised; Larger scale, trip intensive developments, such as offices and retail, should primarily be focused into central locations; New employment and residential development should be consolidated in a manner which renders it serviceable by public transport and accessible, at the local level, by walking, cycling and public transport. Within the Metropolitan Areas of Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, except in limited planned circumstances, trip intensive developments or significant levels of development should not occur in locations not well served by existing or proposed high capacity public transport. Land use development in smaller rural towns shall optimise public transport and sustainable travel integration within settlements. Public transport interchange should be facilitated to encourage modal shift to public transport and sustainable travel between settlements and on approach to settlements. The strategic transport function of national roads should be maintained and protected in accordance with national policy; All non-residential development proposals should be subject to maximum parking standards; and, In locations where the highest intensity of development occurs, an approach that caps car parking on an area-wide basis should be applied. Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles should be integrated into developments. The protection of the Natura 2000 networks and the ecological linkages which support it 	land use and transport integration
Chapter 7 Quality of Life	<p>RPO167: Infrastructure-led Planning: To support sustainable infrastructure-led planning for future population and jobs growth in our region, ensuring social infrastructures are developed in tandem with population and jobs growth reflecting the RSES settlement strategy. Local Authorities should ensure that decision making in relation to new development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.</p> <p>RPO 177: New School Facilities: Planned approach to location of our education provision of new school facilities within reasonable access of public transport and</p>	<p>Included as RPO 175 (former RPO 167) Infrastructure-led Planning</p> <p>Wording updated. Included as</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
	<p>active travel modes. Local Authorities should ensure that a robust site selection process is followed in the selection of new school locations and that decision-making is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment. New development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.</p> <p>RPO 184: Cultural Policies and Objectives:</p> <p>It he Local Authority Development Plans, Local Enterprise Community Plans and Local Area Plans should include cultural policies and objectives supporting the sustainable development of enabling infrastructure including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workspaces for cultural uses; • Delivery and optimisation of high-speed broadband to support the digital media and remote working; • Support investment in training and education initiatives for cultural employment opportunities; • Provision and upgrade of cultural facilities; • Support the adaptation and bringing back into use of heritage buildings; • Where large scale housing is planned, ensure adequate provision is made for a range of community facilities including cultural facilities. Local Authorities should ensure that decisions relating to upgrades/re-use of buildings for developments incorporating cultural and creative sector space and facilities are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment including undertaking studies where regeneration /building projects may have the potential to affect protected species. <p>RPO 188: Gaeltacht:</p> <p>It is an objective to support the development of a network of economic and social infrastructure to address the remote locations of the Gaeltacht which shall include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the Gaeltacht network of digital hubs; • Support for the development and upgrading of regional enterprise infrastructure and accommodation for the Gaeltacht and provision of appropriately located zoned and serviced lands to support enterprise space; • Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making relating to the development of social and economic infrastructure including the development of communications and renewable energy are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment. 	<p>RPO 185 (former RPO 177) New School Facilities</p> <p>Included as RPO 192 (former RPO 184) Cultural Policies and Objectives</p> <p>Wording updated. Included as RPO 196 (former RPO 188) Gaeltacht</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
<p>RPO 191: Larger Sports Projects:</p> <p>To support investment in the sustainable development of larger sports projects in the region under the Large-Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund.</p> <p>Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to the development of recreational and sporting infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.</p>	<p>RPO 192: Green Infrastructure:</p> <p>To support investment in the on-going maintenance and enhanced facilities in existing green infrastructure and support the provision of new public, parks, green space corridors and other public open spaces in tandem with projected population growth to create green, healthy settlements throughout our region. Local Authorities shall identify the potential locations of new public parks and opens spaces jointly (with neighbouring local authorities) and individually to develop both regional scale recreational open space and local parks and open space. Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to the development of new or enhanced Green Infrastructure and new public parks and facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.</p>	<p>Included as RPO 199 (former RPO 191) Larger Sports Projects</p> <p>Included as RPO 200 (former RPO 192) Green Infrastructure and Recreation</p> <p>Wording Updated.</p>
<p>RPO 193: Greenway and Blueway Corridors:</p> <p>To support investment in the development of walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors within the region and extending into and between our region's settlements. Proposals for investment in walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors should be based on rigorous site/route selection studies and Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to such developments is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment, including all necessary reports to assess the potential impact on designated European sites and on biodiversity outside of formal protections such that proposed development does not contribute to loss of biodiversity.</p>	<p>RPO 194: Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Built Heritage assets:</p> <p>To support initiatives that enhance and protect our region's unique natural heritage, biodiversity and built heritage assets.</p>	<p>Included as RPO 201 (former RPO 193) National Trails, Walking Routes, Greenway and Blueway Corridors</p> <p>Wording Updated.</p> <p>Included as RPO 202 (former RPO 194) Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Built Heritage Assets</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
Chapter 8 Water and Energy Utilities	<p>RPO 200: Irish Water and Water Supply</p> <p>It is an objective to:</p> <p>(a) seek Irish Water to revise the Draft Investment Plan (2020-2024) and subsequent investment plans to align the supply of water services with the settlement strategy and objectives of the Southern Region RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford.</p> <p>(b): Delivery and phasing of services shall be subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>(c) Local Authority Core Strategies shall demonstrate compliance with DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities and demonstrate phased infrastructure led growth to meet demands on the water supply, suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (for example hydromorphological pressures) and prevent adverse impacts the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p>	<p>Wording Updated. Included as RPO 208 (former RPO 200) Irish Water and Water Supply</p>
	<p>RPO 204: Strategic Wastewater Treatment Facilities</p> <p>(a) It is an objective to support investment and the sustainable development of strategic wastewater treatment facilities by Irish Water in the region arising from initiatives including Investment Plans, Strategic Drainage Area Plans subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.</p> <p>(b) For the management of wastewater, increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the Local Authorities to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.</p>	<p>Included as RPO 212 (former RPO 204) Strategic Wastewater Treatment Facilities</p>
Chapter 9 Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation	<p>RPO 222: Monitoring</p> <p>(a) It is an objective to carry out a regular update of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data from EPA State of the Environment Reports and NPWS Article 12 and Article 17 reporting and to make this data publicly available to facilitate evidence-based policy making and evaluation in the Region.</p> <p>(b) It is an objective to support the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection.</p>	<p>Updated wording. Included as RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy</p>
Cork MASP Policy Objective	<p>Cork Metropolitan Area</p> <p>(a): To strengthen the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as an</p>	<p>Wording Updated</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
1	<p>international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and the primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region</p> <p>(b): To promote the Cork Metropolitan Area as a cohesive single metropolitan employment and property market where population and employment growth is integrated with: (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region reinforced by (ii) the continued regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of the city centre, Cork City Docklands, Tivoli and suburban areas (iii) active land management initiatives to enable future infrastructure led expansion of the city and suburbs (to be assessed by Core Strategy initiatives) and (iv) the regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of metropolitan towns and other strategic employment locations in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>(c): Seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see Volume 2 Overall MASP Goals).</p> <p>(d): Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate</p> <p>(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region</p>	
Cork MASP Policy Objective 3	<p>Cork Harbour</p> <p>(a): To promote Cork Harbour as a unique and strategic asset in the Cork Metropolitan Area and Southern 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).</p> <p>(b): To seek a specific planning framework initiative through the Core Strategies of Local Authority City and County Development Plans as appropriate to guide the sustainable future management of different uses in the Cork Harbour area, including strategic economic uses, while protecting the sensitive ecosystems and designated natural habitats.</p> <p>(c): The initiative under Part (b) shall address opportunities of a waterfront city and the harbour area, the opportunities for</p>	Included

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
	<p>harbour communities, enhanced transport and public transport connections, Tier 1 Port activity, industries, clusters of economic specialism, research and innovation in the marine economy, renewable energy, ecology and habitat protection, ecosystems services, tourism, greenways and blueways inter alia.</p> <p>(d) The delivery of plans and projects in the Cork Harbour area as a result of this objective shall be subject to quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites</p>	
<p>Cork MASP Policy Objective 13</p>	<p>Port of Cork</p> <p>(a): Support sustainable development and investment in the Port of Cork balanced with the protection of the natural environment and Cork Harbour SPA and promote its role as a Tier 1 International Port and driver for the metropolitan, regional and State economy. To support this role, the Cork MASP seeks the following subject to the outcome of required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The sustainable development of port infrastructure and facilities under the port's strategic development plans balanced with the protection of Cork Harbour's natural environment. -Improved quality of inter-regional transport connectivity and networks improving access to the Port of Cork particularly for freight movement and the quality of the TEN-T Corridor. -Investment in strategic transport corridors as referenced in CMATS and Cork MASP -The relocation of existing port activities from Cork City and investment in infrastructure to remediate sites and enable regeneration of the Cork City Docks and Tivoli. -The appropriate location of SEVESO activities and relocation of these activities from the city docklands subject to required planning and environmental law processes. -The sustainable development and strengthening of cruise tourism. -Support the feasibility, in co-ordination with relevant stakeholders, to create a more integrated and streamlined approach between planning, environmental and foreshore consenting. -Co-ordinate with the relevant Government departments and stakeholders to align the RSES and MASP with opportunities for the region under Marine Spatial Planning. -Support investment in the sustainable renewal, development and key interventions that will drive forward the potential of key assets in the Cork Harbour area balanced with protection of the nature conservation values of Cork Harbour, including City Quays and Tivoli renewal, Marino Point, Cork Dockyard, Cobh, Ringaskiddy, Whitegate and Bantry. <p>(b): Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying</p>	<p>Wording Updated</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
	capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC	
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 1	<p>Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area</p> <p>a) It is an objective to strengthen the role of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to promote the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan area with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region (ii) compact growth and regeneration of Limerick city centre and suburbs, (iii) compact growth and regeneration of Shannon (iv) active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner.</p> <p>c) It is an objective to seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals).</p> <p>d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate</p> <p>e) The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>	Wording Updated
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 17	<p>Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy</p> <p>a) It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of parks, recreation and high quality public open space in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. This Strategy may include, inter alia:</p> <p>The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including (inter alia) Parks, Greenway, Blueways, natural green spaces and ecosystems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The identification of key requirements for recreation, sports and community facilities. ▪ identification of a location for Regional Scale Park within the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as 	Included

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES	Status in Final RSES
	<p>well as the development of neighbourhood parks and open spaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of measures which improve and strengthen the metropolitan area's natural environment and habitats for flora and fauna. <p>The development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council and relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to support and encourage sustainable recreation and tourism opportunities represented by the Shannon Estuary, the potential to create new walkways by linking existing areas of open space and woodland and the opportunity to develop Greenways for cycling and walking. 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.</p>
Waterford MASP PO 1	<p>a) It is an objective to strengthen the role of the Waterford Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to promote the Waterford Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan area with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region (ii) compact growth and regeneration of the Metropolitan Area across the city centre and suburbs, (iii) active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner.</p> <p>c) It is an objective to seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Waterford Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals).</p> <p>d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate</p> <p>e) The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
WATERFORD MASP PO 18	<p>To achieve a healthy, green and connected city and metropolitan area, the preparation of a Metropolitan Wide-</p>

Protective Regional Policy Objectives Relevant to European Sites and / or Natura 2000 Network included in the draft S RSES		Status in Final RSES
	<p>Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy will be required under the Waterford MASP subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. The Metropolitan Wide-Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy shall provide for the following elements: -</p> <p>(a) development of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Waterford City and Kilkenny County Council and relevant stakeholders to deliver a network of parks, Greenway and Blueway corridors, natural areas and habitats, functional spaces relating to flooding and drainage and pedestrian and cycling connections between metropolitan settlements. This shall include support for the Déise Greenway Extensions to WIT and New Ross.</p> <p>(b) investment in green infrastructure and green amenities to reach international best practice and invest in delivering a parks, recreation and amenity strategy for the Waterford Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>(c) identification of a location for Regional Scale Park within the Waterford Metropolitan Area as well as the development of neighbourhood parks and open spaces</p> <p>(d) development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Waterford City and Kilkenny County Council and relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>(e) Development of an Integrated Framework Plan for the Sustainable Development of Waterford Harbour, in order to harness the economic and recreational potential and protect the environmental qualities of the area for all users</p> <p>(f) support and encourage recreation and tourism opportunities represented by the extensive shore line, the potential to create new walkways by linking existing areas of open space and woodland and the opportunity to develop the abandoned railway line between Waterford and New Ross as a Greenway for cycling and walking, subject to the protection of natural heritage including the European sites (the Lower River Suir cSAC (Site Code 002137) and the River Barrow and River Nore cSAC (Site Code 002162).</p>	

7.2 INTRODUCTION (CHAPTER 1 OF RSES)

The draft RSES outlines the role and scope of the RSES and its context in the wider planning policy hierarchy.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Environmental Assessment RPO 1	RPO 1 presents an over-arching environmental and ecological protection policy which underpins the SRA commitment to sustainable development which has been developed as a result of iterative discussion between the AA team and the SRA. It requires any that plans, projects, activities and

	development shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate. Furthermore it notes that the RSES will seek to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. No potential for significant effects on a European site.
Mitigation: None	

7.3 STRATEGIC VISION (CHAPTER 2 OF RSES)

The draft RSES Vision is articulated as follows:

- *Nurture all our places to realise their full potential,*
- *Protect, and enhance our environment,*
- *Work to achieve economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all our citizens,*
- *Accommodate expanded growth and development in suitable locations, and*
- *Promote the region's international reputation as one of Europe's most creative, innovative, greenest and liveable regions.*

The SR Strategy is to build a strong, resilient, sustainable region through eleven Regional Strategic Outcomes, which underpin the vision for the region and are intended to align with international, EU and national policy and set the framework for City and County Development Plans.

Strategic Vision - Assessment
<p>The 11 Regional Strategic Outcomes, as presented in the Southern Region RSES have been developed to align, to a degree with the National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) from the recently published NPF (May 2018) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Broadly speaking the RSO's point to a prioritisation of compact growth with a view to developing healthy attractive places for communities; climate action grounded in sustainable development and the circular economy; and economic opportunity which enhances both inter-national and intra-national connectivity. The RSO are broadly focussed on sustainable development however it is acknowledged that the expression of these proposed outcomes will be through the regional policy objectives in Chapters 3-9 of the RSES.</p> <p>Biodiversity has been integrated directly through RSO7 and RSO8. RSO7 references the protection and strengthening of the region's natural heritage and biodiversity, while RSO8 serves to safeguard and enhance the region's environment. However, there is no reference to Natura 2000 sites within and connected to the region which could be impacted by increased population growth pressure from recreation, water and waste water, transport links etc. and economic growth pressures from land use change, construction, emissions to air and water etc. A specific RSO to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of European sites / Natura 2000 network and contribute positively to achieving their conservation objectives should be included in the RSO's. Furthermore, recognition of the importance of regional and local biodiversity which may not be protected but plays a supporting role in the overall wellbeing of the natural environment should be recognised. Article 10 of the Habitats Directive refers to features of the landscape outside designated sites which are of importance for wild flora and fauna, as follows:</p>

Strategic Vision - Assessment

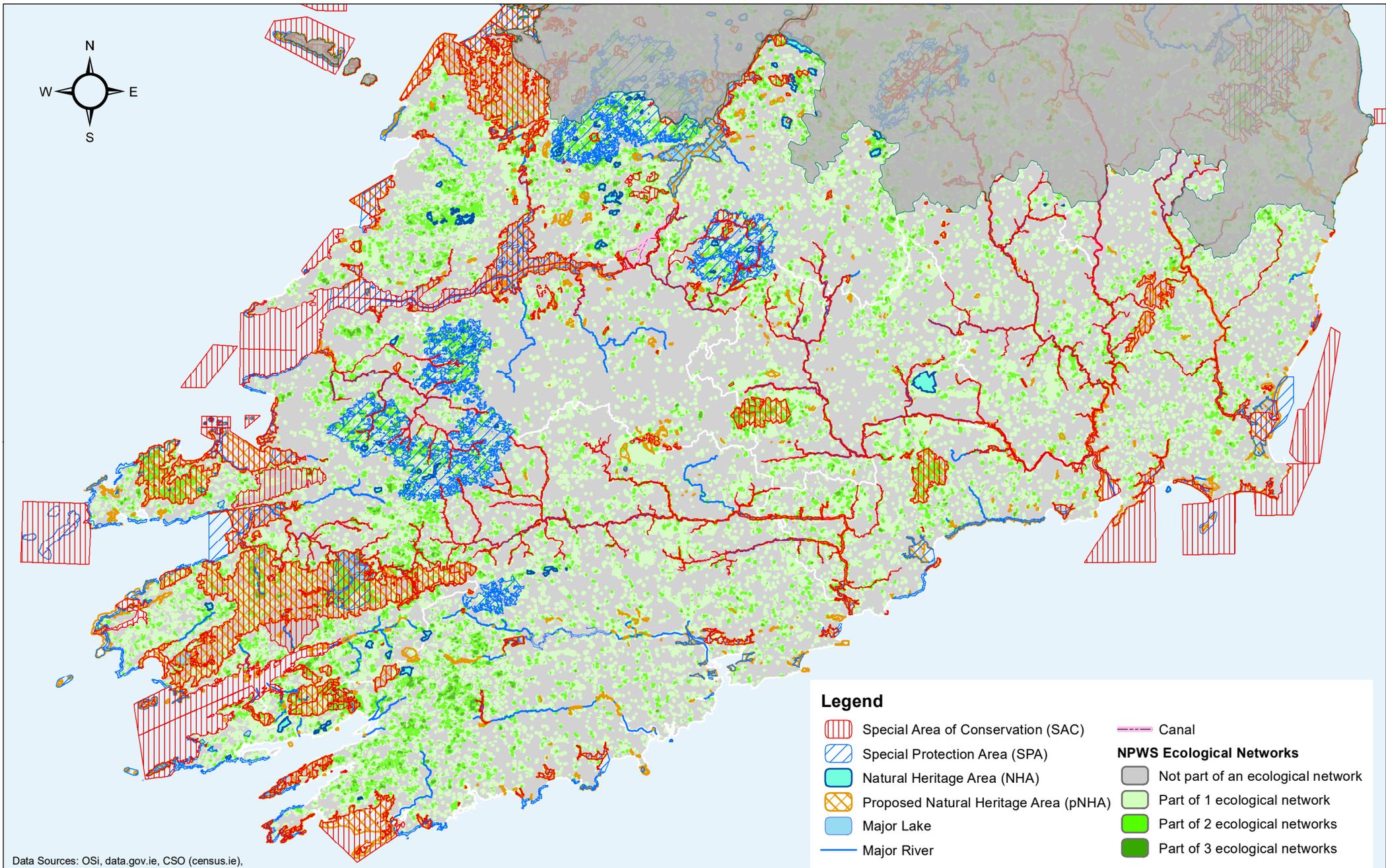
Member States shall endeavour, where they consider it necessary, in their land-use planning and development policies and, in particular, with a view to improving the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network, to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora.

Such features are those which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (such as rivers with their banks or the traditional systems for marking field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones (such as ponds or small woods), are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.

Figure 7-1 presents the Natura 2000 sites within the SR overlaid with the ecological resources map from NPWS to better illustrate the potential for enhancement of linkages across the region. This could act as a blue print for the region to build up a “live” ecological resource map of the region.

Mitigation Measures and Recommendations:

- An explicit RPO should be included to protect and manage the Natura 2000 network.
- The requirements of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive are not specifically considered under the AA process (except in so far as they support a qualifying feature) but it is recommended that the SRA includes a specific RSO which addresses the ensures that ecological connectivity within the Plan area is maintained or improved, which will in turn improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 network.
- Develop an ecological resource map for the region.



Data Sources: OSi, data.gov.ie, CSO (census.ie), NPWS (www.npws.ie), EPA GeoPortal (www.epa.ie).

Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies SEA, AA & RFRA

File Ref: MDR1402Arc0068F02

Figure 7-1 - Biodiversity & Natural Heritage Resources - Southern Region



7.4 PEOPLE & PLACES (CHAPTER 3 OF RSES)

The growth and settlement strategy for the Southern Region includes five tiers as follows:

- **City Metropolitan Areas** – Cork, Limerick Shannon, Waterford.
- **Key Towns** - Kilkenny, Ennis, Carlow, Tralee, Wexford, Clonmel, Killarney, Mallow, Nenagh, Thurles, Newcastle west, Clonakilty, Dungarvan & Gorey.
- **Towns & Villages** - of above 1,500, which provide a housing, employment or service function. The category is broad and ranges from large commuter towns to more remote towns and villages. These will be identified in Development Plans.
- **Rural**- Rural villages less than 1500 and the wider rural region. These will be identified in Development Plans.
- **Networks** -Groupings of towns and villages (including cross boundary) which share geographic, economic, resources and contribute specialism's which if combined provide a strategic opportunity to drive regional economy. These will be identified in Development Plans.

When allocating for future growth in the Core Strategy of each Development Plan local authorities should have due regard to the guiding principles, settlement typology and the appropriate policy response taking account of the following:

- Scale of population, and existing performance
- The extent to which a settlement is located inside or outside one of the three defined City-Region catchments;
- Scale of employment provision, number of jobs, jobs: resident workers ratio and net commuting flows;
- Extent of local services and amenities provision i.e. administration, education – particularly higher education institutes, health, leisure and retail;
- Extent to which trips may be made by sustainable modes of travel, i.e. walking, cycling or public transport.
- Rate and pace of past development and the extent to which there are outstanding requirements for infrastructure and amenities;
- Accessibility and influence in a regional or sub-regional context;
- Sub-regional interdependencies, for example, where a settlement may be in relation to several nearby settlements and scope for collaboration including settlements closely adjoining Local Authority boundaries for cross boundary collaboration;
- Character of local geography and accessibility as a service centre for remote and long-distance rural hinterlands;
- Track record of performance and delivery, as well as ambition and initiative and scope to leverage investment;
- Environmental and Infrastructural constraints.
- The appropriate density and scale of development relevant to the settlement scale and location of the settle including the differing rates and nature of development experienced.
- The need to provide attractive alternative options to rural housing within smaller towns and villages.

An assessment of the Cork, Limerick-Shannon, Waterford Metropolitan areas is provided in Sections 7.11-7.13, while the key constraints, flood risk summary and an assessment of the key towns is provided in Section 7.4.1 to 7.4.14.

7.4.1 Tralee

Tralee

Environmental Sensitivities:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Tralee Bay And Magharees Peninsula, West To Cloghane (west), Ballyseedy Wood (east), Slieve Mish Mountains (south),
- Special Protection Area (SPA): Tralee Bay Complex (west), Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle (north-east),
- Natural Heritage Sites (NHA): Knockatarriv/Knockariddera Bogs
- Proposed Natural Heritage Sites (pNHA): Tralee Bay And Magharees Peninsula, West To Cloghane (west)
- Annex I habitats associated with Tralee Bay, Ballyseedy Wood, and wet heath areas in the south
- Medium contribution to potential ecological networks
- Wetland and saltmarshes
- Medium-high Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Scattered forestry
- Licensed facilities: windfarms (east), 3 IPPC licences, Tralee landfill, Fennit Port
- Moderate-High Aquifer vulnerability
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: River Lee of Moderate/Unassigned status and At Risk, Big River Unassigned and Under Review
- WFD Coastal and Transitional 2010-2015 Water Bodies Risk: Lee K Estuary of Moderate Status and At Risk
- Flood risk areas associated with River Lee and adjacent wetlands
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP): Tralee, Agglomeration Pe 34,266, Plant design Pe 50,333; Overall Compliance (2017) = Pass; EPA Priority Urban Area failing to meet EU requirements (Nitrogen and Phosphorous)

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Tralee as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on the rivers that run through Tralee (e.g. misconnections, surface run-off etc.).

The Big River and River Lee offer two hydrological connections into the Tralee Bay and Magharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC and the Tralee Bay Complex SPA as they dissect the settlement. Any deterioration in water quality as a result of the expansion has the potential to impact these hydrologically connected European Sites.

Tralee Bay And Magharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC and the Tralee Bay Complex SPA are important coastal wetland sites supporting over 20,000 wetland and wintering birds. Water dependant habitats and species, including listed Annex I habitats are therefore vulnerable to degradation through inappropriate development and increased water pressures. The transitional and coastal water bodies bordering Tralee are also vulnerable to impact from neighbouring settlements and heightened port activity.

The RPOs make specific mention to strengthening Tralee's economic role with improvements in inter-regional connectivity on the TEN-T network to the Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas and Atlantic Economic Corridor. Such enterprise expansion and linear infrastructure developments have potential for adverse effects to European Sites as a result of loss of greenfield to development, loss of/disturbance to

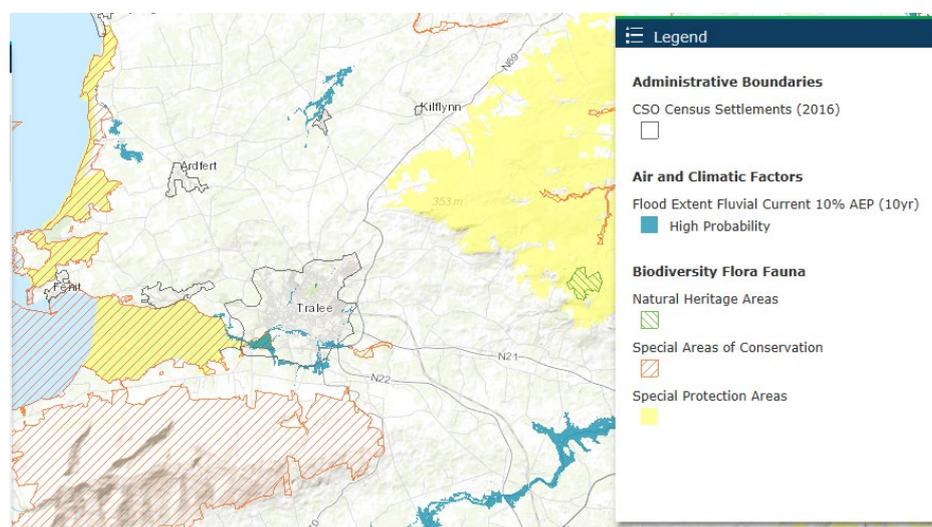
habitats and species, alterations to water quality and/or water movement, potential loss of floodplain, alterations to landscape character or disturbance to supporting features. Disturbance factors associated with such development and regeneration gives rise to spread of IAS.

It is noted that wastewater is treated in the west of Tralee, the facility caters for a population equivalent of 34,266. Despite being within design capacity of 50,033 pe the facility has been listed as an EPA Priority Urban Area. It is failing the more stringent EU treatment standards for Nitrogen and Phosphorus removal. Future growth of Tralee is therefore likely to put significant pressure on the plant and the network, discharging into the Lee Estuary as this area has known nutrient sensitivities. These concerns should therefore be addressed before growing Tralee to avoid diminishing water quality and resultant pressures on European Sites.

Population growth within Tralee will result in increased demand on water supply and therefore there is potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

Proposed NIR Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
3. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
4. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
5. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of sites and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
6. Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.
7. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
8. Flood relief schemes should be subject to robust site selection processes in addition to the appropriate environmental assessments.



7.4.2 Killarney

Killarney

Environmental Sensitivities:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks And Caragh River Catchment (south-west), Castlemaine Harbour (north), Sheheree (Ardagh) Bog (south-east)
- Special Protection Areas (SPA): Killarney National Park (south-west)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Sites (pNHA): Killarney National Park, Macgillicuddy's Reeks And Caragh River Catchment (south), Doo Loughs (south-east), Sheheree (Ardagh) Bog (south-east)
- Annex I Old Oak Woodlands (east) and scattered Residual alluvial forests (south)
- High contribution to potential ecological networks
- High Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Heavy forestry (south)
- Licensed facilities: 5 active quarries, 2 discharge licences,
- Historical Town and key stop on Ring of Kerry/Kerry Way routes
- High Aquifer vulnerability
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: River Deenagh of High Status and Not at Risk , River Flesk of Good Status and Not at Risk
- WFD Lake 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Lake Leane of Good Status and Not at Risk, Ross Bay of Unassigned Status and Under Review, Lake Muckros of High Status and Not at Risk
- Flooding vulnerabilities along River Flesk and lake complex
- Killarney Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), Agglomeration Pe 26,845 (EPA, 2016) 26,130 (Irish Water, 2017) Plant design Pe 54,000. Overall compliance (2017) = Pass

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Killarney as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on the rivers that run through Killarney (e.g. misconceptions, surface run-off etc.). Resultant infrastructure and added urban pressures may impact water quality in the River Deenagh and River Felsk which provide a direct pathway into the nearby lake complex within Killarney National Park SAC and SPA which borders the town. Both rivers are at good status, not currently impacting the SAC/SPA, however any deterioration in water quality as a result of added urban pressure has the potential to negatively impact these hydrologically connected European Sites. Killarney National Park contains a highly variable landscape with Annex I woodland and heathland, in addition to lake complexes, thus highly contributing to avian, terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity. The Merlin and Greenland White-fronted Goose are noted water dependant Qualifying Interests.

The RPOs make specific mention to strengthening Killarney's economic role with improvements in inter-regional connectivity along the Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas and Atlantic Economic Corridor, and throughout the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle. The promotion of enterprise expansion and target of economic and connectivity opportunities, therefore gives rise to potential adverse effects to European Sites as a result of loss of greenfield to development and linear infrastructure, loss of/disturbance to habitats and species. Alterations to water quality and/or water movement, potential loss of floodplain, alterations to landscape character or disturbance to supporting features. Disturbance factors associated with such development and regeneration gives rise to spread of IAS.

7.4.3 Mallow

Mallow

Environmental Sensitivities:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Blackwater River (east-west)
- Low-medium birdwatch sensitivity
- Medium contribution to potential ecological networks
- High Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Scattered areas of heavy forestry
- High landscape character area
- Licensed facilities: Mallow Quarry, 1 discharge licence, 4 IPPC licences, 7 landfill sites
- Historical Town and key destination in Irelands Ancient East
- High-Extreme Aquifer vulnerability with areas of Karst/rock near surface
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: River Blackwater, areas of Good, Unassigned and Moderate Status
- Salmonid river: River Blackwater
- Flooding vulnerabilities associated with River Blackwater in central Mallow
- Mallow Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), Agglomeration Pe 15,381 (EPA, 2016) 15,226 (Irish Water, 2017) Plant design Pe 22,000. Overall compliance (2017) = Fail, EPA Priority Area (Pearl Mussel)

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Mallow as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC that runs through Mallow (e.g. misconnections, surface run-off etc.). This nutrient sensitive water course supports several water dependant Qualifying Interests including freshwater pearl mussel and salmonids. WFD status reduces to moderate status downstream of Mallow, and therefore is already At Risk according to WFD classifications. Added urban pressures have the potential to degrade water quality further and impact Qualifying Interests within the SAC. The Blackwater River SAC passes through three Irish counties, as such, there is also potential for in-combination impacts with other settlements, in the form of multiple pressure points on this interrelated European Site.

The RPOs make specific mention to strengthening its economic role by leveraging its strategic location and prominent industries. Associated developments, including inter-regional connectivity along the TEN-T network to the Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas and Atlantic Economic Corridor may therefore negatively impact European Sites through a number of pathways as a result of built development and heightened urban pressures. The promotion of enterprise expansion via economic and connectivity opportunities, gives rise to potential for adverse effects to European Sites as a result of loss of greenfield to development, loss of/disturbance to habitats and species, alterations to water quality and/or water movement, potential loss of floodplain, alterations to landscape character or disturbance to supporting features. Disturbance factors associated with such development and regeneration gives rise to spread of IAS.

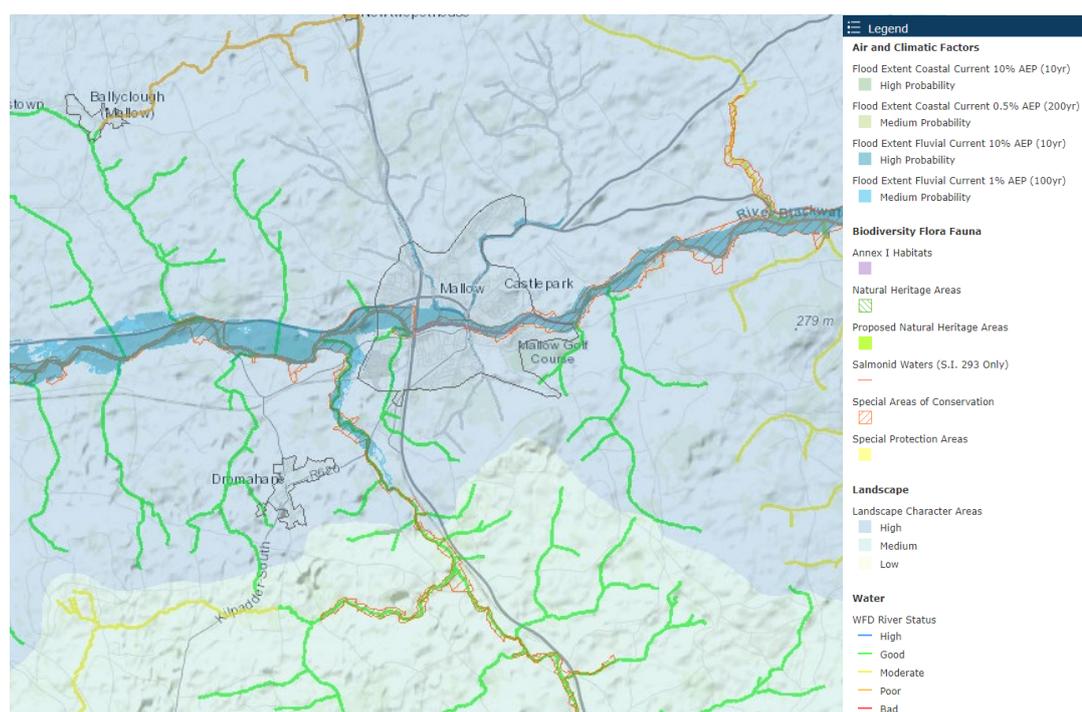
The Mallow treatment facility currently treats wastewater in the east of the settlement, catering for a population equivalent of 15,381 (EPA, 2016) to 15,226 (Irish Water, 2017). The facility is currently within design capacity of 22,000 pe however this is under review, and overall compliance failed for 2017. Mallow has

also been flagged as an EPA Priority Urban Area due to concerns over Freshwater Pearl Mussel populations. Future growth in Mallow is therefore likely to put significant pressure on the plant and the network, discharging into nutrient sensitive waters. These concerns should therefore be addressed before growing Mallow to avoid diminishing water quality and resultant pressures on European Sites.

Population growth within Mallow will result in increased demand on water supply and therefore there is potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

Proposed NIR Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
3. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
4. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
5. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
6. Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.
7. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
8. Flood relief schemes should be subject to robust site selection processes in addition to the appropriate environmental assessments.



7.4.4 Clonakilty

Clonakilty

Environmental Sensitivities:

- Special Protection Area (SPA): Clonakilty Bay
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Clonakilty Bay
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA): Clonakilty Bay
- Annex I Habitat: Estuaries; tidal mudflats; wetlands
- Contribution to Ecological Networks: 4 discrete areas adjacent to the town boundary which are part of 1 ecological network within the town
- Low to High Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Landscape Character Areas: Indentured Estuarine Coast (High sensitivity) – most of town; Rolling Patchwork Farmland (Medium sensitivity) – surrounding areas
- Licensed Facilities: 1 landfill, 1 PRTR
- Clonakilty Airstrip (to west of town)
- Aquifer Vulnerability: Generally moderate along the river, high-extreme elsewhere
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Clonakilty Stream_010 at Good Status/Not at Risk
- WFD Transitional 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Clonakilty Harbour at Moderate Status/At Risk
- WFD Groundwater 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Good Status
- Flooding vulnerabilities (coastal) associated with Clonakilty Harbour and inland; fluvial flooding to the west of the town and east-west through the centre, along the Clonakilty Stream_010
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP): Clonakilty and Environs; Agglomeration Served PE: 8,909 (2016 EPA); Plant design PE: 20,500 (2016 EPA); Overall compliance (2017): Pass

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Clonakilty as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on Clonakilty Bay SAC/SPA. The RPOs make specific mention to strengthening its economic role with improvements in inter-regional connectivity on the N71 road corridor to the Cork Metropolitan Area, Port of Cork and Cork Airport assets. The Clonakilty Stream and Clonakilty Harbour provide direct hydrological connectivity into European Site immediately south-west of the settlement. Any deterioration in water quality as a result of this infrastructural expansion and added urban pressures have the potential to impact hydrologically connected European Sites. The Clonakilty SAC/SPA hold important coastal wetland sites supporting a variety of wetland and wintering birds. Water dependant habitats and species, including listed Annex I habitats are therefore vulnerable to degradation through inappropriate development and increased water pressures.

The promotion of tourism and enterprise expansion via economic and connectivity opportunities gives rise to potential for adverse effects to European Sites. These include loss of greenfield to development, loss of/disturbance to habitats and species through increased visitor pressure, potential loss of floodplain, alterations to landscape character or disturbance to supporting features. Disturbance factors associated with such development and regeneration gives rise to spread of IAS.

It is noted that wastewater is treated in the south-west of Clonakilty, near the harbour and discharges into the SAC/SPA. The facility is well within design capacity of 20,500 pe and passing compliance standards, however the harbour, downstream of the sewage outfall is designated as a Nutrient Sensitive Water Body and at

Clonakilty

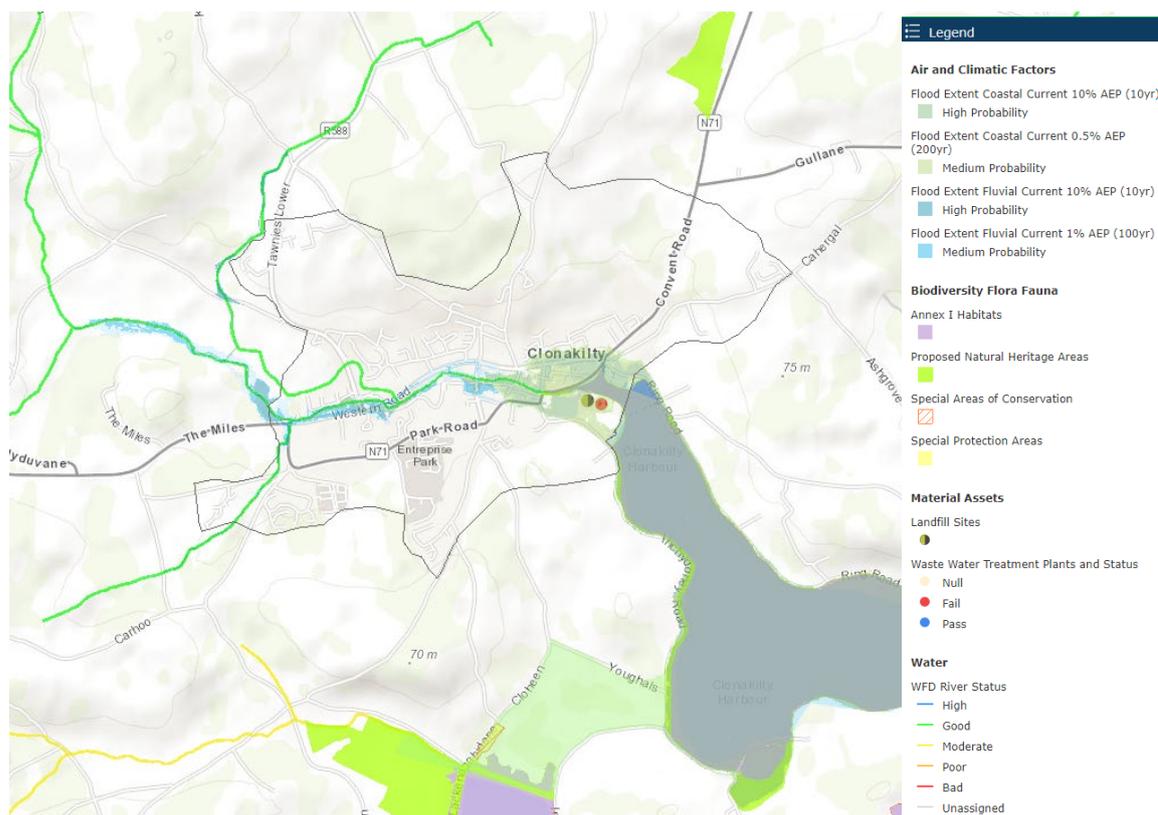
Moderate Status, therefore At Risk as per WFD targets. The plant is not listed as a Priority Area for wastewater.

Population growth within Clonakilty will result in increased demand on water supply and therefore there is potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

There is also potential for in-combination impacts with other regional or key growth settlements, in the form of multiple pressure points on interrelated European Sites.

Proposed NIR Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. In order to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
3. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
4. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
5. Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.
6. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
7. Flood relief schemes should be subject to robust site selection processes in addition to the appropriate environmental assessments.



7.4.5 Ennis

Ennis

Environmental Sensitivities:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Lower River Shannon SAC (north-south), Ballyallia Lake (north), Newhall and Edenvale Complex (south), Pouladatig Cave (west), Toonagh Estate (north-west),
- Special Protection Area (SPA): Ballyallia Lough (north), Dromore Woods And Loughs (north), River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries (south)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Sites (pNHA): Fergus Estuary And Inner Shannon, North Shore (south), Newhall And Edenvale Complex (south), Cahircalla Wood (south-west), Pouladatig Cave (west), Ballyallia Lake (north), Lough Cleggan (north)
- Annex I estuaries and mudflats associated with Lower Shannon SAC, scattered limestone pavements and unassigned habitats surrounding settlement.
- County Geological Sites: Magowna (north-west), Toonagh Quarry (north-west)
- High Landscape Character area
- Medium-high contribution to potential ecological networks
- Wetland and saltmarshes
- Medium-high Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Heavy forestry
- Licensed facilities: 2 discharge licenses, 2 landfill and waste facility
- High-Extreme Aquifer vulnerability with many areas of Rock/Karst at surface
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: River Fergus of Poor Status and At Risk
- WFD Lake 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Ballyallia and Ballybeg Lakes of Unassigned Status
- WFD Coastal and Transitional 2010-2015 Water Bodies Risk: Fergus Estuary of Moderate Status and At Risk
- Extensive flood risk areas associated with River Fergus and adjacent wetlands
- Salmonid River: River Fergus
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)
 - Ennis North, Agglomeration Pe 25,217, Plant design Pe 30,150. Overall compliance (2017) = Fail
 - Clareabbey, Agglomeration Pe 4,984 (with additional Clarecastle load), Plant design Pe 6,000. Overall compliance (2017) = Fail under capacity concerns (Irish Water, 2017)

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Ennis as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on several nearby European Sites. The RPOs also make specific mention to strengthening its economic role within the Mid-West via improvements in inter-regional connectivity to Limerick City, Galway City and Shannon International Airport. Such developments may potentially give rise to negative impacts on water quality through heightened urban pressures, and provide a direct pathway to the European Sites. The River Fergus flows southwards through the settlement as is part of the Lower River Shannon SAC (and Fergus Estuaries SPA). This nutrient sensitive water course supports several water dependant Qualifying Interests. WFD status reduces to moderate status downstream of Mallow, and therefore is already At Risk according to

WFD classifications. Ballyallia Lake SAC and Newhall and Edenvale Complex SAC are also vulnerable to increased urban activity. Added urban pressures have the potential to degrade water quality further and impact Qualifying Interests within each SAC. The Shannon River Basin is Irelands largest basin and passes through several Irish counties, as such, there is also potential for in-combination impacts with other settlements, in the form of multiple pressure points on this interrelated European Site.

The promotion of enterprise expansion via economic and connectivity opportunities to strengthen 'steady state' investment, gives rise to potential for adverse effects to European Sites as a result of loss of greenfield to development, loss of/disturbance to habitats and species through increased visitor pressure, potential loss of floodplain, alterations to landscape character or disturbance to supporting features. Disturbance factors associated with such development and regeneration gives rise to spread of IAS.

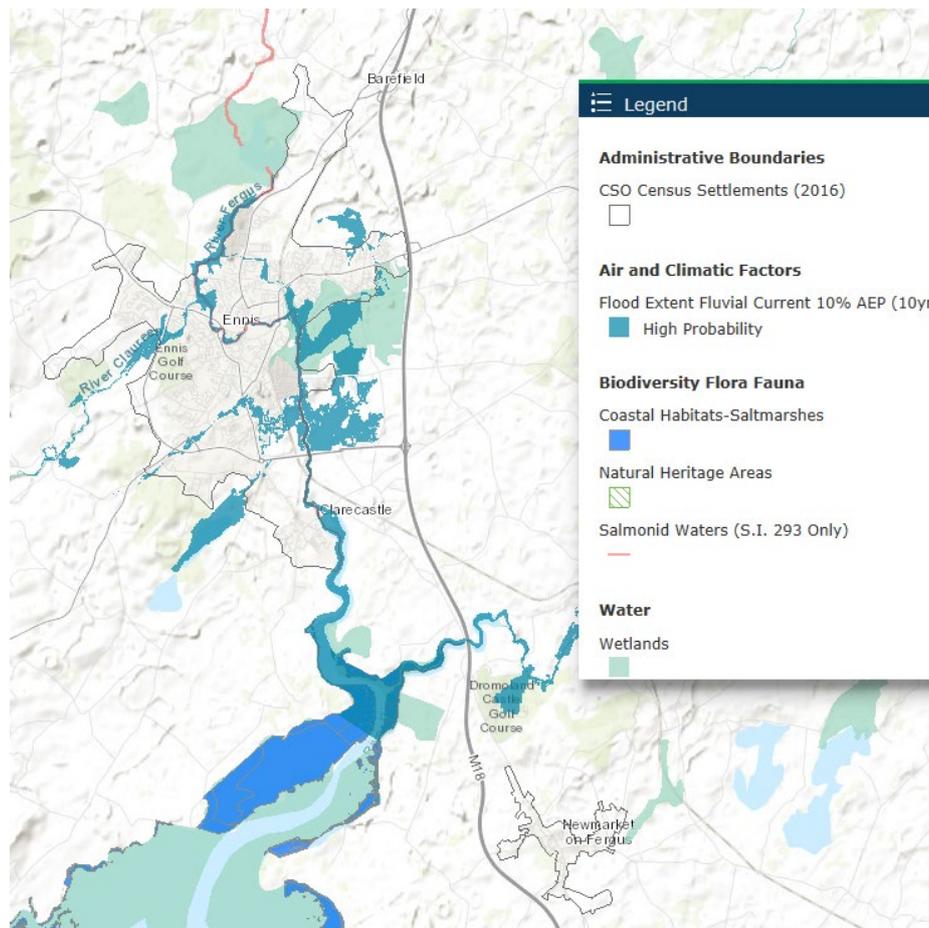
The Ennis treatment facility currently treats wastewater in the east of the settlement, catering for a population equivalent of 15,381 (EPA, 2016) to 15,226 (Irish Water, 2017). The facility is currently within design capacity of 22,000 pe however this is under review, and overall compliance failed for 2017. Ennis has also been flagged as an EPA Priority Urban Area due to concerns over Freshwater Pearl Mussel populations. Future growth in Ennis is therefore likely to put significant pressure on the plant and the network, discharging into nutrient sensitive waters. These concerns should therefore be addressed before growing Ennis to avoid diminishing water quality and resultant pressures on European Sites.

Wastewater is currently treated by two facilities in Ennis. The Ennis north facility caters for a PE of 25,217 with additional headroom in its plant design. It has however failed its overall plant compliance for 2017 on a number of parameters (suspended solids and nutrients). The Clareabby treatment facility has been flagged by Irish Water (2017) for capacity concerns since it has taken the load from the nearby Clarecastle facility. Ennis has not been designated as an EPA priority urban area, however treatment concerns are highlighted as an infrastructural requirement in Ennis.

Population growth within Ennis will result in increased demand on water supply and therefore there is potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

Proposed NIR Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
3. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
4. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
5. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
6. Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.
7. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.



7.4.6 Nenagh

Nenagh

Environmental Sensitivities:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Lower River Shannon (south), Silvermines Mountains (south), Bolingbrook Hill (south), Keeper Hill (south), Lough Derg, North-East Shore (north-west), Scohaboy (Sopwell) Bog (north-east)
- Special Protection Areas (SPA): Slievefelim to Silvermines Mountains (south), Lough Derg (north-west)
- Natural Heritage Sites (NHA): Scohaboy Bog (north-east)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Sites (pNHA): Lough Derg (north-west), Clareen Lough (north-west), Lough Ourna (north), Silvermine Mountains (south), Keeper Hill (south), Killavalla Wood (south-east), Ballintemple Bog (east)
- Medium contribution to potential ecological networks
- Medium Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Heavy forestry (south)
- Licensed facilities: 2 discharge licences, 1 IPPC license, 2 landfill sites, 1 licences waste facility,
- Historical Town and key destination in Irelands Ancient East
- High Aquifer vulnerability
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Nenagh River of Moderate Status and At Risk, Ardgregane Stream of Moderate Status and At Risk.
- WFD Lake 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Lough Derg of Poor Status and At Risk
- Flooding vulnerabilities associated with Nenagh River
- Nenagh Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), Agglomeration Pe 14,166 (EPA, 2016) 13,624 (Irish Water, 2017) Plant design Pe 18,000, (24,000 by 2020). Overall compliance = Pass

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Nenagh as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on several nearby European Sites. The RPOs also make specific mention to harnessing synergies to the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Areas and by utilising its strong urban structure and its proximity to the Atlantic Corridor. Such developments may potentially give rise to negative impacts on water quality through heightened urban pressures. The River Nenagh and Ardgregane Stream both flow through Nenagh and discharge into the Lough Derg Special Protection Area. This nutrient sensitive water body supports several water dependant habitats and species including a variety of water and wetland birds, in addition to nationally important breeding Cormorant and Common Tern populations. WFD status reduces to moderate status downstream of Nenagh, and falls to Poor Status in Lough Derg. Already At Risk according to WFD classifications, the SPA is vulnerable to increased urban activity. Such pressures have the potential to degrade water quality further and impact Qualifying Interests. Lough Derg receives inputs from several settlements in Tipperary, Clare, and Galway, as such, there is also potential for in-combination impacts with other settlements, in the form of multiple pressure points on this interrelated European Site.

The promotion of enterprise expansion via economic and connectivity opportunities to strengthen 'steady state' investment, gives rise to potential for adverse effects to European Sites as a result of loss of greenfield to development, loss of/disturbance to habitats and species through increased visitor pressure, potential loss of floodplain, alterations to landscape character or disturbance to supporting features. Disturbance factors associated with such development and regeneration gives rise to spread of IAS.

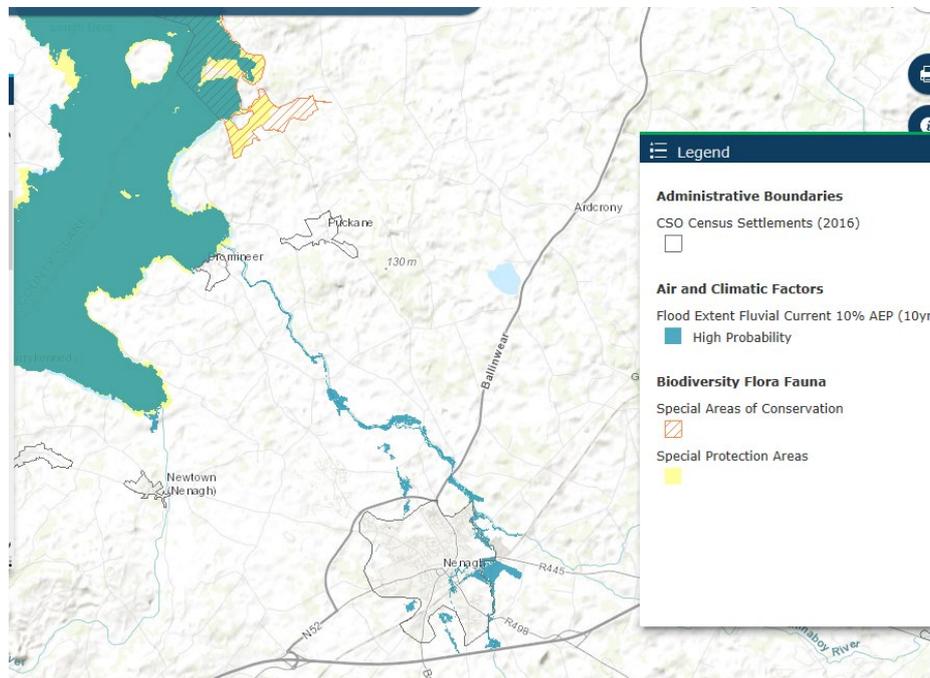
The Nenagh treatment facility currently treats wastewater in the south of the settlement, catering for a population equivalent of 14,166 (EPA, 2016) to 13,624 (Irish Water, 2017). It should be noted that the Nenagh River, downstream of the sewage outfall, is nutrient sensitive. The facility is currently under redevelopment to increase capacity to 24,000 by 2020, these phased developments are important when growing Nenagh to relieve water pressures and avoid negatively impacting European Sites.

Population growth within Nenagh will result in increased demand on water supply and therefore there is potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

Proposed NIR Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
3. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
4. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
5. Support for [linear] infrastructure and traffic management plans are subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.
6. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for

which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.



7.4.7 Thurles

Thurles

Environmental Sensitivities:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Lower River Suir (south)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Sites (pNHA): Cabragh Wetlands (north, south), Killough Hill (south)
- Low-Medium contribution to potential ecological networks
- Medium Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Lightly scattered forestry
- Licensed facilities: Killough Quarry, Moyne Airport
- Historical Town and destination in Irelands Ancient East
- Moderate-High Aquifer vulnerability
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: River Suir of Good-Moderate Status and partially At Risk.
- Flooding vulnerabilities associated with River Suir
- Thurles Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), Agglomeration Pe 10,144 (EPA, 2016) 9,885 (Irish Water, 2017) Plant design Pe 15,000. Overall compliance (2017) = Pass, EPA Priority Urban Area (priority collection systems – excessive spills/leaks)

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Thurles as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;

- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on several nearby European Sites. The RPOs also make specific mention to road and rail infrastructural requirements harness the employment and economic potential of Thurles. Such infrastructural developments give rise to potential for adverse effects to European Sites as a result of loss of greenfield to development, loss of/disturbance to habitats and species through increased visitor pressure, potential loss of floodplain, alterations to landscape character or disturbance to supporting features. Disturbance factors associated with such development and regeneration gives rise to spread of IAS.

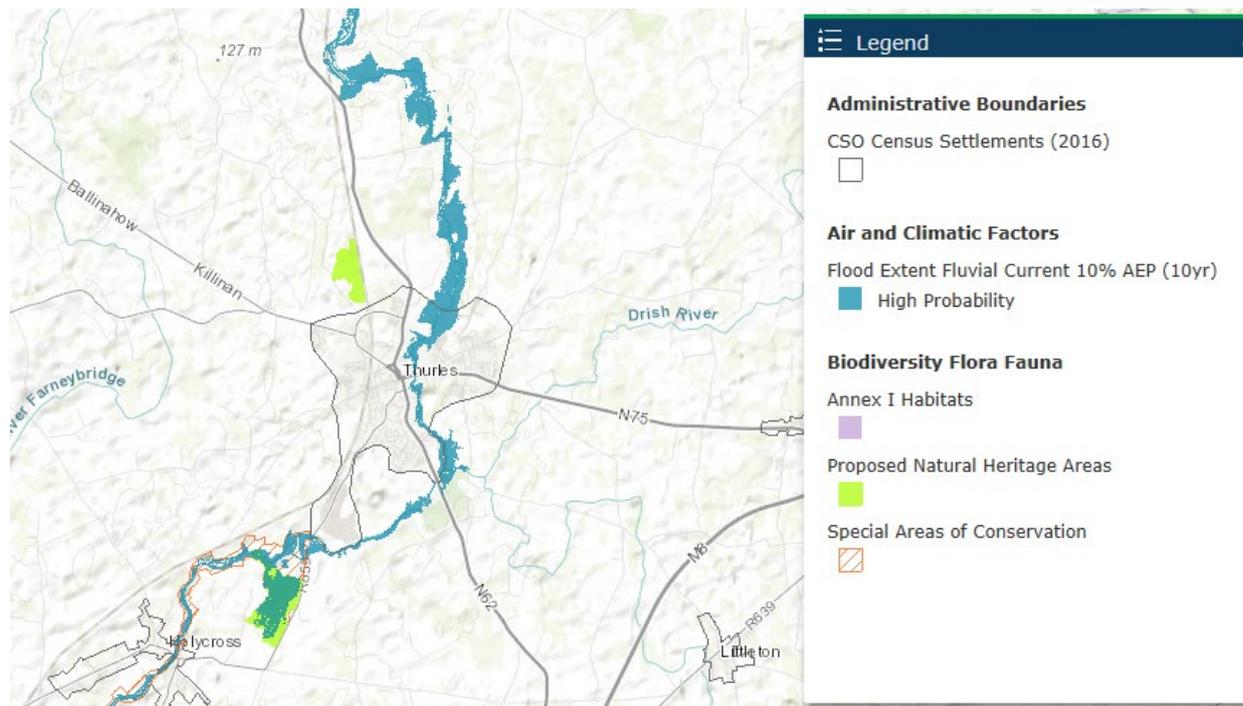
Thurles is situated immediately upstream of the Lower River Suir SAC, as such, any reduction of water quality in the River Suir, provides a direct pathway to the SAC and the potential for negative impacts. Designated for its conservation value, the SAC contains Annex I habitats and key priority habitats of alluvial forest and Yew woodland in addition to water quality dependant species i.e. Salmonids. The Suir river section passing through Thurles is largely at good status however there is a small section of moderate status, this area is highlighted as at risk of not meeting its WFD targets. Also designated as nutrient sensitive, the Suir is therefore vulnerable to increased urban activity. Such pressures have the potential to degrade water quality further and impact Qualifying Interests. The SAC receives inputs from several settlements in Tipperary, Kilkenny, and Waterford, as such, there is also potential for in-combination impacts with other settlements, in the form of multiple pressure points on this interrelated European Site.

The Thurles treatment facility caters for a population equivalent of 10,144 (EPA, 2016) to 9,885 (Irish Water, 2017). The facility is currently within capacity with appropriate headroom. Although passing stationary treatment compliance standards the facility has been highlighted as an EPA Priority Urban Area under concerns of excessive leaks and spills of wastewater. It should be noted that the River Suir, downstream of the sewage outfall, is nutrient sensitive. These concerns should therefore be addressed in tandem with planned growth in Thurles to ensure growth is phased with adequate improvements to key services so that adverse environmental impacts to European Sites are avoided.

Population growth within Thurles will result in increased demand on water supply and therefore there is potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

Proposed NIR Mitigation Measures:

- Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
- In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
- Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
- A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
- Support for [linear] infrastructure and traffic management plans are subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.
- Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.



7.4.8 Newcastle West

Newcastle West

Environmental Sensitivities:

- European Sites: None in or adjacent the town; nearest is the Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA
- Contribution to Ecological Networks: large area overlapping with western the town boundary which are part of 1 ecological network
- Low to High Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Licensed Facilities: Churchtown landfill
- Aquifer Vulnerability: Generally across the town, moderate-extreme in the NW quadrant of the town
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Arra_010 at Poor Status/At Risk; Deel (Newcastlewest)_090 at Moderate Status/ At Risk
- WFD Groundwater 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Good Status
- Flooding vulnerabilities (fluvial) associated with the Arra, Daar and Deel rivers, mainly along the western town boundary, through the town centre and along the eastern town boundaries
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP): Newcastle West; Agglomeration Served PE: 6,619 (2016 EPA), 8,435 (2017 EPA); Plant design PE: 9,000 (2016 EPA); Overall compliance (2017): Fail

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Newcastle West as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on nearby European Sites. Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle

Newcastle West

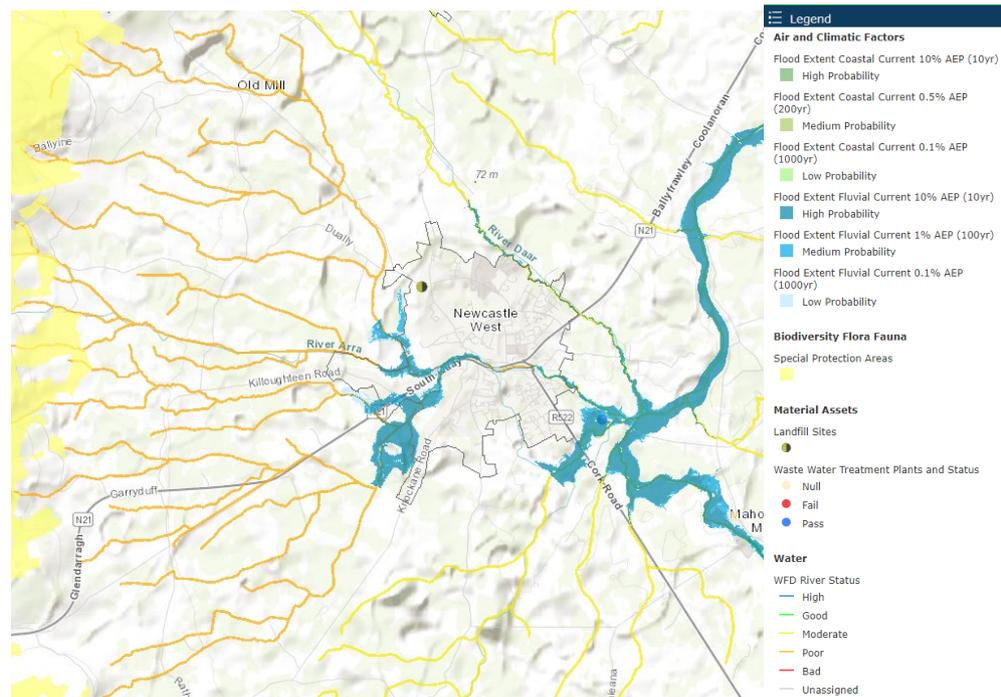
SPA lies to the east of Newcastle West, infrastructural developments to improve interregional connectivity and cross-boundary collaborations therefore gives rise to potential for adverse effects as a result of loss of greenfield to development, loss of/disturbance to habitats and species through increased visitor pressure, potential loss of floodplain, alterations to landscape character or disturbance to supporting features. Tourism investments i.e. the Great Southern Trail may also give rise to indirect long-term negative impacts through increased visitor pressures potentially resulting in habitat disturbance and degradation, and disturbance during any construction works. The trail passes through the Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA and the Lower River Shannon SAC and as such any investment in development of the trail needs to consider potential for impacts on these European Sites. Disturbance factors associated with such development and regeneration gives rise to spread of IAS.

Newcastle West is situated at the confluence of the River Arra and its tributaries, with hydrological connectivity to the Lower River Shannon SAC (and River Fergus Estuaries SPA) approximately 30km downstream, a pathway for potential negative impacts is evident along the course of the River Deal. The Rivers Arra and Deal are at moderate-poor status and therefore highlighted as at risk of not meeting its WFD targets. The Shannon Estuary is therefore vulnerable to reduced water quality through increased urban activity in Newcastle West along with nearby settlements. The SAC receives inputs from several settlements in Tipperary, Limerick, Kerry and Clare, as such, there is also potential for in-combination impacts with other settlements, in the form of multiple pressure points on this interrelated European Site.

Wastewater in Newcastle West is treated near the confluence of the River Arra, River Daar, and River Deal, while the plant is currently operating within capacity, it is failing overall plant compliance for 2017. As the receiving water environment is less than Good status, future growth will need to be planned to ensure sufficient capacity/wastewater treatment is in place to cater for increased loads. This is noted as an infrastructural requirement within the plan however upgrades should be subject to the appropriate environmental and planning assessments to ensure the integrity of European Sites is not diminished. Population growth within Newcastle Castle will also result in increased demand on water supply and as such there is potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

Proposed NIR Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
3. Tourism action plans should undertake carrying capacity assessments to identify visitor pressures, and site/route selection studies with appropriate environmental assessments for proposed development/infrastructural projects to avoid potential adverse impacts to European Sites
4. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
5. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
6. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
7. Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.
8. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.



7.4.9 Kilkenny

Kilkenny

Key Constraints:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): River Barrow And River Nore (north-south/SE through town)
- Special Protection Area (SPA): River Nore (north-south/SE through town)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA): Newpark Marsh (one discrete area within the town, other sites located to the north of town boundary), Dunmore Complex (within), Archersgrove (outside but near south-east town boundary), Lough Macask (to the west outside of town)
- Annex I Old oak woodlands (north)
- Medium-High Terrestrial biodiversity
- Scattered forestry
- Licensed facilities: 2 active quarries, 3 IPPC licenses, Dunmore Kilkenny landfill and waste facility
- County Geological Sites: Archersgrove Quarry (within), Bennettsbridge Quarry (south-east),
- High Aquifer vulnerability
- Key town in Ireland's Ancient East with distinct built and cultural heritage
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Nore_170 at Good Status/under Review; Bregagh (Kilkenny)_030 at Poor Status/At Risk; Brownstown (Pococke)_010 at Good status/under Review
- Salmonid River: The River Nore
- Flooding vulnerabilities associated with path of River Nore
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP): Kilkenny City and Environs; Agglomeration PE 35,643; Plant design PE: 77,000; Overall ELV compliance (2017): Pass

Assessment:

Kilkenny is a historic town located in the heart of Ireland's Ancient East, with a strong cultural heritage and valued as a key tourist destination.

The River Nore flows north to south through Kilkenny and forms part of the River Nore SPA, as well as the River Barrow and River Nore SAC. The River Nore is an important salmonid river, and supports groundwater and surface water dependant habitats and species. The River Nore SPA is also of high ornithological importance as it supports a nationally important population of Kingfisher. While the section of the River Nore running through Kilkenny is at Good status, it is current under Review in terms of meeting its WFD objectives.

Two inputting water bodies, the River Bregagh flowing into town from the west, and the Brownstown flowing into the Nore to the east of the town, are both at Poor ecological status and At Risk for not meeting WFD objectives. Kilkenny City and wastewater treatment plant has a number of storm water overflows within the town, with the main discharge point to the Nore to the south-east of the town, where water body status is not monitored. The PE served is 35,643, and the facility is well within design capacity of 77,000 PE and is passing its licence ELV compliance as of 2017. Downstream of the primary effluent discharge however, the Nore is a designated Nutrient Sensitive Area under the UWWTD as a result of wastewater discharges, as far downstream as the town of Inistioge. Therefore, while the plant may have sufficient capacity for future growth, addition loading resulting from population growth and development needs to be cognisant of the sensitivity of the receiving water environment downstream of Kilkenny, and the potential to impact on water quality supporting the integrity of the SAC and SPA.

The town objective supports enhanced rail services and links including development of freight rail services, which are directly positive for PHH, MA and indirectly positive for AQ and CF. However, any works to improve rail infrastructure have the potential to negatively impact on the environment (BFF, W, LS, CH and LandS), and therefore such projects need to be subject to feasibility studies, site/route selection and environmental assessment processes. Similarly any road improvement or freight facility projects at ports will require similar assessments.

The policy which supports city centre regeneration including development of the Abbey Quarter. Regeneration of sites provides the opportunity to manage uncontrolled run-off and/ or contamination issues are generally improved upon resulting in positive impacts to soil and water quality. There are potential negative impacts for European sites where regeneration and infill development, particularly brownfield sites, resulting in emissions to water or the generation of contaminated material from brownfield sites. The Abbey Quarter Masterplan was subject to SEA and AA processes and therefore it is important that mitigation arising from these processes is implemented in the development of Abbey Quarter particularly as the River Nore SAC/SPA is located directly adjacent to the Abbey Quarter.

The town objective also supports investment in higher education, however, the development of any infrastructure/facility has the potential to negatively impact on the environment and therefore it is important that such development is subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments (SEA, EIA, AA, EclA).

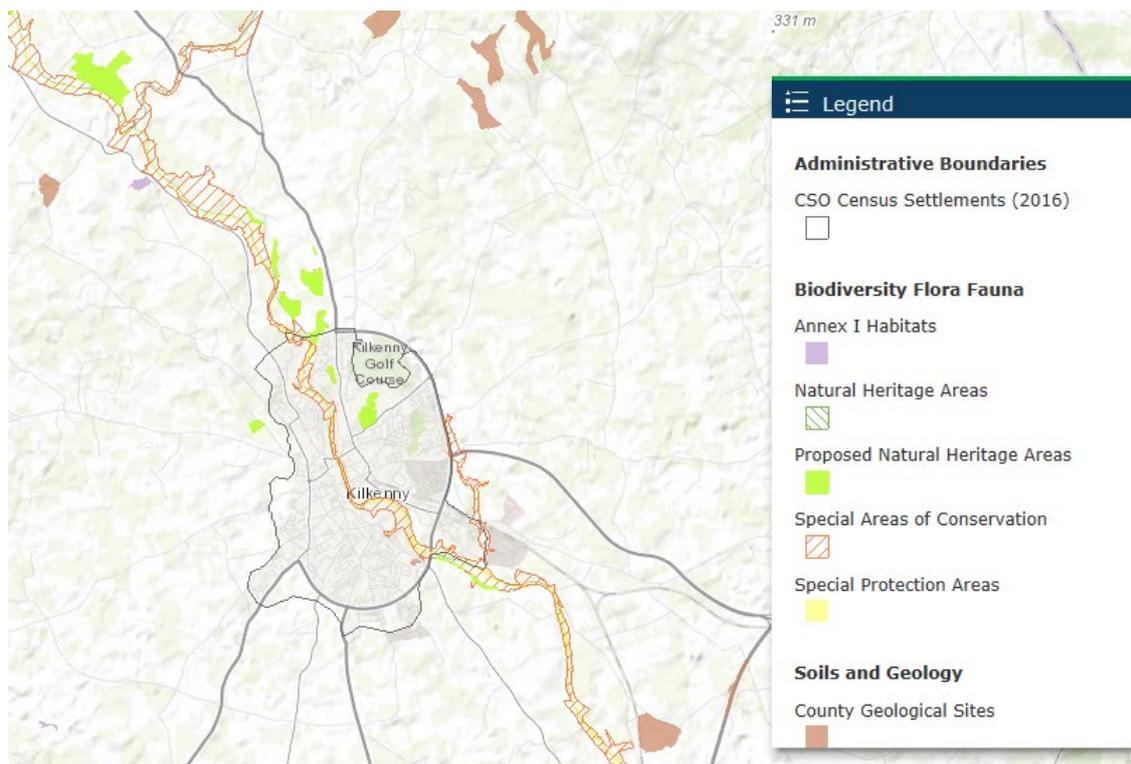
The objective also supports sustainable transport including development of Town Bus Services in support of the Compact '10-minute city' concept, as well as support for the development of rail and freight services at ports. Linear infrastructure has the potential for negative impacts upon European Sites such as habitat loss or fragmentation, species disturbance, spread invasive species and/or degradation in air/soil/water quality. Any such projects need to be subject to feasibility studies, site/route selection and environmental assessment processes.

The upgrading of water supply infrastructure and additional investment in wastewater infrastructure could lead to temporary construction-related impacts such as emissions to air and water. Increasing water supply for the town also has the potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

Proposed NIR Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
3. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
4. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
5. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.

6. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
7. Linear/ strategic infrastructure and associated infrastructure development (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.



7.4.10 Carlow

Carlow

Key Constraints:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): River Barrow And River Nore (north-south through town) [part of River Fushoge also designated 1km to the west of the town; River Lerr designated 3.5km to the north of the town]
- Natural Heritage Sites (NHA): Coan Bogs (~2.5km to south-west of town)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Sites (pNHA): Oakpark (~2km north of town), Cloghrystick Wood (>2km south of town)
- Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchment: Barrow (catchment with previous records of Margaritifera, but current status unknown)
- County Geological Sites: multiple (to the west of town)
- High Landscape Character area
- Medium-high contribution to potential ecological networks
- Wetland and saltmarshes
- Medium-high Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Scattered forestry – heavier to west

- Licensed facilities: Tullow Mushroom Growers Ltd windfarm, Clongrennane quarry, 2 IPPC licenses
- Moderate-High-Extreme Aquifer vulnerability
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Barrow_160 and Barrow_170 at Moderate Status/At Risk, Burren_060 at Poor Status/At Risk.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP): Carlow, Agglomeration Pe 30,636 (EPA 2016) 34,000 (Irish Water 2017), Plant design Pe 36,000. Overall compliance (2017) = Pass, not a Priority Urban Area

Assessment:

Carlow is the county town of County Carlow situated within the south-east of Ireland lying on the Carlow/Laois border. The River Barrow runs through the town of Carlow, and is a designated SAC, with the area supporting a rich array of flora and fauna - the site is of considerable conservation significance for the occurrence of good examples of habitats and of populations of plant and animal species that are listed on Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive. Furthermore it is of high conservation value for the populations of bird species that use it. North of the town, Annex I residual alluvial forest habitat is found along the Barrow. And there are other areas around the town boundary which contribute to ecological networks and biodiversity. Additional areas of natural value include Oakpark pNHA located about 2km to the north-east, and Cloghrick Wood pNHA located over 2km to the south. As such, the wider area around Carlow supports a rich array of biodiversity, vulnerable to negative impacts associating with the growth of Carlow, site selection with appropriate environmental assessment will therefore be vital to ensure the integrity of these areas is protected. The town objective supports development of underused lands along the River Barrow, which is part of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC. Although the lands have not been identified, it is imperative that any development along the lands adjacent to the river consider potential for impacts on European sites.

The section of the River Barrow running through the town is currently at Moderate 2010-2015 ecological status and is therefore At Risk of not meeting WFD objectives. Wastewater treatment is facilitated by the Carlow treatment plant designed to cater for 36,000 with the current load at 34,000 PE as of 2017. Irish Water indicates that headroom stands at just 727 PE and that there is a project underway to cater for future growth. It should be noted that the Barrow is at Moderate WFD status within Carlow town, and that the length of the river from downstream of the Portarlinton sewage outfall around 40km to the north of Carlow, as far south as Graiguenamanagh, is also a designated Nutrient Sensitive River. While the Carlow plant is not listed as a Priority Urban Area, future growth has the potential to increase pressure on the receiving water environment in particular, and therefore on the European site.

The town policy supports town centre regeneration, which provides the opportunity to manage uncontrolled run-off and/ or contamination issues are generally improved upon resulting in positive impacts to soil and water quality. However there is also potential for negative effects on European sites from impacts to biodiversity and water quality, where regeneration and infill development, particularly brownfield sites, results in emissions to water or the generation of contaminated material.

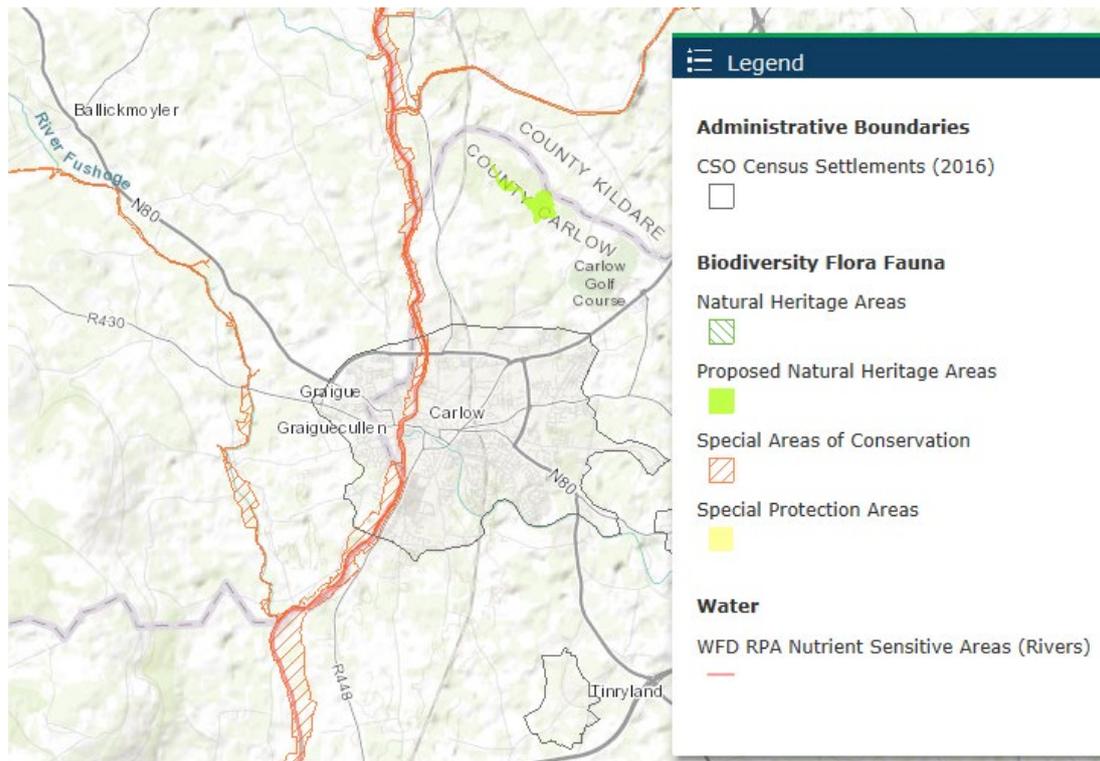
The objective also supports improved rail services and public transport, as well as a Regional Logistics Facility to serve the region along the M9 and/or on the Dublin-Waterford Rail line. However, the development of any infrastructure including any road upgrades has the potential to negatively impact on the environment and therefore it is important that all aforementioned development is subject to feasibility, site/route selection and environmental assessments (SEA, EIA, AA, EclA).

Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
3. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
4. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
5. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of

any European site.

6. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
7. Linear/ strategic infrastructure and associated infrastructure development (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.



7.4.11 Wexford

Wexford

Key Constraints:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Slaney River Valley (east, north), Long Bank (east), Screen Hills (north-east), Raven Point Nature Reserve (east);
- Special Protection Area (SPA): Wexford Harbour and Slobs (east, north), The Raven (east);
- Proposed Natural Heritage Sites (pNHA): Wexford Slobs And Harbour (east, north), Slaney River Valley (north-west), Screen Hills (north-east), Forth Mountain (west);
- Annex I habitats associated with Slaney River Valley and Wexford Bay: Large shallow inlets and bays, estuaries, tidal mudflats and sandflats, coastal lagoons, fixed/embryonic shifting/marram dunes, residual alluvial forests;
- High-Highest Birdwatch Sensitivity;
- Medium contribution to potential ecological networks;
- Wetland and saltmarshes;
- Medium-high Terrestrial Biodiversity;
- Scattered forestry;

- Licensed facilities: 2 discharge licences, 2 IPPC licenses, South East Recycling Company Ltd, Wexford Fishing Port;
- Historical Town and key destination in Irelands Ancient East;
- Low-Moderate Aquifer vulnerability with some areas of Rock/Karst at surface;
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Rathaspick & Coolree Stream of Unassigned Status and under review;
- WFD Coastal and Transitional 2010-2015 Water Bodies Risk: Lower Slaney Estuary of Poor/Moderate Status and At Risk;
- Flooding vulnerabilities associated with River Slaney and adjacent wetlands;
- Salmonid River: River Slaney; and
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Wexford Town, Agglomeration PE 28,110 (EPA, 2016) 30,317 (Irish Water, 2017) Plant design Pe 45,000. Overall compliance (2017): Pass.

Assessment:

Wexford town is located in the south side of the Wexford Harbour, at the mouth of the River Slaney, a major river which drains much of the south-east, then discharging to the Irish Sea. The River Slaney entering Wexford as well as the harbour areas are designated as an SAC/pNHA (Slaney River Valley) and SPA (Wexford Harbour and Slobs). The SAC is designated for surface and groundwater dependent habitats as well as species such as freshwater pearl mussel, salmon, lamprey, shad, otter and harbour seal (at the coast). The Wexford slobs are of international importance for several species of water birds but also because it regularly supports well in excess of 20,000 water birds, and is one of the top three sites in Ireland for number and diversity of wintering birds. Some of these include Bewick's Swan, Whooper Swan, Light-bellied Brent Goose and Greenland White-fronted Goose, as well as many native species e.g. hen harrier. Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, located within Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA, is a Ramsar Convention site, a Biogenetic Reserve and a Statutory Nature Reserve. Parts of the Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA are also designated as Wildfowl Sanctuaries.

The Slaney River Valley SAC and Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA are contiguous with the Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC/pNHA and The Raven SPA located at the coast beyond the harbour, further to the west of Wexford. This SPA is of international ornithological importance as it provides important roosting habitat for the Wexford Harbour Greenland White-fronted Goose flock. The site also supports a range of other species, including five which have populations of national importance; the site is also a Nature Reserve and Ramsar site. There are a range of Annex I habitats, concentrated along the river, harbour and coastline, which contribute to regional biodiversity.

A number of river water bodies feed into the Slaney transitional water bodies from either side, which are variable at Moderate 2010-2015 ecological status (e.g. Boro_060), Poor ecological status (Clonmore River Slaney_010) or have Unassigned status (mainly on the eastern side of the estuary). The Slaney estuary itself extends far inland to the north as far as Enniscorthy, and is comprised of two water bodies. The Upper Slaney Estuary to the north of Wexford is at Good 2010-2015 ecological status, dropping to Poor status in the Lower Slaney Estuary south of Oilgate/Ballyhogue north of Wexford, and through the town itself. Further out, the Wexford harbour coastal water body is at Moderate status. Water quality is therefore vulnerable to further degradation by additional pressures as a result of growth in Wexford. WFD water quality status has not been assigned to the Rathaspick and Coolree Streams so impacts upon these streams are currently unknown, however directly influence the SAC/SPA and associated biodiversity considerations. Site selection and appropriate environmental assessments will therefore be vital to ensure the integrity of these areas is not diminished by growth and development.

Wexford Town waste water facility currently treats wastewater in the south of the settlement, catering for a population equivalent of 30,317 PE (Irish Water, 2017). The facility is well within design capacity of 45,000 PE and is current passing its licence ELV's for 2017. The upgrading of water supply infrastructure and additional investment in wastewater infrastructure to support the economic development and anticipated growth of Wexford can have positive impacts in terms of minimising the risk of discharges contributing to degradation of the water environment. However upgrading should be undertaken on a phased basis with an understanding of the carrying capacity of the receiving environment to assimilate increased loading.

The town objective supports enhanced rail links including development of freight rail services. Road upgrades and expansion of the Town Bus Network are also proposed to improve connectivity. However, any works to improve or develop linear infrastructure, or other strategic development sites, has the potential for adverse effects upon European Sites depending on connectivity to those sites, and has the potential for negative

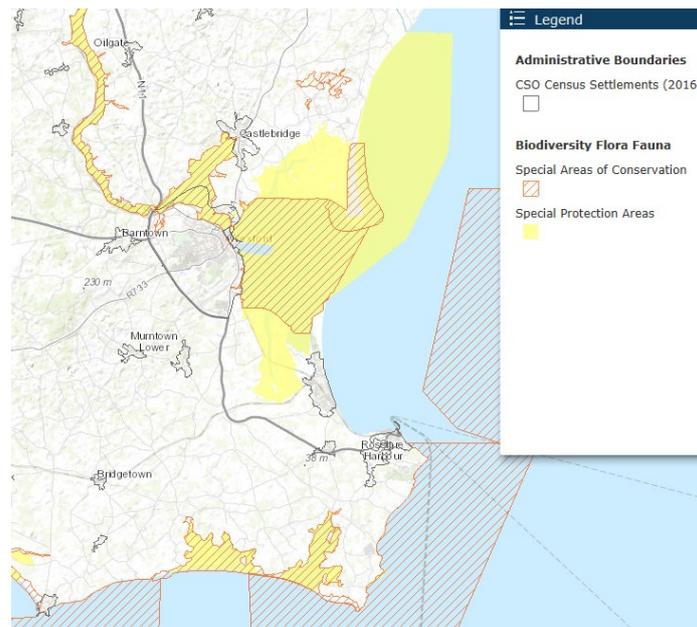
impacts upon European Sites such as habitat loss or fragmentation, species disturbance, spread invasive species and/or degradation in air/soil/water quality.

The objective also supports significant investment in port facilities at Rosslare Europort, which has potential for significant impacts (construction noise and vibration and long-term negative impacts from ongoing operational noise and lighting) European sites and water quality, in particular the nearby European sites and the significant bird populations to be found in the wider area. Soil/sediment also has the potential to be negatively impacted by discharges/emissions to the water column and to marine sediments. Any investment in development of the port needs to consider potential for impacts on the European Sites.

Urban regeneration and improvements to the public realm can provide the opportunity to manage uncontrolled run-off, and/ or contamination issues are generally improved upon resulting in positive impacts to soils and water quality. There are potential negative impacts on European sites where regeneration and infill development, particularly brownfield sites, results in emissions to water or the generation of contaminated material from brownfield sites. The objective also supports investment in higher education, which is positive for PHH.

Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
3. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
4. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
5. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
6. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
7. Linear/ strategic infrastructure and associated infrastructure development (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.



7.4.12 Clonmel

Clonmel

Key Constraints:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Lower River Suir (east-west)
- Natural Heritage Sites (NHA): Slievenamon Bog
- Proposed Natural Heritage Sites (pNHA): Marlfield Lake (west), Kilsheelin Lake (east)
- Annex I Old Oak Woodlands (south of town), Residual alluvial forests (west of town in Marlfield Lake pNHA)
- Medium-high contribution to potential ecological networks
- Medium-high Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Heavy forestry (south)
- Licensed facilities: 2 discharge licences, 4 IPPC licences
- Historic town and key destination in Ireland's Ancient East
- High-Extreme Aquifer vulnerability with patchy areas of Rock/Karst near the surface
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Suir_190 at Good Status/Not at Risk
- Flooding vulnerabilities along River Suir floodplains
- Clonmel Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), Agglomeration PE 20,929 (EPA, 2016) 29,400 (Irish Water, 2017) Plant design PE 60,000. Overall compliance (2017) = Pass

Assessment:

Clonmel is located on the Tipperary Waterford border and is the county town of Tipperary. The town is situated mostly on the northern banks of the River Suir, part of the Lower River Suir SAC, designated for surface and groundwater dependent habitats as well as species such as freshwater pearl mussel, salmon, lamprey, shad, otter, and white-clawed crayfish.

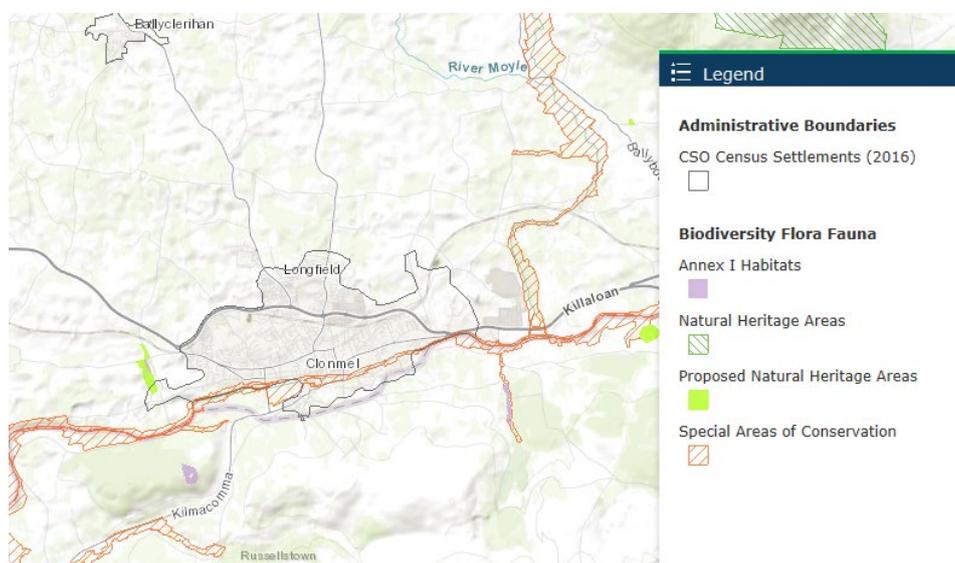
The upstream River Suir water body to the town (Suir_180), the water body with the town (Suir_190) and the downstream section (Suir_200; Anner_060) are all at Good ecological status for 2010-2015, and are therefore meeting their WFD objectives. However inappropriate growth in Clonmel has the potential to negatively impact water quality and consequently on European site. The Suir is a designated nutrient sensitive river, resulting from wastewater discharges from Clonmel, for the section of the Suir from the west of the town to as far as the eastern edge of Carrick-on-Suir. The Clonmel treatment facility currently treats wastewater in the south east of the settlement, catering for a population equivalent of 20,929 (EPA, 2016) to 29,400 (Irish Water, 2017). The facility is well within design capacity of 60,000 PE and passing its licence ELVs for 2017. Despite sufficient headroom, given the Suir's nutrient sensitive designation, additional development in the town has

the potential to give rise to likely significant effects on European sites through increased wastewater loads and subsequent decreases in water quality.

The objective supports improvements and upgrading of road and rail links, sustainable transport links and enhanced bus services to improve connectivity. Linear infrastructure has the potential for negative impacts upon European Sites such as habitat loss or fragmentation, species disturbance, spread invasive species and/or degradation in air/soil/water quality. Any such projects need to be subject to feasibility studies, site/route selection and environmental assessment processes. Similarly, the development of Ballingarrane Park as a Strategic Employment Location for Clonmel should be subject to feasibility studies and environmental assessment processes, to ensure the integrity of the SAC is not diminished. The provision of a new water treatment plant could lead to temporary construction-related impacts such as emissions to air and water. The intention to boost water supply for the town could have the potential for increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes.

Mitigation Measures:

- Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
- Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
- In order to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
- Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
- A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
- Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
- Linear infrastructure and associated infrastructure (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.



7.4.13 Gorey

Gorey

Key Constraints:

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): located outside town to the west - Slaney River Valley SAC
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA): Courtown Dunes And Glen (downstream at the coast to the SE)
- Contribution to Ecological Networks: part of 1 network in three patches overlapping town boundary in NE, NW and S;
- Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchment: proximity to catchment of extant populations to the west of town;
- Low to Moderate Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Licensed Facilities: 1 PRTR facility, 1 quarry (to the SW of the town)
- Aquifer Vulnerability: Generally high in the town, high-extreme on E and SW sides of the town
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Banoge_010 at Moderate Status/At Risk; Banoge_020 & Banoge_030 both at Poor Status/At Risk
- WFD Groundwater 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Good Status/ Not at Risk;
- Flooding vulnerabilities (fluvial) associated with River Banoge, mainly N-S through centre of town, and along the western tributary;
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP): Courtown-Gorey; Agglomeration Served PE: 18,068 (2016 EPA), 18,462 (2017 Irish Water); Plant design PE: 36,000 (2016 EPA/2017 Irish Water; Overall compliance (2017 AER): Pass.

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Gorey as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

Gorey is a market town located in the south-east of Ireland in Wexford, located about 3.5km from the coast, with a population of 10,366 in the 2016 census. The nearby village of Courtown located on the coast to the south-east of Gorey is a popular resort destination. The nearest European site is the Slaney River Valley SAC located approximately 1.75km to the west of the town, with Annex I old sessile oak woodland designated along the river bank directly west of the town. The SAC is also designated for surface and groundwater dependent habitats as well as species such as freshwater pearl mussel, salmon, lamprey, shad, otter and harbour seal (at the coast). Downstream of Gorey at Courtown, the coastline is designated as a pNHA - Courtown Dunes And Glen.

The Banoge_010 water body entering the town is at Moderate 2010-2015 ecological status, flowing into the Banoge_020 and Banoge_030 in the centre and south of the town which are both at Poor status. All three water bodies are therefore At Risk of not meeting WFD objectives. The town is served by the Courtown-Gorey wastewater treatment plant (located close to Courtown). The plant is operating well within capacity and is currently passing its ELV compliance as of 2017. Irish Water notes that the plant has headroom for an additional approximately 6,300 housing unit equivalents (factoring in the average occupancy of 2.75). However given the status and risk of the receiving water environment, future development of the town should be cognisant of this to future loads, and services should therefore be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the relevant authorities.

The objective is to sustainably strengthen the role of Gorey Town as an economic driver and to leverage its strategic location and proximity to regionally important infrastructure, such as Rosslare Europort, and to build on its economic strengths (retail, tourism etc.). Increased investment holds significant potential for negative effects on biodiversity, water quality and soil, through greenfield and brownfield development, habitat loss

Gorey

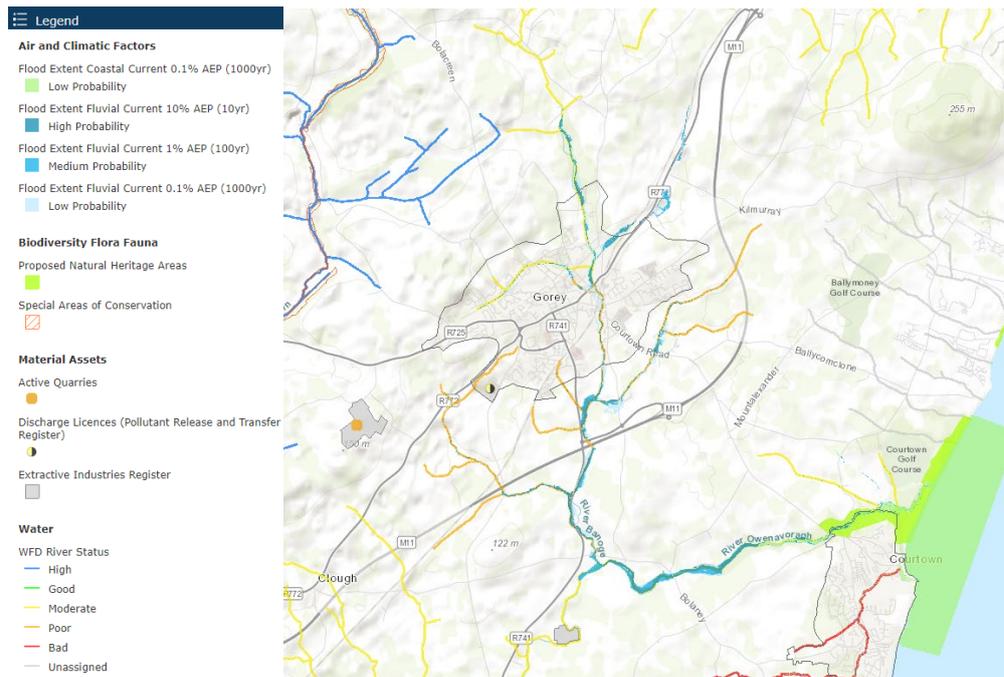
and disturbance and emissions to air, soil and water. Planning of any new development should be subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments as appropriate.

The objective supports enhanced rail services, new bridge crossings over the railway as well as road upgrades, and sustainable transport modes (including walking and cycling), proposed to improve connectivity. However, any works to improve road, rail and public transport infrastructure have the potential to negatively impact on the environment, and therefore such projects need to be subject to feasibility studies, site/route selection and environmental assessment processes.

Urban regeneration and improvements to the public realm are broadly positive, where it provides the opportunity to manage uncontrolled run-off and/ or contamination issues are generally improved upon resulting in positive impacts to water quality and soils. There are potential negative impacts for biodiversity, soil and water quality where regeneration and infill development, particularly brownfield sites, resulting in emissions to water or the generation of contaminated material from brownfield sites.

Mitigation Measures:

- Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
- Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
- In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
- Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
- A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
- Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
- Linear infrastructure and associated infrastructure (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.



7.4.14 Dungarvan

Dungarvan

Key Constraints:

- Special Protection Area (SPA): Dungarvan Harbour
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): located outside town to NE of N72 - Glendine Wood
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA): Dungarvan Harbour
- County Geological Site (CGS): Dungarvan Harbour (within); Shandon Railway Cutting Cave (to N of the town)
- GeoPark: UNESCO Copper Coast GeoPark to NE of the town, between Dungarvan and Tramore
- Annex I Habitat: Estuaries; tidal and mudflats
- Contribution to Ecological Networks: part of 1 network within the town; patches outside to NW, N and NE
- Coastal Saltmarshes: around River Colligan outside town, along southern settlement boundary and along coastal part of Clonea Road
- Low to High Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Licensed Facilities: 1 IPPC licence, 1 licensed waste facility
- Aquifer Vulnerability: Generally low-moderate in the town, high-extreme along the coast and in the north of the town
- Designated Shellfish Area: Dungarvan Harbour (to S of the town)
- WFD River 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Colligan_040 of Moderate Status/At Risk
- WFD Transitional 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Colligan Estuary Moderate Status/At Risk
- WFD Groundwater 2010-2015 Ecological Status and Risk: Generally Good Status/ Not at Risk west side of town, Review east side of town (within); Poor Status 'Waste Facility' groundwater/At Risk (to the W of the town)
- Flooding vulnerabilities (coastal) associated with River Colligan and harbour; fluvial flooding along northern settlement boundary
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP): Dungarvan; Agglomeration Served PE: 18,440 (2016 EPA), 18,462 (2017 Irish Water); Plant design PE: 25,000 (2016 EPA/2017 Irish Water) – Note: agglomeration serves other settlements; Overall compliance (2017 AER): Pass; EPA Priority Area (2017) for UWW (sole pressure on a water body)

Assessment:

In consideration of the above, the development of Dungarvan as a key town has potential for adverse effects on European Sites along a number of pathways. These pathways include:

- Habitat loss, destruction and/or disturbance as a result of the growth ambition;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation – part of Dungarvan Harbour pNHA is located in the northern part of the town with the bulk to the south and along and within the harbour;
- Deterioration in water quality as a result of the growth ambition;
- Increased demand on water supply; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

Dungarvan is a coastal town in the south-east of Ireland, with a population of 9,227 in the 2016 census. The area is known for its spectacular coastline and geological heritage, with the UNESCO Copper Coast GeoPark located to the north-east of the town along the coastal stretch as far as Tramore.

RPOs seeking investment opportunities in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, recreational, arts and culture gives rise to the potential for increased diffuse urban pressure on the rivers that run through Colligan and the downstream Colligan Estuary (e.g. via misconnections, surface run-off etc.). The River Colligan flows into the Colligan Estuary, around which the town has grown, and which is also designated as an SPA, hosting important populations of Light-bellied Brent Geese. The estuary is at Moderate ecological status and is therefore At Risk of not meeting its WFD objectives. The Dungarvan WWTP is listed as a Priority Urban Area for wastewater as of 2017, as it has been identified by the EPA as being the single significant pressure impacting the Colligan Estuary. The current population of Dungarvan is well within the design capacity of the WWTP, however it is noted that the plant takes loads from other settlements. At present, Irish Water notes that the plant has headroom for approximately 2,391 housing unit equivalents (factoring in the average occupancy of 2.75). Future planning for the growth of the town should be cognisant of the sensitivity of the receiving water environment from future loads. There is also potential for in-combination impacts with other regional or key growth settlements, in the form of multiple pressure points on interrelated European Sites, a number of which are located along the coast to the north-easts and south of Dungarvan. Future upgrades to water and wastewater infrastructure is noted, as services should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the relevant authorities.

Urban regeneration can be broadly positive in preventing urban sprawl pushing towards the neighbouring European Sites and where regeneration provides the opportunity to manage uncontrolled run-off and/ or contamination issues and generally improve the quality of the receiving environment. As with any development there are also potential negative effects where regeneration or infill development results in source- impact-pathways to connected European Sites e.g. emission of pollutants to water, or the generation of contaminated material may give rise to the spread of IAS resulting in loss of/ disturbance to species and habitats.

Small areas of woodlands, grasslands and wetlands are present in the surrounding areas, as such contribute to ecological networks and have low to high terrestrial biodiversity, including inland parts of the estuary, parts of which are designated for the Annex I habitat – tidal mudflats. The provision of cycle and walking infrastructure may have the potential to fragment these habitats or encroach on riparian zones. Where located near the SPA, visitor pressure/recreation and use of cycleways may disturb wildlife, particularly birds.

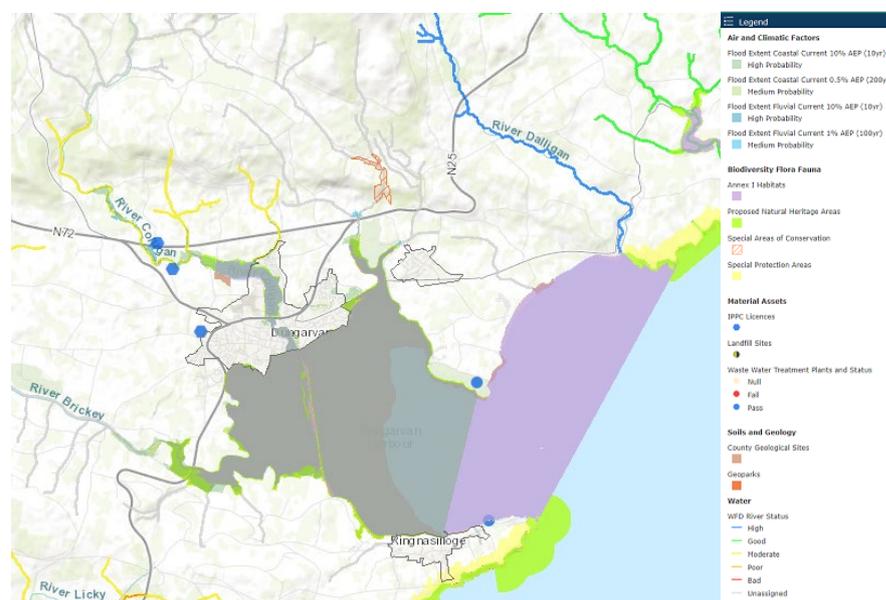
The town RPO references upgrading of the N25 and N72 national roads; upgrading of road infrastructure can give rise to likely significant effects on European sites in particular, as a result of construction-related impacts and longer-term permanent operational impacts, namely through habitat loss, species loss/disturbance and long-term emissions to air, soil and water, as well as changes to water quality. There is also potential for permanent loss of greenfield.

Mitigation Measures:

1. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
2. Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.
3. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of

water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.

4. Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.
5. A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
6. Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.
7. Linear infrastructure and associated infrastructure will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.



7.4.15 Overarching Mitigation Measures for Growth Locations

The following Overarching Mitigation Measures are proposed in relation to the identified growth locations above:

- Area action plans shall be prepared for each of the 14 growth areas and shall assess potential for impact pathways in relation to European sites and the potential for ex-situ impacts. Action plans will ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site as a result of objectives and policies included in each plan. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.
- In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.
- Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.

- The RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.

7.5 A STRONG ECONOMY – INNOVATIVE & SMART (CHAPTER 4 OF RSES)

Chapter 4 of the draft RSES develops the strategy to secure future prosperity and achieve regional parity. The chapter addresses the following themes: enhancing regional accessibility; transforming transport to well-functioning integrated transport systems; and optimising international connectivity. This relates to the components 5 and 11 of the strategy outlined in Chapter 2 of the RSES as follows:

- To build a competitive, innovative and productive economy (5), and
- Build an inclusive outward looking international region on the global stage (11).

The delivery of related infrastructure has the potential for significant effects on European sites including;

- Habitat loss or destruction during construction;
- Loss of key supporting habitats and ecosystem complexes during construction;
- Habitat fragmentation or degradation as a result of routing / siting;
- Introduction of barriers to movement;
- Disturbance to habitats/species from noise, air light emissions;
- Species mortality from collision or resulting from disturbance of habitat;
- Alterations to water quality and/or water movement from drainage patterns;
- Alterations to air quality from transport related emissions especially road, air and sea transport;
- Introduction or spread of invasive species during construction and operation; and
- Alternations due to climate change from continued emissions of GHG.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Economic Opportunities and Choice for All Social Enterprise	RPO 36 and RPO 37 - These policies aim to strengthen learning and increase employment opportunities to retain a skilled labour force in the region. The RPO's will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Regional Economic Resilience	RPO 38 - This addresses building a resilient economy in the region. It will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Atlantic Economic Corridor	<p>RPO 39 is a policy driver to develop the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) for investment and economic growth. There is no implicit detail contained in the policy, although the RSES supports the development of strategic regional infrastructure in proximity to the AEC. The policy itself will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites, and it is recognised that potential projects within the AEC will be subject to planning requirements including AA.</p> <p>Furthermore it is noted that the RSES in RPO 1 commits to sustainable development' which shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate. The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Rural Economy CAP	<p>RPO 40 aims to exploit shared learning within the region. It will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.</p> <p>RPO 41 aims to deliver sustainable actions under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which forms part of the Common Agriculture Policy. This programme and its parent policy from which in Ireland it derives, was not subject to AA. Although including a number of environmental objectives and grant assisted projects, there are activities where there can be significant potential for adverse impacts on site integrity across a range of protected habitats and species depending on location. The policy does reference sustainable and potentially positive actions such as biodiversity restoration, water and soil management, but is not explicit in acknowledging the potential negative effects of these activities or the need to protect European sites and avoid adverse effects. There is considerable potential for key impacts such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct and Indirect Loss, disturbance or fragmentation of habitats – construction and operation impacts coupled with increased visitors resulting in further adverse effect on European sites; ▪ Disturbance of species supported by a European site (or ecological network) ▪ Changes in key indicators of conservation importance- alteration to the drainage regime in sensitive wetlands; run-off of pollutants during construction, alterations to water quality and quantity for sites which are dependent on water quality and quantity (habitats and species), pollution events where temporary populations during “high” season may put unsustainable pressure on services. <p>In developing such initiatives, the SR and its constituent Local Authorities must consider the potential for the initiatives and infrastructural proposals to lead to likely significant effects and where necessary adverse effects on site integrity.</p>
Mitigation: As SEA and AA were not undertaken on these plans / programmes the SRA should condition any support for same on the outcome of AA for the individual initiatives it intends to support. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Action Plan for Rural Development and Rural Development Programme	Neither of the two programmes to which RPO 42 refers were subject to SEA or AA. Thus there has been no documented environmental consideration for the objectives or actions to date. In supporting such programmes, the SR must consider the potential for initiatives to result in likely significant effects and possibly adverse effects on European sites integrity.
Mitigation: As SEA and AA were not undertaken on these plans / programmes the SRA should condition any support for same on the outcome of AA for the individual initiatives it intends to support. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Rural Economic Development Zones	RPO 43 is a support policy to drive sustainable transboundary regional projects and support investment in sustainable infrastructure development. The policy, in driving sustainable infrastructural development does not address protection of the environment or avoiding adverse effects on the integrity of the European sites either within the region or those with transboundary connectivity. It is acknowledged that the policy refers to sustainable development which is defined in RPO 1 as development which shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate. The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Digital and Physical Infrastructure in Rural Areas Rural Partnership Models	RPO 44 aims to accelerate the roll out of digital facilities and infrastructure supporting it as well as other elements such as water and wastewater as well as enhanced transport connectivity. Although there is no site specific detail associated with the policy, there is considerable potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European site, if unmitigated, owing to the range of potential projects that the policy espouses. Individually or in-combination impacts cannot be ruled out. However, much of the infrastructural improvements are captured by other sectoral plans that themselves have been subject to AA and include mitigation measures e.g. National Broadband Plan or the Water Service Strategic Plan. Other improvement such as local transport improvements are typically identified in County Development Plans and include specific planning mitigation owing to the fact that they are located within or in close proximity to environmentally sensitive areas including European sites, both terrestrial and aquatic, but in particular coastal and riverine areas. RPO 45 is a shared evidence base model between and cross communities in the region. It will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.
Mitigation: Mitigation measures in sectoral plans will be applicable to the delivery of any projects arising from RPO 44. However, the policy should reinforce such mitigation by referencing the fact that any plans or individual projects relating to the development and/or establishment of digital and physical infrastructure are subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites	

in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>Innovative Hubs and Centres of Excellence</p> <p>Innovation in rural Areas</p> <p>Diversification</p> <p>Economic clusters and Ecosystems</p> <p>Multinational Corporation</p>	<p>RPO 46 supports development of centres of excellence or hubs in line with the regions settlement strategy with a focus on innovation in agri-food, agri-tech, marine research, creative industries, knowledge economy etc. No adverse effects on site integrity as a result of the policy.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the policy may be a pre-cursor for further development of these areas which could lead to indirect impacts if poorly sited. As such, any opportunities for growth at a local level must first establish the potential for likely significant effects on any European sites. Projects arising out of the policy will be obliged to follow the requirements of the planning process as appropriate.</p> <p>RPO 47 supports innovation within the region. It will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.</p> <p>RPO 48 supports the development of specialism diversity across rural regions to act as dynamic drivers for rural economy. The types of specialism include agriculture, marine, forestry, peatlands, energy, tourism etc. All such developments have potential for adverse effects if inappropriate sites. As such the commitments in RPO 1 are essential to ensure that only sustainable development is supported by the RA within the RSES.</p> <p>RPO 49 and RPO 50 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.</p>
<p>Mitigation: RPO 46 and 48 will require robust feasibility and site selection, which includes explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European sites and where relevant potential for adverse effects on the integrity of a European site will be carried out in advance of any site development.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>Tourism</p>	<p>Potential for adverse effects on site integrity as a result of RPO 51 if unmitigated as it seeks to encourage visitors to cultural and natural heritage assets in the region as well as enhanced leisure amenities including greenways and blueways. These may include sites/assets adjacent to or within European sites. Although the policy recognises sustainable development and is not geospecific, it is likely that some areas will be located within or in close proximity to environmentally sensitive areas including European sites, both terrestrial and aquatic, but in particular coastal and riverine areas. New development coupled with increased visitor numbers has the potential to result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct and Indirect Loss, disturbance or fragmentation of habitats – construction and operation impacts coupled with increased visitors resulting in further adverse effect on European sites; ▪ Disturbance of species supported by a European site (or ecological network) ▪ Changes in key indicators of conservation importance- alteration to the drainage regime in sensitive wetlands; run-off of pollutants during construction, alterations to water quality and quantity for sites which are dependent on water quality and quantity (habitats and species), pollution events where temporary populations during “high” season may put unsustainable pressure on services. ▪ Spread of invasive weeds and biosecurity threat to species such as

	<p>Crayfish – poor construction controls, unwitting spread via increased visitors or as a vector via boats along blueways.</p> <p>Following iterative discussion with the SRA, the RPO has been expanded to commit to supporting relevant authorities in the development of specific monitoring protocols for visitor pressure to ensure that tourism activities are maintained within sustainable limits for the European sites in the region. The feasibility of plans in the context of site sensitivity and the sustainable limits of specific sites will need to be established before any targeted initiatives.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Any plans relating to the development of new or expansion/renewal of existing facilities and amenities shall be subject to the commitments under RPO 1 and the outcome of appropriate planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>The feasibility of plans in the context of site sensitivity and the sustainable limits of specific sites will need to be established before any targeted initiatives. See RPO 52.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Tourism and the Environment	<p>Following iterative discussion with the SRA, RPO 52 has been included in the RSES. This commits to the following:</p> <p><i>Development of new or enhanced tourism infrastructure and facilities should include an assessment of the environmental sensitivities of the area including an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) if required in order to avoid adverse impacts on the receiving environment. Where such tourism infrastructure or facilities are developed, the managing authority/agency should ensure that effective monitoring protocols are put in place to monitor and assess the ongoing effect of tourism on sensitive features with particular focus on natural, archaeological and built heritage assets.</i></p> <p>RPO 52 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.</p>
<p>Mitigation: None</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Retail	<p>The preparation of retail strategies as identified in RPO 53 and the application of the existing retail hierarchy in the region will not give rise to adverse effects on integrity of any European sites.</p> <p>The policy recognises that Urban regeneration and public realm renewal projects in towns and villages should be assessed for potential impacts on the receiving environment. The policy focus is on existing services and potential need for new build such as carparks. As such it has overlooked the risk of potential adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites, and the recognition of potential direct connectivity of many of the regions towns and villages centres via watercourses to European sites.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Support for infrastructural development is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
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Low Carbon Economy.	In principle, RPO 54 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites, as it focusses on acceleration towards low carbon economy and the development of green technologies. The policy includes environmental consideration for the development of future green technologies, it is not explicit if new build or resource requirement might be required as a result of a future project. Thus there is no project –specific detail. Any such projects shall be subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.
Mitigation: In line with RPO 1, robust feasibility and site selection, which includes explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European sites and where relevant potential for adverse effects on the integrity of a European site will be carried out in advance of any site development.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
National Policy Statement on Bio-economy Bio-economy and rural areas	<p>RPO 55 relates to support for the National Policy Statement on the Bio-economy (2018) recognises the role for bio-economy in transition to a low carbon climate resilient economy which relies less on fossil-based resources and increases use of renewable biological materials. While a policy seeks to move Ireland toward a low carbon economy with benefits in terms of reduced GHG emissions [and indirect positive impacts for protected habitats and species which may be effected by climate change] , the nature of the source materials has potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites if not properly sited. This may be through land use change as wild areas and / or peripheral lands are harnessed for this new crop; changes in species dynamics; alteration of water regimes; erosion and runoff. The objective commits to a feasibility study on bio-economy for the region. This study must consider the potential for adverse effects on European sites.</p> <p>RPO 56 is supporting the expansion of the agricultural and food sectors together with the bio-economy. <i>Foodwise 2025</i> and the closely allied <i>Forestry Programme 2014-2020</i> have been subject to AA, however the Bioenergy Plan which overlaps with both has not yet been adopted. The policy does reference facilitating sustainable agri economies and also notes the importance of maintaining and protecting the natural landscape. However it is not explicit in acknowledging the potential negative effects of these activities or the need to protect European sites and avoid adverse effects.</p>
<p>Mitigation: The feasibility study shall consider the potential for adverse effects on European sites. furthermore it shall develop siting criteria for different bioenergy types to inform future suitable location within the region.</p> <p>The mitigation measures committed to as part of the Appropriate Assessments of Foodwise 2025 and Forestry Programme 2014-2020 and the yet to be published Bio-energy Plan must be fully applied if the policies on bio-energy in the region are to avoid adverse effects on European sites. The relevant measures shall be detailed and considered in the feasibility study.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Bio-economy and Rural Areas National Bio-economy Hub in Lisheen Health Place Audit	RPO 57 supports the sustainable development of Lisheen as a smart driver with potential to significantly contribute towards climate change targets.. Lisheen is within close proximity to the Lower River Suir SAC, which supports a considerable number of coastal and aquatic habitats and species and a number of terrestrial habitats. Where such activities occur there can be significant potential for adverse impacts on site integrity across a range of protected habitats and species depending on location. Thus the SR has been

	<p>explicit in acknowledging the potential negative effects of the project and has integrated a requirement for the site to satisfy AA requirements to ensure protection of and avoidance of adverse effects to European sites.</p> <p>RPO 58 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.</p>
<p>Mitigation: A feasibility study will be undertaken to inform decision making in relation to development of the Lisheen site to determine what development may be appropriate given the proximity of the site to the Lower River Suir SAC and how it can be achieved while ensuring the conservation objectives of the SAC are not compromised. It is noted that the site can only be developed where it can be determined, beyond reasonable scientific doubt that adverse effects can be avoided in the integrity of any European sites.</p> <p>Local economy and community plans will be subject to AA when prepared. This will include areas already in existence such as Lisheen which may not have previously been subject to AA. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Locations for Employment Development	There is potential for adverse effects from RPO 59 as it seeks to identify future locations for strategic employment zones however it is recognised that the objective has explicit regard to environmental constraints. In line with RPO 1, robust site and route selection will underpin the identification of sites and projects and AA will be applied as appropriate.
<p>Mitigation: Robust feasibility and site selection, which includes explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European sites and where relevant potential for adverse effects on the integrity of a European site will be carried out in advance of identifying further strategic employment zones.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Skills and Talent Entrepreneurship Enterprise and Innovation Support	<p>RPO 60 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.</p> <p>RPO's 61-63 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites</p> <p>RPO 64 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.</p>
<p>Mitigation: None</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Regional Investment	<p>RPO 65 is concerned with developing a regional investment plan to ensure continuous investment in infrastructure. It is noted that the RPO explicitly requires;</p> <p><i>All proposals for investment in infrastructure shall be subject to robust site selection and environmental feasibility/assessment including Flood Risk Assessment. This should include explicit consideration of the likely significant effects on European sites and potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites in advance of any development.</i></p> <p>As a result, RPO 65 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.</p>

Mitigation: None

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Trade; International good practice; Bidding capacity; Common and shared evidence base; Future Proof Anticipating economic structural changes	RPO 66 - 73 will not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites.
Mitigation: With reference to RPO 71 Shared Evidence Base, it is recommended that the shared evidence base extend to environmental performance also.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Marine Economy Maritime Spatial planning - Consistency and Alignment	<p>The Regional assembly aims to support the development of the upcoming Maritime Spatial Plan. Three RPO 75-77 have been proposed to give effect to this in supporting regional and cross-boundary management of coastal areas which is to be welcomed. It is noted this plan will be subject to SEA and AA when prepared and will address the coastal and marine European sites in particular in developing a sustainable marine economy.</p> <p>The region also has an objective to ensure alignment and consistency in land use and marine planning which supports the protection of the marine environment and the growth of the marine economy in RPO 74. While alignment and consistency are to be welcomed, exploitation of the marine environment has potential for adverse effects through impacts on water quality, changes in marine processes, disturbance and collision with fauna and loss and disturbance of habitats. As such, any support for growth within the marine economy must first consider the types of activities, development etc. which are suitable given the European sites if negative effects are to be avoided, especially in combination effects.</p>
<p>Mitigation: As per the RPO 76, support for any project will be subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>The mitigations arising from the AA of the upcoming MSP shall be fully integrated into the developing marine economy.</p> <p>Given the number of overlapping and competing plans already in place and anticipated for the coastal and maritime areas, it is recommended that the SRA establish a cross-boundary working group to develop interim strategies for protection of coastal and marine based European sites until such time as the MSP and associated AA mitigation is available. This early and proactive work will help inform data gaps and identify pressures which can in turn assist in assessment of the MSP in due course.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Shannon Estuary and Other Harbour Plans	RPO 77 references development in line with the SIFP. It is noted that this plan has already been subject to SEA and AA. Any further plans or projects arising from this should ensure implantation of the mitigation measures

	required by the AA for the SIFP. Furthermore, and in line with RPO 1, further layers of the planning hierarchy will also require environmental assessment including SEA, EIA and AA as appropriate as committed to in RPO 77..
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Maritime Resource and Blue Economy	RPO 78 aims to support collaborations between to support sustainable development of marine resources. There is potential for individual and in-combination effects in particular for productive sector enterprises, which could have implications for habitats and species through loss/degradation or fragmentation of habitat, changes to hydrological conditions that support species and habitats as well introduction/spread of invasive species. It is noted that the RPO expressly notes that supports are subject to the outcome of the required <i>appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes</i> .
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Marine Investment	<p>A series of four policies, RPO 79-82 seek to investment for individual elements pertaining to the sustainable delivery of and improvements to delivering targets and harvest under a range of European and national programmes and initiatives. Investments in developing the marine sector through construction of new or expanding existing infrastructure in as yet unidentified locations could result in adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites. As such investment in the marine environment has potential for adverse effects through impacts on water quality, changes in marine processes, disturbance and collision with fauna and loss and disturbance of habitats. Any support for investment must first consider the types of activities, development etc. which are suitable given the European sites if negative effects are to be avoided, especially in combination effects.</p> <p>To address this potential, the SRA has explicitly included a requirement under each of the four RPOs for <i>Robust site selection and environmental feasibility is required in advance of seeking investment including all necessary flood risk assessments</i>.</p> <p>It is further noted that RPO 1 commits to SEA, EIA, AA and EcIA as appropriate to inform decision making.</p>
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Renewable Offshore Energy Marine Clusters	No potential for adverse effects from RPO 83 and RPO 84 as they promote cooperation and awareness of the regions offshore energy potential. The Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan was subject to SEA and AA, which resulted in 12 separate plan level mitigation measures as well as suggested project level mitigation measures being recommended to ensure that no adverse effects on the marine environment. The development of a research driven marine cluster to support development of Marine ICT and Biotechnology does not in itself has significant potential for adverse impacts on site integrity across a range of protected habitats and species depending

	<p>on location and/or individual projects arising out of the support.</p> <p>It is noted that both RPOs have been modified to include a requirement that: <i>Initiatives arising from this objective shall be subject to robust feasibility and site selection, which includes flood risk assessment and explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European Sites and potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites in advance of any development.</i></p> <p>No potential for adverse effects as a result.</p>
<p>Mitigation: In respect of the first RPO, full plan and project required mitigation as required in the OREDP.</p>	

7.6 ENVIRONMENT – CREATING A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT FOR A HEALTHY SOCIETY (CHAPTER 5 OF RSES)

Chapter 5 of the draft RSES acknowledges that the core needs for our wellbeing are clean air, clean water, and access to amenity, safe food, stable environment, and safe shelter. The quality of each one of these is directly influenced by the quality of the environment. This relates to the regional objectives RPO 7, 8 and 9 in Chapter 2 of the RSES as follows:

- To strengthen and protect our region’s diverse culture, recreation, natural heritage, biodiversity and built heritage;
- To safeguard and enhance our environment through sustainable development, transitioning to a low carbon and climate resilient society;
- To provide infrastructure and services in a sustainable, plan and infrastructure led manner to ensure the sustainable management of water waste and other environmental resources

The delivery of infrastructure and services to support a healthy environment has the potential for significant effects on European sites including;

- Habitat loss or destruction during construction;
- Loss of key supporting habitats and ecosystem complexes during construction;
- Habitat fragmentation or degradation as a result of routing / siting;
- Introduction of barriers to movement;
- Disturbance to habitats/species from noise, air light emissions and visitor pressure;
- Species mortality from disturbance of habitat;
- Alterations to water quality and/or water movement from drainage patterns;
- Alterations to air quality from transport related emissions;
- Introduction or spread of invasive species during construction and operation; and
- Alternations due to climate change from continued emissions of GHG.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030 National Mitigation Plan and National Adaptation Framework</p>	<p>No potential for adverse effects for RPO 85 - 86. The RPOs for climate action are broadly positive in supporting a transition to a low carbon, and climate resilient region. Promoting a shift away from the use of fossil fuels and combustion based energy to renewable energy sources will have positive impacts, including positive impact for air quality through reduced deposition/acidification cause by air pollution.</p> <p>While climate mitigation measures are typically positive for the environment, adaption options may result in a more varied impact. Climate adaption strategies for key infrastructure can result in alterations to current land uses (such as flood risk management infrastructure) and, as such, have the potential for both positive and negative impacts on site integrity for European sites. While such schemes are typically subject to AA and EIA to identify and mitigate any such negative impacts, the potential remains for significant impact.</p> <p>The objectives place obligations on the local authorities, such as the incorporation of climate policies into statutory land-use plans which will have a broader positive environmental impact only if successfully implemented. The role for the Regional Climate Action Offices are</p>

	<p>highlighted in this regard. Guidance and training in relation to AA and the obligation of public authorities would greatly assist these offices in discharging their duties without leading to deterioration of habitats and species in accordance with Art. 27 of the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations, 2011, as amended.</p> <p>See Section 7.6.9 for further discussion on climate impacts.</p>
<p>Mitigation: As per RPO 1, any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>Guidance and training in relation to AA and the obligation of public authorities shall be provided for the Regional Climate Action Offices and Local Authority staff to upskill them in relation to impacts on European sites in relation to climate mitigation and adaptation measures in the region.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector</p> <p>Electric Vehicle Infrastructure</p> <p>CNG refuelling stations and TEN-T corridors</p> <p>Decarbonisation in the Agricultural Sector</p>	<p>The RPOs 87 to 90 relate to decarbonisation and are broadly positive in supporting a transition to a low carbon energy future.</p> <p>RPO 87 - 89 relate to the support and investment in clean generated electricity, electric vehicle facilities, refuelling facilities and trans European transport network for compressed natural gas. While the promotion of clean energy electricity is broadly positive, the development of new infrastructure to support these RPOs could lead to significant adverse effects on European Site integrity which must be considered within the planning hierarchy. It is noted that the Alternative Fuels Plan has undergone SEA and AA and the mitigation from the AA is relevant to this policy area.</p> <p>RPO 90 is broadly positive for environmental receptors as programmes such as GLAS aim to encourage farmers to promote biodiversity, protect water quality, and also to help combat climate change. The Rural Development Programme is referenced and it is noted this has not undergone AA. As such, support for any measures under that pan shall be subject to showing not adverse effects on European site and site integrity.</p> <p>Furthermore it is noted that carbon neutrality in the Agri sector is also related to offsets against afforestation and the National Forestry Programme 2014-2020. Forestry has significant potential for adverse effects on European sites as a result of acidification of soils, run-off, siltation and habitat disturbance and loss. This has undergone AA and as such the mitigation measures are relevant to this RPO.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Apply the mitigation measures included in the National Forestry Programme 2014-2020.</p> <p>In line with RPO 1, any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>Renewable Energy</p> <p>Interconnection Infrastructure</p> <p>Energy Storage and Carbon Capture</p> <p>Clean Electric Heat Technologies</p> <p>Future proofing and Retrofitting</p>	<p>No potential for adverse effects on European site integrity as a result of RPO 91.</p> <p>No potential for adverse effects on European site integrity as a result of RPO 92 subject to RPO 1 which requires robust siting and associated environmental assessment including AA.</p> <p>RPO 93 relates to supporting the upgrade and development of current power stations to use energy efficient and renewable energy sources. The move away from fossil fuels in our power stations is a positive one as much of the fuel in the past has been from exploitation of peat resources with devastating</p>

<p>Non-Fossil Fuel and Heat Sources</p>	<p>consequences for the source peatlands. RPO 93 is not explicit in the new sources to be used and as such there is significant potential for adverse effects depending on the nature and source of the renewable energies. RPO 94 will allow for impacts to be explored in appropriate detail. This RES will be subject to AA in due course.</p> <p>RPO 95 references wind energy at appropriate locations. Wind energy guidelines are in preparation and these should be explicitly referenced as they will include AA specific mitigation to avoid adverse effects on European sites as part of site election.</p> <p>RPO 96 relates to integration of indigenous renewable energy production. RPO 96 is not explicit in indigenous renewable energy production to be undertaken and as such there is potential for adverse effects depending on the nature and source of production. RPO 94 will allow for impacts to be explored in appropriate detail. This RES will be subject to AA in due course.</p> <p>RPO 97 No potential for adverse effects on European site integrity as the RPO relates to supporting research.</p> <p>RPO 98 No potential for adverse effects on European site integrity as the RPO relates to supporting research.</p> <p>RPO 99 This RPO relates to the sustainable development of international connection between Ireland and France in the Southern Region. This will be subject to RPO 1 and will undergo appropriate route and site selection and assessment including AA.</p> <p>RPO 100 relates to energy storage and carbon capture. The RPO recognises the early stage these technologies are at and points toward research and pilot sites. The selection of these sites should be subject to RPO 1 to ensure no potential for likely significant effects on a European site.</p> <p>The RPOs 101-102 are broadly positive which relate to the support of initiatives for clean electric heat technology and investment into energy efficiency. The development of new infrastructure to support these RPOs could lead to adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites depending on location.</p> <p>RPO 103 relates to conversion of homes to non-fossil fuels. No potential for adverse effects on European site integrity.</p>
<p>Mitigation: RPO 93 and RPO 96 will require a dedicated feasibility study to inform the decision making on new energy efficient and renewable energy sources and productions to ensure that the sourcing of the energy does not have indirect negative impacts on any European site. The source of the renewable energies must be considered as part of the assessment of impacts on European sites.</p> <p>The RES for the region will be subject to AA and will take account of the life cycle impacts from RE.</p> <p>In line with RPO 1 proposals for development and infrastructure will need to be subject to robust site and/or route selection that addresses environmental concerns such as landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity as a minimum.</p> <p>Development of international interconnections will require robust route and site selection and environmental assessment, including AA.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>Circular Economy EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy</p>	<p>RPOs 104 and 105 support initiative that develop a circular economy and implement plans relating to circular economy such as the Southern Regional Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 and EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy – Closing the Loop. RPO 104 supports such initiatives through implementation of the RWMP for the Southern Region. It is noted that the RWMP has undergone SEA and AA. Mitigation included development of siting guidance to assist LA in planning waste activities / facilities, feasibility studies to inform future use of old waste management facilities and development of</p>

	templates and training for waste staff to assist in ensuring AA was being applied appropriately in waste planning. These mitigations are underway and will ensure adverse effects from circular economy initiatives avoid adverse effects on European site integrity.
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Bio-Energy Implementation Plan	No potential for adverse effects on European site integrity as a result of RPO 106 which relates to bio-energy. While the preparation of a Bio-Energy Implementation Plan (for the Southern Region is broadly positive, there is potential for adverse effects should there be a requirement for bioenergy infrastructure and depending on the source of the bio-energy used. In response to concerns raised by the NIR, proper site selection and environmental assessment has been referenced in the RPO as: <i>(b): Proposals for Bio-Energy development and infrastructure will need to be subject to robust site and/or route selection that includes consideration of likely significant effects on European Sites and subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</i>
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Ecosystem Services	No potential for adverse effects from RPO 107 as this is looking to integrate planning for Ecosystem Services into the preparation of statutory land use plans in the region.
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Floods Directive Flood Risk Management FRMP Flooding and Planning System Flooding and Biodiversity Flooding and Capital Works Flood Relief Schemes	RPO's 108-113 deal with flood risk and management under the Floods Directive. Flood risk and management has the potential to give rise to both positive and negative effects on biodiversity and European sites. Protection of floodplains and restoration of flood plains through sustainable planning will bring benefits to habitats and species reliant on the natural flood regimes. However, in managing flood risk for protection of human health, conflicts may occur, especially where physical measures are required such as barriers. Impacts may arise for European sites and protected habitats and species as a result of release of suspended solids, changes in nutrient levels, changes in water levels and river morphology, habitat loss or disturbance and species disturbance from noise or visual intrusion. The EC has recognised the relationship between water quality, flooding and Habitats and has align scale, reporting and monitoring to facilitate better integration of the various objectives under the relevant directives. RPO 108 supports collaboration which is positive. No adverse effects from RPO 108. RPO 109 references the FRMP. These have been prepared by the OPW at a unit of management scale. All of the FRMP have undergone AA and mitigation measures have been developed. It is noted that the FRMP do not deal with project level proposals and as such, the design of location specific

	<p>flood measures will continue to be subject to AA as part of proper planning and sustainable development. No adverse effects from RPO 109 taking into account existing AA mitigation and the requirements of RPO 1.</p> <p>RPO 110 and RPO 111 deal with forward planning to ensure flood risk is considered within CDP and LAP. No adverse effects from either objective. These plans are themselves subject to AA also.</p> <p>integration of sustainable water management solutions will be directly positive to waters in relation to protection and conservation of water resources as well as incorporating natural water retention measures. In particular, RPO 112 is positive which aims to enhance biodiversity and amenities and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats. RPO 112 also acknowledges that any plans and projects that require flood risk management measures and may potentially impact upon European Sites are subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive. No adverse effects.</p> <p>RPO 113 and RPO 114 relate to physical infrastructure and as a result have the potential for adverse effects on site integrity, depending on location. Impacts may arise for European sites and protected habitats and species as a result of release of suspended solids, changes in nutrient levels, changes in water levels and river morphology, habitat loss or disturbance and species disturbance from noise or visual intrusion. Assessment of project level solutions will be required – see RPO 1.</p>
<p>Mitigation: In line with RPO 1, any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>RBMP SUDs RBMP and Spatial Planning</p>	<p>RPO 115 addresses the RBMP and acknowledges the synergies between it and the Floods Directive. The WFD, from which the RBMP originates specifically includes the Birds and Habitats Directives as basic measures to achieve the environmental objectives of the WFD and in so doing clearly links the two pieces of legislation. The most recent RBMP was published in Q1 2018 and has undergone AA.</p> <p>RPO 116 promotes the integration of sustainable water management solutions such as SuDs and the diversion of surface water from combined sewers. The development of new infrastructure to support this RPO could lead potential likely significant effects upon European Sites and where necessary adverse effects on site integrity. Project level assessment will be required to support decision making once locations are identified as per RPO 1.</p> <p>RPO 117 concerns integrating water resources and land use planning and encourages better integration of water issues into the planning authority's land-use plans and strategies which is positive. Reference should also be made to DHPLGs forthcoming guidance on the integration of River Basin Management Planning with land-use planning in order to ensure effective water management and compatibility between planned growth and environmental sustainability. No potential for adverse effects</p>
<p>Mitigation: Any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>Specific reference should be made to the DHPLGs forthcoming guidance on the integration of River Basin Management Planning with land-use planning.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Green Infrastructure Green Infrastructure Corridors</i></p>	<p>RPO 118 has an objective to promote the movement of wildlife and encourage the management of features that support European Sites. Within this RPO green infrastructure will be integrated within statutory land-use plans and Local Area Plans and it is noted that regard should be given to the conservation of European sites, ecological networks and protected species.</p> <p>Green infrastructure such as greenways, blueways, peatways, walkways and cycleways are generally positive from an environmental perspective acting as ecological corridors, pollinator-friendly areas, air, and noise-pollution barriers if designed appropriately. However, as with any linear infrastructure, there is potential for both direct and indirect negative impacts through habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, species disturbance from construction or increased visitor pressure, decreased in water quality, alteration to ecological processes and potential spread of invasive species. The sensitive siting and routing of this infrastructure is essential to ensuring there are no impacts on the integrity of the sites or on achievement of their conservation objectives.</p> <p>RPO 119 seeks to encourage biodiversity enhancement along transport corridors. This has potential to contribute to achievement of Art. 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to encouraging the management of features of the landscape with importance for wild fauna and flora which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (such as rivers with their banks or the traditional systems for marking field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones (such as ponds or small woods), are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. No adverse effects on site integrity.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Any proposed GI should be supported by a quality site/route selection process that addresses environmental concerns such as landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity as a minimum.</p> <p>Any future development of greenways, blueways, peatways, cycleways or walkways shall include an assessment of the impacts from increased visitor pressures, in particular, on sensitive European sites and the design will consider the provision of protective measures to avoid disturbance/visitor pressure.</p> <p>As per RPO 1, any plans or projects relating to the development and/or establishment of infrastructure are subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Biodiversity Invasive Species Pollinators</i></p>	<p>RPO 120 has a number of sub-objectives to promote protect and enhance biodiversity. The objective explicitly refers to the need to screen projects and plans for the potential to impact on European sites. No adverse effect from this objective.</p> <p>RPO 121 relates to the management of invasive species including better coordination between local authorities and also education and awareness raising of the threats posed by invasive species. Following iterative discussions with the RSES team the policy was amended to clearly link threats posed from invasive and the European site network. The policy states that: <i>the management of invasive species where there is a corridor such as hydrological connections to European Sites needs to be carefully considered and implemented in order to prevent the spread of invasive species to sensitive sites.</i> As a result of the inclusion of this reference the objective has no adverse effects on site integrity.</p> <p>RPO 122 supports the implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020. The policy recognises that without pollinators <i>to maintain the diversity of wild plants and support healthy ecosystems</i> this could have negative impacts on wider biodiversity. As such support for implementation</p>

	of the measures in the pollinator plan will help to avoid possible adverse effects on European sites where habitats and species are dependant on pollinators for their survival and wellbeing.
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Landscape Water Air Noise Light	<p>RPO 123 seeks to develop a regional landscape strategy. This involves undertaking Regional Landscape Assessment, Landscape Character Map and local guidance. The development of such a strategy will not have adverse effects on site integrity.</p> <p>RPO 124 125 relate to water management. A number of other inter-related directives and plans are noted including the WFD. These directives have synergies with the habitats directive and in many cases share common goals in maintaining or achieving improvements in water quality and indirectly water dependant ecosystems including those which are European sites. These objectives will require investment into water service infrastructure in order to achieve water quality objectives and ensure positive impacts are achieved. The development of new infrastructure has potential for adverse effects on site integrity if sited inappropriately.</p> <p>RPO 125 High ecological status is required in rivers designated (within cSACs) for freshwater pearl mussel, and the promotion of good status would be insufficient for the obligatory protection of these rivers. This should be referenced in RPO 125.</p> <p>RPO 126 relates to the management of air quality for public health. This includes a greater emphasis on cycling, walking, public transport and energy efficiency. No specific measures are identified. No potential for adverse effects.</p> <p>RPO 127 relates to the management of noise and the preparation of Noise Action Plans. No potential for adverse effects.</p> <p>RPO 128 supports the Kerry International Dark-Sky Reserve and supports the establishment of other 'Dark Sky' Parks. While this is positive, the further development and/or establishment of parks must be cognisant of any potential for likely significant effects / adverse effects on European sites arising from increased tourism e.g. visitor pressure, noise and disturbance and additional infrastructure to support the initiative.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>RPO 124-125: Any projects required to achieve this objective will be subject to RPO 1 which requires AA and EclA to inform development.</p> <p>RPO 125: The RPO should reflect the need to achieve high status as a minimum in relation to some key species such as FPM.</p> <p>RPO 128: The establishment of Dark Sky Parks will include and assessment of the potential to impact on European sites within the zone of influence.</p>	

7.7 CONNECTIVITY (CHAPTER 6 OF RSES)

Chapter 6 of the draft RSES sets out Regional Policy which seek to sustainably advance the RSES vision for realising the full potential of places, achieving economic prosperity, improving quality of life and accommodating growth and development in suitable locations. The chapter addresses the following themes: enhancing regional accessibility; transforming transport to well-functioning integrated transport systems; and optimising international connectivity. This relates to the regional objectives RPO 2, 4, and 6 in Chapter 2 of the RSES as follows:

- To enhance the regional accessibility through upgraded transport infrastructure and digital connectivity allied to transformed settlement hierarchy;
- To transform our transport systems from polluting and carbon intensive modes to well-functioning integrated public transport, walking and cycling and electric vehicles; and
- To optimise our international connectivity through investment and increased capacity in our ports and airports and provision of high-quality digital connectivity throughout the region.

The delivery of any linear infrastructure has the potential for significant effects on European sites including;

- Habitat loss or destruction during construction;
- Loss of key supporting habitats and ecosystem complexes during construction;
- Habitat fragmentation or degradation as a result of routing / siting;
- Introduction of barriers to movement;
- Disturbance to habitats/species from noise, air light emissions;
- Species mortality from collision or resulting from disturbance of habitat;
- Alterations to water quality and/or water movement from drainage patterns;
- Alterations to air quality from transport related emissions especially road, air and sea transport;
- Introduction or spread of invasive species during construction and operation; and
- Alternations due to climate change from continued emissions of GHG.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p style="text-align: center;">Digital Connectivity, Infrastructure and Smart Cities and Region</p>	<p>RPO 129-130 The further development and expansion of the Smart technology within the RSES region may require the installation of infrastructure such as fibre broadband and associated cabling, tunnelling and trenching that could impact upon European Sites located within proximity or that support connectivity.</p> <p>RPO 131 The objective under this key policy area references potential for <i>international digital transmission connections between the Region, US, UK and Europe</i>. Any such proposals should be supported by feasibility studies which should consider potential environmental and ecological impacts associated with international digital infrastructure which would include sub-sea cables.</p> <p>RPO 132-134 Where existing utilities infrastructure is used for roll out of communications networks and digital infrastructure, potential for likely significant effects on European Sites can arise from installation, operation and maintenance of same. The main effects on European Sites associated with this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Direct habitat loss of European Sites if new digital infrastructure is

	<p>constructed within the Site.</p> <p>Direct or indirect habitat loss or fragmentation through loss of small patches of habitat within a larger European Site to facilitate access/installation of infrastructure if the existing utilities infrastructure was already sited within the European Sites. This could also arise from loss of ecological corridors and connectivity, outside of European Sites but which support the functioning of the European Sites, such as loss of hedgerows or treelines through small scale clearance to facilitate access/installation of the broadband network</p> <p>Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to the broadband roll out and other ICT infrastructure including international digital transmission infrastructure such as subsea cables.</p> <p>Consenting development of the broadband network at project level, the Local Authorities, or other Public Authorities/Competent Authorities where applicable, are responsible for ensuring that the installation or construction of the broadband network at local level will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Sites. It is acknowledged that there is potential for likely significant effects on European Sites if a consistent and co-ordinated approach is not followed by the competent authorities for AA. It is further noted that the National Broadband Plan is being subject to AA and the identified mitigation will need to be applied in roll out.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to the broadband roll out and other ICT infrastructure including international digital transmission infrastructure such as subsea cables</p> <p>The mitigation measures provided for in the NIS for the National Broadband Plan should be fully applied.</p> <p>Any plans relating to the development and/or establishment of ICT infrastructure are subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>International Connectivity Freight Strategy</p>	<p>RPO 135 supports the maintenance and enhancement of international connectivity including the TEN-T core and comprehensive network. Enhancement of any transport infrastructure has potential to adversely impact European sites, depending on location and connectivity see section 7.7.2 to 7.7.5 for discussion.</p> <p>RPO 136 supports the development of a Regional Freight Strategy and consultation with relevant implementing agencies.</p> <p>Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to the rail, road, inland waterway, maritime and inland port infrastructure to support / enhancement of the TEN-T network. All such infrastructure enhancement and maintenance is subject to the outcome of appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Any plans relating to the development and/or establishment of transport infrastructure are subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>Ports and Harbours</p>	<p>Port infrastructure has the potential to result in adverse effects on European sites through the following pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct and indirect disturbance to QI/SCI habitats and/or species of European Sites from commercial shipping and associated noise and disturbance spread of invasive species

- Loss / disturbance to feeding or nesting areas for Annex bird species as a result of expansion of activities and land reclamation;
- Disruption of feeding resources for Annex bird species as a result of expansion of activities and land reclamation and encroachment;
- Underwater noise disturbance leading to behavioural change and/or physical injury in marine mammals as a result of piling and other engineering activity.
- Deterioration in water quality result in deterioration of wetland, marine and coastal habitats with respect to their water quality and favourable conservation status as a result of suspended sediments and/or contaminants escaping into the marine environment during marine engineering construction.

RPO 137 refers to strengthen investment to deliver actions under National Ports Policy and investment in sustainable infrastructure projects. This includes enhancement and promotion of Tier 1 and Tier 2 ports. The RPO requires that *Development proposals will be subject to environmental assessment and feasibility where assessment has not already taken place.* This is also relevant to RPO 139 which identifies the need for port infrastructure to be complemented by improved access infrastructure. This has the potential for adverse impacts as a result of cumulative effects including cumulative loss of habitat, deterioration of water or air quality etc. The in-combination effects must be considered at an overall strategy level to ensure this cumulative impact can be fully considered. This would be best achieved through AA of the proposed Regional Port Strategy noted in RPO 140.

Similarly RPO 138 seeks to protect port and airport assets in the region through proper land use planning subject to *consideration of environmental concerns including water quality, flood risks, human health, natural and built heritage.*

RPO 141 identifies a number of port actions needed to support international connectivity in the region. It furthermore states that these actions are *subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes while ensuring the protection of sensitive natural environments and the protection of Natura sites, the protection of other harbour interests including recreation, tourism and residential amenity.*

It is also noted that within RPO 142 which underpins all ports in the Southern region the SRA, the RSES commits to;

Undertaking feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC; and that port development in the region must adhere to the European Commission guidelines on the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones in order to protect the European Sites around them.

These policies are welcomed as it clearly acknowledges the potential for port activities to adversely impact on the integrity of European sites within the zone of influence of the port and the need to address this early in the planning process.

See section 7.7.3 for further discussion.

Mitigation: As per the RPO, support for these projects is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes

Any economic activity in the SRA which utilises the marine resource should also have regard to Ireland's obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) which requires achieving and maintaining Good Environmental Status (GES) of coastal and marine waters (comprising both the water column and the seabed beneath it).

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p style="text-align: center;">Airports (Cork, Shannon, Kerry & Waterford)</p>	<p>Airport infrastructure has the potential to impact on site integrity of European Sites supporting connectivity with Airports in the region. Key pathways for impact are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased noise disturbance of birds in SPAs along approach and landing paths to and from the airport; ▪ Changes in water quality as a result of run-off and pollution events from actions such as de-icing; ▪ In combination impacts from other infrastructure developments; ▪ Changes in the habitat and conditions supporting European site function as a result of climate change. <p>See section 7.7.8 for further discussion.</p> <p>RPO 143 relates to seeking investment to sustainably deliver actions under the National Aviation Policy. It is noted that this policy document it has not been subject to AA. This policy encourages growth within the aviation sector with possible future requirements for infrastructure and / increased air traffic. There is therefore potential for adverse effects particularly in relation to disturbance of birds in European sites adjacent to or overflown by aircraft and through deterioration of water quality as a result of drainage from airport activities such as de-icing. It is noted that RPO 144 relates to a regional airport strategy this will need to subject to AA to ensure that strategies include specific actions to ensure that the integrity of connected European sites is not adversely effected as a result of airport sector growth in the region. It is noted that earlier drafts of the RSES included consideration of <i>environmental assessment of airport masterplans to better inform land use planning and environmental protection in the region</i>. This commitment appears to have been removed.</p> <p>RPO 145 also relates to continued development of the enterprise assets of the regional airports to support other inter-related sectors such as tourism. As such there is potential for in-combination effects on European sites. As above, AA of the regional airport strategy is required when it is drafted to better inform decision making, including the potential for cumulative and indirect effects on European sites.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Any plans relating to increased infrastructure, ATM or other intensification of use at Cork, Shannon, Kerry and Waterford airports must be subject to AA . This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>SRA should seek to support an appraisal of the existing drainage systems in operation at the airports to ensure they are capturing pollutants to avoid downstream impacts on water quality which provide a direct link to European sites.</p> <p>SRA should seek to support a dedicated study into the impact of aircraft movements on any SPAs within the zone of influence of each of the regions airports with particular reference to bird response. This will ensure a strong evidence base is in place to inform projects which may be required under this policy area.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p style="text-align: center;">Integration of Land Use and Transport Planning</p>	<p>RPO 146-152 address integrated transport and land use planning. RPO 146 specifically includes a guiding principle <i>for the protection of the Natura 2000 networks and the ecological linkages which support it</i> . This has been added as a result of iterative discussions with the AA team.</p> <p>These guiding principles in turn inform the decision making around the transport strategy of the RSES expressed in RPO 147-152. Furthermore RPO 1 also underpins the land use planning process which requires SEA and AA of</p>

	<p>all statutory land use plans.</p> <p>RPO 151 deals with managing the Region's Transport Assets. It specifically requires that enhancement to existing land transport networks shall be subject to robust feasibility, route selection, environmental and planning processes that reduce impacts on the environment.</p> <p>RPO 152 identifies the need for LTPs. It is noted in the RPO that LTPs will be subject to further environmental assessment at local level as part of the Local area plan process. Given the subject matter of these plans it will be important to undertake AA to inform local solutions and mitigation measures which can avoid adverse impacts on site integrity through mitigation or compensation measures as appropriate.</p>
<p>Mitigation: The guiding principles for integration of transport planning and land use planning should explicitly reference the protection of the Natura 2000 networks and the ecological linkages which support it. This has been addressed in the draft RSES.</p> <p>AA of local transport plans should be considered in addition to the statutory assessments needed for a LAP.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Rural Development	RPO 153-154 relate to investment into rural transport services and socially inclusive transport services. No adverse effects on site integrity.
Mitigation: None	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Sustainable Mobility	<p>RPO 155 relates to the delivery of the National Strategic Outcome on sustainable mobility.</p> <p>The upgrade and development of road, rail bus, cycling and walking networks including park and ride facilities has the potential for adverse effects upon European Sites depending on connectivity to European sites. Linear infrastructure has the potential for negative impacts upon European Sites such as habitat loss or fragmentation, species disturbance, spread invasive species and/or degradation in air/soil/water quality.</p> <p>Supporting infrastructure, such as park and ride can have additional impacts depending on siting as they may encourage visitors to nearby locations for recreation. If these areas include sensitive habitats and species this could add to pressures.</p> <p>It is noted that this RPO is subject to <i>"the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment process."</i></p>
<p>Mitigation: As per the RPO, support for these projects is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Robust route and site selection is also required to inform decision making on where best to locate facilities such as park and ride to avoid introducing indirect visitor pressure.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies	RPO 156 relates to strategic transport strategies for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. It is identified within the RPO that support under these strategies is subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes for the sustainable development of transport

	<p>infrastructure. Furthermore it is stated that the <i>Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.</i>” This is a positive addition to the RPO as a result of SEA recommendations as part of the iterative process.</p> <p>RPO 157 supports higher densities within urban areas and has potential for indirect positive effects from a general shift away from roads, reducing impacts on habitats and species associated with air pollution and water pollution from road runoff. However higher density populations in areas in close proximity to / or connectivity with European Sites has the potential to place increased pressure to the sites in terms of visitor pressure, water, air, soil quality, species and habitat disturbance. It is noted that appropriate development plan policies implementing this RPO will in due course be subject to AA at the appropriate geographical scale.</p>
<p>Mitigation: The actions arising from the transport strategies will be subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>Proposals for higher densities within DP will need to establish potential for visitor pressure and pressure on services to accommodate these densities without leading to adverse effects on any European site.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Investment in Improved Strategic Road Connectivity	<p>RPO 158 supports maintenance and enhancement of road infrastructure in the region, including inter-urban, primary and secondary roads. Road infrastructure has the potential to result in adverse effects on European sites through a number of pathways – see section 7.7.6 for discussion.</p> <p>It is noted that RPO 159 and RPO 161 state that they are subject to the <i>required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes</i>. This qualification is welcomed as it clearly acknowledges that the proposals will require detailed consideration once project specific information is available. A reference to the requirement for <i>robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment</i> would enhance these policies, as per RPO 160 below.</p> <p>RPO 160 identifies National and Local Road Projects stating that they are “<i>subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes</i>”. This qualification is welcomed as it clearly acknowledges that the proposals will require detailed consideration once project specific information is available.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that investment priorities for these strategic assets are administered by other agencies and departments and as such the reference in the draft RSES is subject to the outcome of appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process administered by these other agencies.</p>
<p>Mitigation: As per the RPO, support for road infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to all strategic infrastructure projects referenced and feasibility studies will consider a full range of reasonable alternative modes and technologies.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Rail	Rail infrastructure has the potential to result in adverse effects on European sites through a number of pathways – see section 7.7.4 for discussion.

	<p>It is noted that RPO 162 to invest in rail networks including park and ride facilities is <i>“subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process”</i>.</p> <p>This qualification is welcomed as it clearly acknowledges that the proposals will require detailed consideration once project specific information is available. A reference to the requirement for <i>robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment</i> would enhance these policies, as per RPO 160 above.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that investment priorities for these strategic assets are administered by other agencies and departments and as such the reference in the draft RSES is subject to the outcome of appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process administered by these other agencies.</p>
<p>Mitigation: As per the RPO, support for rail networks is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to the rail projects and feasibility studies will consider a full range of reasonable alternative modes and technologies.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Bus	<p>Bus infrastructure has the potential to result in adverse effects on European sites through a number of pathways – see section 7.7.5 for discussion.</p> <p>It is noted that RPO 163 to invest in bus networks is <i>“subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process”</i>. This qualification is welcomed as it clearly acknowledges that the proposals will require detailed consideration once project specific information is available.</p> <p>A reference to the requirement for <i>robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment</i> would enhance these policies, as per RPO 160 above.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that investment priorities for these strategic assets are administered by other agencies and departments and as such the reference in the draft RSES is subject to the outcome of appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process administered by these other agencies.</p>
<p>Mitigation: As per the RPO, support for bus networks is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Reference to <i>“subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes”</i> should also be included for bus as per roads above.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Rural Transport	<p>RPO 164 relates to the development and expansion of the Local Link Rural Transport Programme. No potential for adverse impacts.</p> <p>RPO 165 relates to the investment in infrastructure to facilitate rural transport within key tourism corridors including, the Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Ancient East and Irelands Hidden Heartland Corridors.</p> <p>There is potential for indirect negative impacts and in-combination effects as a result of increased visitor pressure upon European Sites located within these key tourism corridors such as species/habitat disturbance, erosion and habitat fragmentation or loss.</p> <p>It is noted that RPO 165 states that the development of infrastructure is <i>“subject to robust feasibility studies to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes”</i>.</p>

Mitigation: As per the RPO, support for these projects is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.

An assessment of visitor pressure, including seasonal pressure will be required to inform appropriate planning around key tourism sites.

An AA of plans, for significant initiatives, similar to the WAW should be undertaken prior to development of infrastructure and services.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Walking and Cycling	Walking and cycling can impact both positively and negatively on European sites and this is addressed further in Section 7.7.7. RPO 166 acknowledges that the support for cycling and walking initiatives mentioned is subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. Furthermore support for the regional cities' metropolitan area Cycle Network Plans is subject to AA.
Mitigation: The mitigation measures provided for in the NIS for the National Cycle Plan should be fully applied. Such initiatives shall commit to feasibility and route selection studies with a view to identifying and subsequently avoiding high sensitivity feeding or nesting points for birds and other sensitive fauna.	

7.7.1 Communications Networks and Digital Infrastructure

Impacts to European Sites arising from communications networks and digital infrastructure differ depending on the type of technology used. For example, stringing cables onto existing overhead telecommunications infrastructure typically occurs alongside the road network, as this is the existing location of much of the telecommunications infrastructure. However, existing overhead electricity infrastructure typically transverses rural countryside and therefore stringing cables onto this infrastructure involves carrying out works in off-road areas and carries an increased likelihood of having access to European Sites. The laying of subsea cables has the potential to impact European Sites within marine/coastal/transitional areas as well as international sites located within the Natura 2000 network.

Where existing utilities infrastructure is used for roll out of communications networks and digital infrastructure, potential for likely significant effects on European Sites can arise from installation, operation and maintenance of same. The main effects on European Sites associated with this include:

- Direct habitat loss of European Sites if infrastructure is constructed within the Sites;
- Direct or indirect habitat loss or fragmentation through loss of small patches of habitat within a larger European Site to facilitate access/installation of infrastructure if the existing utilities infrastructure was already sited within the Sites. This could also arise from loss of ecological corridors and connectivity, outside of European Sites but which support the functioning of the European Sites, such as loss of hedgerows or treelines through small scale clearance to facilitate access/installation of the broadband network;
- Destruction of species and habitat within and outside of European Sites during installation of the network e.g. destruction of Otter holts along due to machinery traversing over or in close proximity to the area e.g. along field drains or wet ditches;
- Direct habitat degradation resulting from access of construction related machinery or trampling during installation and maintenance of the network;

- Potential direct loss of species through collision with the network e.g. birds colliding with overhead wires or masts. It should be noted that the existing utilities over ground network may have collision impacts already associated with it which could lead to cumulative collision impacts;
- Barriers to movement of species as a result of construction of a new network e.g. construction of overhead lines or masts in flight paths or migration routes of birds;
- Potential alteration to ground water movement through installation of underground cable routes and masts which could impact water dependent habitats and species;
- Direct and indirect disturbance to QI/SCI habitats and/or species of European Sites⁹ located in the vicinity during installation and operation/maintenance of the infrastructure e.g. via noise or human disturbance;
- Impacts on water quality both ex-situ and in-situ arising from installation/construction works, such as sedimentation and release nutrients from soil which could impact water dependent habitats and species. This is also relevant to the maintenance/operation of the network; and
- Potential introduction and spread of invasive species to a European Site, or adjacent to or adjoining a European Site, through vector material carried on machinery/equipment required for installation and operation/maintenance of the network or materials required for construction and operation/maintenance of the network.

7.7.2 TEN-T

Ireland has one core network corridor, The North Sea-Mediterranean Corridor. It stretches from Belfast and the ports of Cork and Dublin, as well as from the northern UK ports Glasgow and Edinburgh through Belgium with a branch from Amsterdam and Rotterdam, via Luxembourg to Strasbourg and Basel and via Lyon to the southern French ports of Fos/Marseille. It covers rail, road, airports, ports, RRT's and the Dutch-Belgian inland waterway system as well as the Rhône river.

Within this region the area rail, port and airport infrastructure flagged as potentially receiving financing from the Connecting Europe Facility include

7.7.3 Ports

It is noted that the ports policy supported in Chapter 6 of the RSES is underpinned by RPO 142 in which all ports in the Southern region the SRA will seek to;

Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC; and

Port development in the region must adhere to the European Commission guidelines on the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones in order to protect the European Sites around them.

These specific policies are welcomed as it clearly acknowledges the potential for port activities to adversely impact on the integrity of European sites within the zone of influence of the port.

A National Ports Policy was developed in 2013 to better address maritime transport services. The policy clearly delineated Tier 1 ports of national significance and those listed within the RSES includes Cork Port and Shannon-Foynes Port. Tier 2 ports of national significance include Waterford

⁹ Including potential transboundary impacts on European Sites in Northern Ireland for which there is a pathway of connectivity as a result of the implementation of the Intervention Strategy.

Port and Rosslare-Europort are also listed in the RSES. New Ross is a port of regional significance listed both within the National Ports Policy and the RSES. A number of other smaller ports within the southern region are also listed in the RSES. Under the NPF the strategic development of Tier 1 and 2 Ports, ports of regional significance and smaller harbours are addressed as part of RSES, metropolitan area and city/county development plans.

All of these ports in the region are in or directly adjacent to European Sites and include extensive areas of protected habitats and species. Growth of ports has the potential for impact on the European Sites through changes in coastal processes and sediment budgets as a result of dredging or similar works. Sources of impact at ports include:

- dredging (maintenance and / capital) resulting in changes in coastal processes and sediment budgets commercial shipping and associated noise and disturbance;
- emissions of to water and air;
- waste generation and land reclamation;
- attraction of associated industrial development;
- traffic accessing the port
- contaminated land issues; and
- construction activities.

These in turn give rise to pressures on adjacent SAC and SPA. Key pressures include:

- Direct and indirect disturbance to QI/SCI habitats and/or species of European Sites from commercial shipping and associated noise and disturbance spread of invasive species;
- Loss / disturbance to feeding or nesting areas for Annex bird species as a result of expansion of activities and land reclamation;
- Disruption of feeding resources for Annex bird species as a result of expansion of activities and land reclamation and encroachment;
- Underwater noise disturbance leading to behavioural change and/ or physical injury in marine mammals as a result of piling and other engineering activity; and
- Deterioration in water quality result in deterioration of wetland, marine and coastal habitats with respect to their water quality and favourable conservation status as a result of suspended sediments and/or contaminants escaping into the marine environment during marine engineering construction.

Recognising the complexities of issues in the estuarine and coastal zone, the European Commission published guidelines on the *Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones*. The guidelines note that port development in European sites is not precluded but must be approached with care and must include early stakeholder dialogue. The approach to port development in any of the ports noted must adhere to these guidelines in order to protect the European Sites.

Any plans to facilitate growth and port access must first ensure that it will not have any adverse effects on the integrity of the site(s) and if necessary meet the requirements of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. The Ringaskiddy Redevelopment Port as part of the Port of Cork has been subject to screening for AA, EIS and NIS. The Port of Waterford Masterplan and the Shannon Foynes Port Company Vision 2041 has been subject to AA screening, NIS and SEA.

It is also noted that there is uncertainty in relation to the effects of Brexit on level of activity at the Cork port within the RSES which is a link for distribution of goods to the UK.

7.7.4 Rail Infrastructure

It is noted that the rail projects supported in Chapter 6 of the RSES are supported, *subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process*. This qualification is welcomed as it clearly acknowledges that the proposals will require detailed consideration once project specific information is available.

The provision of public transport options has the potential to offset GHG emissions related to use of private cars. Climate change is a significant driver for negative impacts on European Sites therefore measures to reduce emissions should be viewed as broadly positive.

Irish Rail have committed to the sustainable growth and expansion of the railway to 2040 and beyond. As the InterCity rail services play a key role in offering sustainable travel alternatives for longer distance trips, interregional connectivity requires improvement. Due to lack of investment in infrastructure to keep pace with the major inter-urban motorway network, use of the service can be negatively impacted by journey times. It is acknowledged that investment is required in this area. In addition it is important to improve frequency and journey times.

In relation to upgrades to existing rail services, a new National Train Control Centre is planned for delivery and a feasibility study of high speed rail between Dublin-Belfast, Dublin-Limerick Junction/Cork will be carried out.

This expansion and improvement of rail services has the potential for direct and indirect negative effects on European Sites though construction related activities leading to pollution of downstream watercourses with run-off or suspended solids and disturbance of species in adjacent European Sites, or if the rail line crosses directly through a European Site, loss of protected habitat and habitat supporting QIs for these sites.

The wider rail network at a regional scale also has potential for negative effects on the Natura 2000 network through support of commuter rail services. There is potential for further expansion of commuter rail services based on planned developments along the rail corridor, in addition to the refurbishment of lines has the potential for negative effects on European Sites. Disused rail lines in many cases have become ecological corridors and may be relevant for some protected species such as bats / otters depending on the location. Upgrades etc. have potential for construction related impacts primarily related to pollution to surface waters. Emissions to air as a result of rail can give rise to NO_x, SO_x and particulates emissions, particularly where diesel stock is in use.

7.7.5 Bus Infrastructure

It is noted that the bus projects supported in Chapter 6 of the RSES are supported, *subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process*. This qualification is welcomed as it clearly acknowledges that the proposals will require detailed consideration once project specific information is available.

The provision of public transport options has the potential to offset GHG emissions related to use of private cars. Climate change is a significant driver for negative impacts on European Sites therefore measures to reduce emissions should be viewed as broadly positive.

Investment in bus transport is ongoing within the Cork Metropolitan Area, whilst transport strategies are in development for Limerick and Waterford which will result in a similar investment in these areas.

No direct impacts to European Sites from the proposed bus improvements identified. Potential for indirect effects as a result of temporary construction related effects from widening and / or resurfacing through drainage pathways.

7.7.6 Investment in Improved Strategic Road Connectivity

It is noted that the bus projects supported in Chapter 6 of the RSES are supported, *subject to the outcome of appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process*. This qualification is welcomed as it clearly acknowledges that the proposals will require detailed consideration once project specific information is available.

Climate change is a significant driver for negative impacts on European Sites therefore measures which promote private car use have the potential to increase GHG emissions as well as other transport related emissions such as NO_x, SO_x and particulates. The key effects on European Sites associated with fuel combustion are; nitrogen/sulphur deposition leading to acidification and eutrophication of soils/water, deposition of particulate matter leading to vegetation damage and/or change in species assemblage and increased atmospheric CO and CO₂ accelerating climate change. Atmospheric deposition of sulphur and nitrogen compounds causes acidification of soil and surface waters. It has also been found that particulate matter (PM) deposition can result in acidification of soils (Bhattacharjee, *et al.*, 1999). In 2010, 7% of land area in the EU-28 (28 EU Member States) exceeded acidification critical loads and this is projected to decrease to 4% by 2020 (EEA, 2015a). Deposition of sulphur and nitrogen compounds also causes eutrophication of freshwater and saltwater systems (EEA, 2015a).

Nitrogen deposition, as a result of NO_x emissions, causes many alterations to vegetation communities. It has been found that the number of species at risk within acidic and calcareous grasslands increased at nitrogen deposition rates greater than 5-10 kg N ha⁻¹ yr⁻¹ (JNCC, 2011). Increases of up to 50% in canopy height at N-deposition rates of 45-50 kg N ha⁻¹ yr⁻¹ (Stevens, *et al.*, 2010) and an increase in the occurrence and abundance of competitive species have also been documented (JNCC, 2011). The JNCC (2011) also found that increased N-deposition on calcareous grasslands resulted in decreased species richness, forb and bryophyte cover and an increase in grass cover. This results in an overall decline in biodiversity.

The European Environment Agency (EEA) highlight that NO_x emissions contribute to the acidification of soil, lakes and rivers, causing loss of animal and plant life and biodiversity (EEA, 2015b). Similarly the EEA (2014) identified one of the main pressures on grassland ecosystem biodiversity was airborne nitrogen, amongst other pressures such as habitat fragmentation, conversion of land for alternative fuel crop and afforestation. Airborne nitrogen was identified to encourage the establishment of competitive species, favour species poor communities (i.e. reduced diversity) and reduce the structural density of grasslands through acidification and eutrophication. Nitrogen deposition is known to be affecting acidic and calcareous grasslands, heathlands and bogs (JNCC, 2011). The EEA published a report which succinctly summarised the links between increased nitrogen deposition, eutrophication and loss of biodiversity (European Environment Agency, 2010). They stated that nitrogen deposition can lead to eutrophication of ecosystems (European Environment Agency, 2010; Rai, 2016) and when deposition rates exceed critical load values "*it is damaging to biodiversity*". The report went on to state that excessive levels of reactive nitrogen, in the form of nitrogen deposition, constitute "*a major threat to biodiversity in terrestrial, aquatic and*

coastal ecosystems". Many mapping efforts to investigate the impacts of nitrogen deposition on biodiversity are focused around 'critical loads'. However "not all critical loads are defined to protect biodiversity." The report also stated that in terrestrial habitats N-deposition "causes a loss of sensitive species and hence biodiversity". This was attributed to the excess nitrogen inputs favouring "a few nitrogen tolerant species over less tolerant ones" (European Environment Agency, 2010). As can be seen, "N-deposition reduces the conservation value of sensitive priority habitats" by impacting biodiversity and is a significant barrier to the UK (and by inference, Ireland) achieving the "targets within the Habitats Directive and Biodiversity Action Plans" (RoTAP, 2012). It must be kept in mind however that many of these studies state that research into the effects on biodiversity are lacking.

Emissions of particulate matter can have many detrimental effects on vegetation (Beckett, *et al.*, 1998; Rai, 2016). Rai (2016) stated that particulate matter may adversely affect biodiversity, in particular urban forests. Biomass combustion, wood burning in particular, is a major source of particulates in the atmosphere (EEA, 2015) due to the high ash and moisture content of wood and the often incomplete combustion associated with small-scale wood burning. Incomplete combustion of wood causes increased levels of coarse particulate matter (PM₁₀) in the atmosphere and the nucleation, condensation or coagulation of nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, ammonia, and volatile organic compounds (found in biomass combustion emissions) result in the formation of secondary particles (PM_{2.5}) (USEPA, 2004). Particulate matter deposition is considered by many, albeit with limited direct research available, to cause many impacts such as reduced biodiversity, sedimentation of surface waterbodies and impacted growth of vegetation (Rai, 2016).

Alterations to the physical structure of vegetation has been found to occur as a result of PM deposition; a significant source of damage to trees, by particulate matter (PM) pollution, can be the abrasive action of the turbulent deposition of the PM (Das, *et al.*, 2012; Hirano, *et al.*, 1995; Kulshreshtha, *et al.*, 1994). Kulshreshtha, *et al.*, (1994) showed this to have increased callus tissue formation on leaf surfaces. The increase deposition of atmospheric PM has also been shown to result in the occlusion of stomata, thereby decreasing the efficiency of gaseous exchange (Beckett, *et al.*, 1998; Das, *et al.*, 2012; Hirano, *et al.*, 1995). The formation of a 'crust' on leaves and bark surfaces has also been observed, due to PM deposition. This crust disrupts physiological processes, such as bud break, pollination and light absorption/reflectance (Beckett, *et al.*, 1998). Although fine PM deposition has been found to provide nutrients to vegetation, it also "changes leaf surface properties, increases the duration of surface wetness" and can result in modification of the habitat for epiphytic organisms, which may lead to increased risks from pathogens (Cape, 2008; Manning and Feder, 1980; Shkaraba and Perevedentseva, 1991).

The projects listed within RPO 159 which support the provision of National Road Projects which have potential for likely significant effects depending on the project solution proposed are listed below. It is noted that with RPO 159 the schemes listed above are subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.

- M20 Cork to Limerick which will require the crossing of the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford SAC);
- N8/N25 Dunkettle Interchange which is in close proximity to Cork Harbour SPA;
- N69 Listowel Bypass which will require the crossing of the Lower Shannon SAC;
- N28 Cork to Ringaskiddy adjacent to Cork Harbour SAC;
- N21/N69 Limerick to Adare to Foynes adjacent to Barrigone SAC, River Shannon and Fergus Estuaries SPA and Lower River Shannon SAC;
- N22 Ballyvourney to Macroom in the vicinity of St Gobnet's Wood SAC;
- N72/N73 Mallow Relief Road in vicinity of Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford SAC) ;

- N25 New Ross Bypass which requires a crossing of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC;
- M11 Gorey to Enniscorthy which is in the vicinity to of the Slaney River Valley SAC.

There are also projects listed within RPO 159 which support the progression of National Road Projects at pre-appraisal stages which have potential for likely significant effects depending on the project solution proposed. It is noted that these are subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.

- N11 Oilgate to Rosslare ;
- N21 Newcastle West Bypass;
- N21 Abbeyfeale bypass;
- N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction requires the crossing of the Lower River Suir SAC;
- N24 Waterford to Cahir;
- N25 Waterford to Glenmore in the vicinity of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC;
- N25 Carrigtwohill to Midleton

The provision of the following National Road Projects within RPO 160 to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility which may have potential for likely significant effects depending on the project solution proposed are listed below. It is noted that these are subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.

- Cork Northern Relief Road;
- N20 to Dunkettle;
- N40 South Ring Road;
- N27 Cork-Cork Airport;
- Maintenance and improvements on the N22, N25, N71, N72, N73, N86 Corridors;
- Limerick Northern Distributor Road;
- N69 Foynes to Limerick Upgrade;
- Limerick Southside Accessibility-M20/M7 Interchange;
- Upgrade and improve the N80 Enniscorthy to Carlow, Portlaoise and the Midlands;
- Upgrade and improve the N25 Waterford to Cork;
- Upgrade and improve the N29 - access to Port of Waterford Belview;
- Maintain and improve the, N30, N77 and N78.

Within RPO 160 the following regional and local roads will be progressed to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility which may have potential for likely significant effects depending on the project solution proposed are listed below. It is noted that these are subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.

- Shannon Crossing;
- Dingle Relief Road;
- Coonagh to Knockalisheen Main Contract;
- Realignment of R498 Nenagh/Thurles road at Latteragh;

- Killaloe Bypass/R494 upgrade;
- Cork Northern Ring Road connecting the N22 to the M8;
- Carrigaline Western Distributor Road;
- Cork Airport Improved Connectivity;
- Limerick Northern Distributor Road;
- Limerick Southside Accessibility Project M20/M7 Interchange;
- Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy;
- Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh and designation to National Road Status;
- Upgrade of the R630 Regional Road linking Midelton to Whitegate Road (Energy Hub);
- Upgrade of the R558 Regional Road linking Tralee to Fenit Port;
- Limerick R527 Dock Road, R445 Dublin Road, R527 Tipperary Road;
- Upgrade and improve the N29 - access to Port of Waterford Belview; and
- Upgrade and improve the R418 Tullow to Castledermot and Junction 4, M9.

Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to all road projects. The early stage assessment must consider initially potential for likely significant effects of the various routes / sites as part of multi-criteria assessment and where necessary criteria which address avoidance of adverse effects on integrity of European sites may be required as a differentiator in decision making if not clear low risk alternative presents itself. In this way the SRA can support the delivery of sustainable solutions for transport which protect the integrity of European sites.

7.7.7 Walking and Cycling

Climate change is a significant driver for negative impacts on European Sites therefore measures to reduce emissions should broadly be viewed as positive for the Natura 2000 network as they contribute to improved air quality and reduced GHG emissions. However, promotion of smarter travel can result in direct and indirect likely significant effects on European Sites through land-use change to develop greenways, cycleways or other cycling / walking infrastructure. This could include direct habitat loss, fragmentation or degradation to construct the infrastructure, species mortality during construction and operation, habitat and species disturbance due to increased human presence adjacent to or in close proximity to European Sites.

Provision of cycleways is generally positive from an environmental perspective, but cycleways in proximity to sensitive sites and species may disturb wildlife, particularly feeding and nesting birds. Their construction may also impact on groundwater and surface water quality and quantity. Delivery of the cycle network set out in the three regional cities' metropolitan area Cycle Network Plans are subject to AA. There is potential for routes (subject to selection) to have an impact on Natura 2000 sites and wider biodiversity. This is particularly the case along coastal sites and canal and river sites which by their linear nature can act as important links and stepping stones for biodiversity.

The RPO includes mitigation as follows:

- *Subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes;*
- *Subject to SEA and AA where required;*

- *A buffer distance shall be maintained between walking, cycling, Greenway and Blueway corridors from coastal areas, particularly those subject to current and future erosion, as well as rivers and canals to ensure protection of riparian zones; and*
- *Such initiatives shall commit to feasibility and route selection studies with a view to identifying and subsequently avoiding high sensitivity feeding or nesting points for birds or other sensitive fauna.*

Provision of greenways and blueways may also result in indirect negative impacts; key issues for European Sites include the provision of support infrastructure such as slipways and quays, water pollution from fuel from boats, noise disturbance from power boats, human disturbance from increased footfall on adjacent towpaths and people using the water, loss or disturbance of riverine or fringing habitat to provide associated infrastructure. In addition there is potential for transfer of disease and spread of invasive species as a result of boating activity. A recent example is the introduction of crayfish plague in the River Barrow system. This can result in 100% mortality for the protected White-clawed crayfish. The policy base should include a clear objective to prevent the spread of IAS within the region. It is not clear if the national cycle plan has undergone AA.

7.7.8 Airports

Any intensification or expansion of airport activities has the potential for long-term negative impacts on European sites as a result of air emissions, noise disturbance from aircraft and from passenger ground traffic. Significant land use change is also a factor as is run-off and pollution of watercourses and soils from airfield infrastructure e.g. from de-icing of planes. International aviation is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions.

7.7.8.1 Cork

Cork Airport is not located within or adjacent to any European Sites however there are a number of potential pathways for impact including emission to surface water, collision and noise disturbance. These have the potential for indirect negative impacts, particularly on downstream SAC and SPA in Cork Harbour and its associated transitional water bodies. Those with hydrological connectivity include Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA, which may also be impacted by approach paths.

Cork Airport is intersected by three river water bodies, Moneygurney_010 (IE_SW_19M300900), Two Pot (Cork City_010 (IE_SW_19T050890) and Owenboy (Cork)_030 (IE_SW_19O011000). The WFD status of Moneygurney_010 for the 2010 – 2015 period is unassigned, and the risk status is at review pending further information. For Two Pot (Cork City)_010, the status is also unassigned, however the river is classed as at risk of failing to achieve WFD objectives. Finally, Owenboy (Cork)_010 is also unassigned, and the risk status is at review pending further information. The transitional water bodies downstream into which these rivers drain are at risk of failing to achieve WFD objectives. The WFD status of Owenboy Estuary (IE_SW_060_1200) is unassigned, while the Lee (Cork) Estuary Upper (IE_SW_060_0950) is at moderate WFD status. These rivers and transitional water bodies form the hydrological pathway from the airport to the closest European Sites; however there is also a likelihood of diffuse urban pressures from Cork City and the wider area.

Activities such as de-icing, refuelling, general wear and tear of tyres etc. which generate pollutants along with run-off from the runways surface will increase in line with any planned expansion. Should expansion be planned for Cork Airport, further analysis would be required to determine how the increased capacity is to be achieved to facilitate growth of the airport without adverse effects on the

receiving waters and potentially the downstream European Sites which have hydrological connectivity to the airport.

While there is no evidence to indicate that birds in the coastal SPAs on aircraft approach paths are disturbed by the aircraft movements, a dedicated study should be undertaken to inform future proposals at the airport, particularly in relation to any change to existing operations.

7.7.8.2 Shannon

Shannon Airport is not located within but is directly adjacent to two European Sites. There are a number of potential pathways for impact including emission to surface water, collision and noise disturbance. These have the potential for indirect negative impacts, particularly on downstream SAC and SPA in the Shannon Estuary. Those with hydrological connectivity include the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA, which may also be impacted by approach paths.

The river water body Urlan Beg_010 (IE_SH_27U010950) intersects Shannon Airport and flows directly to the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA. The WFD status for this river during the 2010 – 2015 period is unassigned, while the risk of failing to achieve WFD objectives has been classed as review, pending further information. The same river also flows through the town. The WFD status of the Upper Shannon Estuary (IE_SH_060_0800) into which the river discharges is poor and is at risk of failing to achieve WFD objectives. Shannon Airport Lagoon (IE_SH_060_1000) is located adjacent to the airport, and is moderate WFD status, under review. This lagoon is fed via tidal exchange and therefore any impacts to the estuary have potential to impact the lagoon. Moving downstream, the Lower Shannon Estuary (IE_SH_060_0300) improves to moderate WFD status, but remains at risk of failing to meet WFD objectives.

Activities such as de-icing, refuelling, general wear and tear of tyres etc. which generate pollutants along with run-off from the runways surface will increase in line with any planned expansion. Should expansion be planned for Shannon Airport, further analysis would be required to determine how the increased capacity is to be achieved to facilitate growth of the airport without adverse effects on the receiving waters and potentially the downstream European Sites which have hydrological connectivity to the airport.

While there is no evidence to indicate that birds in the coastal SPAs on aircraft approach paths are disturbed by the aircraft movements, a dedicated study should be undertaken to inform future proposals at the airport, particularly in relation to any change to existing operations.

7.7.8.3 Kerry

Kerry Airport is not located within or adjacent to any European Sites however there are a number of potential pathways for impact including emission to surface water, collision and noise disturbance. These have the potential for indirect negative impacts, particularly on downstream SAC and SPA in Castlemaine Harbour. Those with hydrological connectivity include Castlemaine Harbour SAC and Castlemaine Harbour SPA.

The Brown Flesk_030 intersects Kerry Airport and was at good WFD status for the 2010 – 2015 period. It has been determined to be not at risk of failing to achieve WFD objectives. Upstream of the airport the river is at high WFD status for the same period, whilst downstream it deteriorates to moderate WFD status. However the monitoring station for good status is > 8 km downstream of the

airport where it joins the Maine River and the deterioration is seen in the Maine, which likely rules out the airport as the pressure causing the deterioration in status downstream.

Activities such as de-icing, refuelling, general wear and tear of tyres etc. which generate pollutants along with run-off from the runways surface could increase with expansion and investment at Kerry Airport. Should expansion be planned, further analysis would be required to determine how the increased capacity is to be achieved to facilitate growth of the airport without adverse effects on the receiving waters and potentially the downstream European Sites which have hydrological connectivity to the airport.

While there is no evidence to indicate that birds in the coastal SPAs on aircraft approach paths are disturbed by the aircraft movements, a dedicated study should be undertaken to inform future proposals at the airport, particularly in relation to any change to existing operations.

7.7.8.4 Waterford

Waterford Airport is not located within or adjacent to any European Sites however there are a number of potential pathways for impact including emission to surface water, collision and noise disturbance. These have the potential for indirect negative impacts, particularly on downstream SAC and SPA in Tramore Back Strand. Those with hydrological connectivity include Tramore Dunes and Backstrand SAC and Tramore Back Strand SPA, which may also be impacted by approach paths.

The river water body Ballygunnmore_010 (IE_SE_17B290990) intersects the airport and flows to the coast where it enters Tramore Back Strand (IE_SE_120_0000). The WFD status for Ballygunnmore_010 for the 2010 – 2015 period is unassigned, with the risk of failing to meet WFD objectives at review pending further information. For Tramore Back Strand, the WFD status for the same period is high; however the risk of failing to meet WFD objectives remains at review. Activities such as de-icing, refuelling, general wear and tear of tyres etc. which generate pollutants along with run-off from the runways surface are likely to increase with the development of a second runway to grow operations. Further analysis is required to determine how the increased capacity is to be achieved to facilitate growth of the airport without adverse effects on the receiving waters and potentially the downstream European Sites which have hydrological connectivity to the airport.

While there is no evidence to indicate that birds in the coastal SPAs on aircraft approach paths are disturbed by the aircraft movements, a dedicated study should be undertaken to inform future proposals at the airport, particularly in relation to any change to existing operations.

7.7.9 Climate Change Impacts on Biodiversity and the Natura 2000 Network

Global warming and climate change are recognised threats to biodiversity, and specifically European sites. It is acknowledged that climate change can have both positive and negative impacts on biodiversity which poses complex problems for planning and particularly nature conservation policy and practice which is seeking to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Numerous studies have been conducted in Ireland and the UK investigating the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and the conservation status of European sites.

In Ireland, the EPA funded research investigating the impacts of climate change on the nature conservation resources of Ireland, through the use of ecological modelling as part of their 2007-2013

research programme¹⁰. The results of this study suggested that the habitats most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in Ireland are:

- Upland habitats (siliceous and calcareous scree, siliceous and calcareous rocky slopes, alpine and subalpine heath);
- Peatlands (raised bog, blanket bog); and
- Coastal habitats (fixed dunes, etc.).

This is also acknowledged in the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 which also highlights negative impacts on a suite of species from climate change.

Habitats and Vegetation

Peatlands i.e. raised bogs, blanket bogs and fens, cover c. 21% of Ireland's land cover (NPWS, 2015). Peat-forming bogs (i.e. active bogs) act as important long-term carbon sinks. Although their distribution is limited to approximately 2-3% of the earth's land surface (Heijmans et al., 2008), peat accumulation has resulted in vast quantities of carbon being stored in bogs; equating to approximately 20% of the global carbon store held in terrestrial ecosystems (Gorham 1991). Bogland species typically consist of Sphagnum (the main peat forming species) and other vascular plant species. A study using ecological modelling found that areas dominated by Sphagnum, at the expense of vascular plants, typically exhibit higher carbon sequestration rates. This study further highlighted that Sphagnum growth rate typically increases when exposed to increased ambient CO₂ concentrations. This is due to this species being less nutrient-limited than other vascular plant species typically found on bogs and therefore gaining competitive advantage. It is also linked to the increased water use efficiency of Sphagnum (Heijmans et al., 2008). These findings indicate towards the close relationship between atmospheric carbon concentrations and peat-formation rates and highlight the possible effects that changing atmospheric carbon concentrations could have on the future of peatlands and their associated biodiversity.

A national study (BOGLANDS) carried out from 2007 to 2013 on the peatlands of Ireland (EPA, 2011) highlighted the importance of climate change in relation to peatlands and the impacts it has on peatland biodiversity. Elevated air temperatures due to global warming has resulted in the "melting of permafrost peatlands" (Camill, 2005) and altered vegetation patterns in temperate peatlands (Chapman et al., 2001; Gunnarsson et al., 2002). As part of the BOGLANDS study, climate change scenario data was analysed to investigate future projections of climate change and the sensitivity of different Irish peatlands. These analyses outputs showed that predicted changes will affect low Atlantic blanket bogs in the West of Ireland the least. The outputs also showed that these predicted changes in climate are likely to place peatlands under severe stress resulting in significant impacts on the peatland carbon store, GHG fluxes and biodiversity (EPA, 2011).

Other studies have been conducted investigating the impacts of elevated atmospheric carbon dioxide on peatland vegetation and some show that plant productivity increases with increasing carbon dioxide levels (Kang et al., 2001; Saarnio et al., 2003), leading to a subsequent increase in soil respiration (Norby, 1997) and methane emissions (Dacey et al., 1994; Saarnio and Silvola, 1999). This alteration of the soil habitat and floral composition is likely to affect the biodiversity of the peatland habitat.

¹⁰ EPA Climate change Research Programme (CCRP) 2007-2013 Report Series No. 19. *Winners and Losers: Climate change impacts on Biodiversity in Ireland.*

Peatlands worldwide act as a major sink of carbon, naturally mitigating anthropogenic rises in atmospheric carbon dioxide. However, degraded peatlands, where there is drawdown of the water table and a drying-out of the peat, release the stored carbon as carbon dioxide emissions. As a result of this, the situation in Ireland is thought to differ from the sink scenario, due to the high levels of degradation of Irish peatlands. The areas of degraded peat are emitting greater amounts of carbon dioxide than the areas which are sequestering this GHG (Wilson, 2008) resulting in a source scenario, rather than a sink. This further exacerbates the impacts of elevated atmospheric carbon and likely results in declines in peatland biodiversity.

A modelling study carried out by the Irish EPA as part of their 2007-2013 research programme¹¹ investigated the impacts of climate change on biodiversity in Ireland. Modelling outputs suggested that “species representative of Arctic-montane, boreal-montane and boreo-arctic montane biomes will be most vulnerable” to the impacts of climate change as these species in Ireland will not have higher altitudes and latitudes to move to. Whereas, species with “disjunct and narrow distributions are projected to experience the largest range changes, contracting and expanding, respectively”. Some of the key messages from this study were that widespread changes are already occurring in natural ecosystems and these will continue, but will accelerate in scope and scale in the coming decade due to GHG already in the atmosphere. However, it also outlines that the scale and extent of changes will continue to accelerate over longer timescales if GHGs emissions continue or increase.

Montane heath habitats (comparable to the protected ‘Alpine & Subalpine heath’ habitats found in Ireland) are also experiencing impacts on their biodiversity due to climate change caused by GHGs; due to montane species limited adaptability they are extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change (Berry et al., 2003), such as elevated temperature and ambient carbon dioxide concentrations. This results in intensified pressure on montane biodiversity (Perrin et al., 2009).

Climate change can impact different habitats in varying ways. Although indications suggest that protected areas are likely to retain ‘climatic suitability’ for species more so than unprotected/ undesignated areas, studies have shown that in fact European Sites retain climatic suitability no more or no better than unprotected areas and sometimes are even less effective than unprotected areas (Araújo et al., 2011).

Coll et al. (2012) suggest that policy initiatives in Ireland, aimed at reducing climate change impacts on biodiversity need to focus on two key habitat types:

- The first type are that of ‘displaced refugia’ where ‘species are able to find suitable habitats after they have been displaced by climate change from their original location’; and
- The second areas are ‘regions of high connectivity that allow species to track climate changes through dispersal’.

They therefore surmise that efforts are needed to integrate protected/designated areas into wider landscapes, seascapes and sectors. This can be achieved through the use of connectivity measures, i.e. development of ecological networks and corridors. In addition to this, restoration of already degraded habitats is essential to addressing climate change impacts and increasing the habitats resilience to climate change (Coll et al., 2012). This is more appropriately addressed through climate change adaptation strategies more so than mitigation; mitigation dealing with the causes of climate change and adaptation dealing with the impacts of climate change.

¹¹ EPA Climate change Research Programme (CCRP) 2007-2013 Report Series No. 19. *Winners and Losers: Climate change impacts on Biodiversity in Ireland.*

The effects of climate change going forward will have major consequences for the species which European sites are designated. Impacts on species will differ greatly and may result in alterations of the species composition which define the habitats on which site designation is based upon. Future designation of sites will therefore need to incorporate projected climate change impacts. Management of current sites will also need to take account of projected climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation strategies must be developed. In order for this to occur, dynamic systems for designating sites may be required as species ranges change (Coll et al., 2012).

Climate change can impact the biodiversity of terrestrial sites through impacts on vegetation also. One example of such an impact is the effect of elevated CO₂ on plant responses; elevated atmospheric CO₂ can influence plant responses to various stressors, such as water availability (Cowling and Sykes, 1999; Farquhar and Sharkey, 1982). Short-term measurements showed that under elevated CO₂ conditions, plants showed reduced transpiration rates and exhibited increased water use efficiency (WUE) (Farquhar and Sharkey, 1982). This alteration of plant responses can alter the plants vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and the varying environmental conditions that can occur.

In recent geological time (the Pleistocene era), atmospheric CO₂ concentrations were 25–50% below the current level (Cowling and Sykes, 1999; Sage and Coleman, 2001). It is known that photosynthetic productivity of certain plants (known as C3 plants) is significantly reduced at these low CO₂ levels, which is further compounded by higher temperatures and during stress. Photosynthesis may have acclimated to these reduced CO₂ concentrations in order to compensate for this inhibition. However, plants have limited control of Rubisco (an enzyme involved in carbon fixation) and other photosynthetic protein production following CO₂ reduction. Therefore, it is postulated that low CO₂ levels resulted in the evolutionary selection of plants adapted to CO₂ deficiency. Sage and Coleman (2001) postulated that adaptations to low CO₂ concentrations may still exist in plants and therefore may constrain responses to rising CO₂ concentration, resulting from ever increasing anthropogenic emissions. This response formed the basis for their prediction that low atmospheric CO₂ would have had a greater impact on vegetation in mid-latitude, warm-temperature climates than cold habitats. This study found that reducing ambient CO₂ from 360ppm to 180ppm caused a plant biomass decline of 50%, potentially due to a decline in productivity. This study highlights the unlikely scenarios that can occur as a result of reducing GHG's; plant production may actually decline in response to reducing anthropogenic emissions, thereby reducing atmospheric CO₂ levels.

A phenomenon known to occur under elevated CO₂ concentrations is known as the “nitrogen dilution effect” (Veteli, 2003). This phenomenon describes the scenario where plants commonly have decreased foliar nitrogen concentrations when grown under elevated CO₂, i.e. an increase in the C:N ratio. Lincoln et al. (1993) stated that this effect is dependent on; the carbon fixation pathway of the plant species (i.e. C3 or C4 plant); the plant species and community; and the availability of other resources. This phenomenon has been observed for agricultural and non-domesticated species in many habitats (Lincoln et al., 1993; Bezemer and Jones, 1998). In nearly all studies which investigated this phenomenon it was found that nitrogen concentrations had decreased by an average of 15% (Bezemer and Jones, 1998).

Coastal and Estuarine Habitats

Increasing levels of GHGs and primarily CO₂, are of particular concern when considering the biodiversity within coastal, estuarine and marine habitats. Ireland is home to numerous coastal, estuarine and marine protected habitats, with many also designated as priority habitats under Annex I of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), e.g. coastal lagoons, fixed dunes (grey dunes),

decalcified dune heath and machair. Coastal, estuarine and marine habitats are particularly sensitive to elevated atmospheric carbon inputs due to the multitude of impacts that occur as a result, such as:

- Increased water temperature due to global warming effects;
- Ocean acidification;
- Decreased shellfish calcification (Gazeau et al., 2007); and
- Altered thermal stratification patterns of lagoons.

Approximately one third of the world's anthropogenic CO₂ emissions are stored in the Earth's oceans, at a rate of approximately 22 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a day (Feeley et al., 2006), which has resulted in a decline in pH (Orr *et al.*, 2005) and is predicted to further decline in the future (Caldeira and Wickett, 2003). Ocean acidification has been noted occurring in the offshore coastal areas of Ireland (ICES, 2014); the recent State of the Environment Report 2016 (EPA, 2016) noted ocean acidification of Irish waters as potentially "very damaging" to marine organisms and further stated that it is a concern worldwide, due to increasing climate change.

A report by the EU Commission (COM, 2009) assessing the impacts of climate change on water, coasts and marine systems in Europe predicted that marine ecosystems and marine biodiversity will in the future continue to be impacted by elevated atmospheric CO₂, through ocean acidification; impacts to biodiversity will occur through alterations to species fecundity, feeding patterns and distribution, increased frequency of algal blooms and altered distributions of planktonic organisms.

Declining ocean pH has many direct and indirect impacts on biodiversity. One such negative impact is the decreased calcification of many shellfish species. Ocean acidification results in decreased pH of the waters and a consequent decrease in calcium carbonate saturation. This decreased availability of calcium carbonate in the water impacts calcareous organisms greatly as they depend on soluble calcium carbonate to synthesis their protective shells. Experiments have shown that at elevated CO₂ coralline algae, coccolithophorids and foraminifera exhibit reduced size and reduced calcification (Aegean, 1985; Bijma et al., 1999; Leclercq et al., 2000; Riebesell et al., 2000; Langdon and Atkinson, 2005) and a more recent study also exhibited this effect in relation to two common bivalves; the edible mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) and Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) showed a negatively correlated linear relationship between calcification and CO₂ concentration. These declines in such shellfish species can have significant impacts on "coastal biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and services" (Gazeau et al., 2007).

The direct impacts of decreased calcification on calcifying marine organisms is evident, however a number of indirect impacts can occur also; in response to reduced calcium carbonate saturation in oceans, calcifying organisms may adapt to this change by shifting their spatial distribution and moving to areas of higher carbonate ion concentrations (Doney et al., 2009). This may result in significant negative impacts on the associated flora and fauna (Burns, 2008). Another indirect impact is the potential loss of important habitats such as cold-water coral reefs (found along the west coast of Ireland) and/or maërl beds which would likely result in reduced local biodiversity (Ní Longphuirt et al., 2010).

Juvenile bivalves are extremely sensitive to the impacts of ocean acidification; a link has been observed between high mortality of juveniles and calcium carbonate dissolution (Green et al., 2004). This impact can result in a loss of juvenile stages of many bivalve species resulting in reduced biodiversity.

Some marine organisms are also at risk of hypercapnia (excessive CO₂ in the blood) and acidosis (serious condition resulting from hypercapnia) due to ocean acidification (Findlay et al., 2008; Pörtner et al., 2004, Shirayama & Thornton 2005, Miles et al., 2007). This increased rate of hypercapnia and acidosis can result in increased mortality thereby reducing the biodiversity of marine habitats experiencing elevated CO₂ or CO₂ saturation.

Impacts on Species

Ireland currently plays host to 61 species (flora and fauna) protected under Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC13. Responses to climate change and elevated atmospheric CO₂ in particular are species-specific (as seen above with calcifying marine organisms) and must therefore be investigated individually. Although broad observations can be made for various faunal (birds, fish, mammals) or floral (angiosperms, gymnosperms, algae, bryophytes) groups, investigations at species level elicit more accurate predictions of future impacts to species, with increasing carbon dioxide concentrations. For the purposes of this report, a number of species will be discussed in detail with regard to the impact of climate change and elevated atmospheric CO₂ concentrations on their populations and inferences will be made as to the impacts this has on the biodiversity of their corresponding habitats.

It is known that as concentrations of atmospheric CO₂ increase forage quality typically decreases and this may affect the foraging habits of grazing and browsing animals (Dukes, 2000). Although cattle farmers may be able to maintain livestock populations at current levels (i.e. under current concentrations of atmospheric CO₂) by supplementing the livestock feed with nutritional additives, the growth and reproduction of wild fauna is likely to experience a decline due to deterioration of foraging habitat (Owensby et al. 1996).

The European Commission conducted a modelling and analyses study into the impacts of climate change on 212 species of Community Interest for which model data was available, within the Natura 2000 Network in Europe (EC, 2009). The study “assessed the direct impacts of climate change on the Natura 2000 network and also related the results of the species vulnerability assessments to the Natura 2000 network”.

The findings of the study were as follows;

- For breeding birds one out of the 149 species assessed was seen to react positively to climate change. However, in European Sites in the Mediterranean biogeographic region, about 78% of species fall into the top four vulnerability categories; extremely critically vulnerable, critically vulnerable, very highly vulnerable and highly vulnerable;
- Vascular plants did not show large numbers of highly vulnerable species; and
- Protected butterfly species in European Sites exhibit low or moderate vulnerability to climate change.

The Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulous*) nests in northern Scandinavia and winters in central Europe. Although small numbers of Waxwings are seen in Ireland each winter, unusually high numbers of the species have been sighted in Ireland in winter 2017 (Holland, 2017). This is thought to be due to the abnormally low temperatures occurring across central Europe, an occurrence that may be attributed to climate change. The Waxwing feeds almost exclusively on berries during the winter months. However due to the freezing temperatures across central Europe their food supply has been depleted and therefore it is thought that birds are moving towards Ireland in search of a more

plentiful supply of berries. Flocks of up to 400 birds have been observed in Ireland. Thus the species range may be altering due to effects of climate change.

Positive Impacts of Elevated Carbon Dioxide on Biodiversity

Although elevated atmospheric carbon dioxide is largely thought to have solely negative impacts on vegetation and botanical biodiversity it has been shown that elevated CO₂ can sometimes positively impact vegetation.

Numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of elevated CO₂ on plant productivity, primarily due to concerns over food security and crop yields. In over 1000 studies it was conclusively shown that a doubling in the atmospheric concentration of CO₂ resulted in a c. 33% increase in C3 crop yields and a c. 10% increase in C4 crop yields (Kimball, 1985; Cure and Acock, 1986). Other studies have also shown that plants grown at elevated CO₂ concentrations exhibit increased water use efficiency (Dukes and Mooney, 1999), which is preferential should drought events increase in frequency with climate change. This highlights the potentially negative impact that reducing atmospheric CO₂ may have on plant productivity, which may have knock-on effects such as reduced crop yields and food shortages.

As plants typically increase their water use efficiency in response to growth under elevated CO₂ concentrations, this is likely to allow some species, annual grasses for example, to extend their ranges further into drier, more arid regions. However, in more mesic areas, grassland dominant species increasing in water use efficiency will likely increase deep water percolation. This will benefit shrubs and other deep-rooting species. This may result in rapid population increases in leguminous shrubs due to their deep-rooting patterns and increased N fixation, as rising CO₂ concentration stimulates N fixation (Dukes, 2000).

A number of insect species have been shown to benefit from increased atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide. Some studies investigating aphid populations suggest that populations could increase under elevated CO₂ concentration, due to increased fecundity and longer settling time on foliage (Awmack *et al.* 1996; Smith 1996). However, it is thought that this effect may be dependent on the host plant species. For example, the potato aphid (*Aulacorthum solani*) population levels respond quite differently to elevated CO₂ concentration dependent on whether it is feeding on bean (*Vicia faba*) or tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) (Awmack *et al.*, 1997).

Light-bellied brent goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) is a long distance Arctic migratory species that winters in Ireland, utilising the many grasslands and estuaries as feeding grounds. This species is amber-listed as the largest proportion of the global population winter at less than ten sites in Ireland, thereby making the Irish population internationally significant. A recent study was published in the UK (Cleasby *et al.*, 2016) which looked at the impacts of climate change on the species. The primary focus of this study was the potential impact climate change is having on the reproductive rates of females and the survival rates of males and females and possible links between these rates. It is known that migratory species such as the Brent goose are particularly sensitive to climate impacts due to the various climatic conditions they must endure throughout their annual cycle.

The study was conducted using integrated population models (IPM) and demonstrated that climatic conditions, when experienced at the start of the breeding season, exerted the most influence on survival and fecundity and resulted in these rates occurring in opposite directions (Cleasby *et al.*, 2016), and therefore were the biggest driver of population vital rates, which has previously been concluded in other studies also (Boyd, 1987; Gaston *et al.*, 2005). Because climatic conditions appear to have “opposing effects on different demographic rates” (Cleasby *et al.*, 2016; Oudenhove *et al.*,

2014) the interactions between these rates is likely important and should not be ignored in future studies of climate change impacts.

Another interesting finding of this study related to the survival rates of male brent geese versus female and the influence of climate. It was found that when June North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) values were negative (negative NAO indices during the summer represent favourable environmental conditions for breeding) female survival rates declined. However, this correlation was not seen for male geese (Cleasby et al., 2016; Oro et al., 2010). Therefore, it could be reasoned that female survival rates are lowest in years when productivity rates are highest. This led the researchers to the conclusion that the most likely cause of this relationship between survival rate and climatic conditions is that it is driven by a “classic life-history trade-off between investing in reproduction versus self-maintenance” (Williams, 1966), partly influence by environmental conditions. It is thought that decreased survival rates during increased productivity years is due to increased predation rates (Hagen et al., 2007) as female birds are spending longer sitting on nests, leaving them more vulnerable to predators. The take-home message from this report is that climate change has the potential to affect population dynamics in this species (Cleasby et al., 2016) and therefore affect biodiversity of a number of geographical locations due to the numerous habitats the geese utilise during their annual cycle.

In the Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica* Newman) elevated atmospheric carbon dioxide and the resultant increase in ambient temperature are known to effect herbivory rates in native and agricultural communities (Niziolek et al., 2012). Niziolek et al. (2012) investigated the impacts of elevated carbon dioxide and elevated temperature on soybean crops and on the herbivory rates of the Japanese beetle which feeds upon it. Elevated CO₂ and elevated temperature were investigated individually and in conjunction. It was known, from previous studies, that when soybeans were exposed to levels of CO₂ predicted to occur by 2050, the damage to foliage greatly increased due to increased chewing by insects, the Japanese beetle in particular (Coviella & Trumble, 1999; Hamilton et al., 2005; Dermody et al., 2008). It was also known that when the beetle fed on foliage grown under elevated CO₂ conditions the survivorship of the beetles increased (O’Neill et al., 2008). However, Niziolek et al. (2012) found that when elevated CO₂ was applied simultaneously with elevated temperature (as would occur under such conditions in the troposphere), the effect of temperature on leaf damage appeared stronger than the effect of elevated CO₂. This was thought to be likely due to the direct effect of the temperature increase on insect metabolism. This response may indicate that under elevated temperature and CO₂ concentration, as the climate warms from anthropogenic impacts, soybean may experience greater foliage damage.

This study showed that with elevated temperature Japanese beetles will spend more time feeding, along with an increase in herbivory rate and will not experience a decline in overall survivorship, given that there are no other changes in beetle behaviour and physiology (Niziolek et al., 2012). This exhibits how elevated carbon dioxide and elevated temperature, conditions predicted under climate change, can benefit a species. However, this is with consequent impacts to the food plant, the soybean.

While much of the research discussed above includes habitats and species wider than the Irish context, it illustrates the extent of potential impacts associated with biodiversity as a result of climate change. The EPA Climate Change Research Report on the winners and losers in Irish biodiversity concluded that:

It is projected that many species in Ireland will experience significant changes to their ranges under future climate scenarios. Species with disjunct and narrow distributions are projected to experience the largest range changes, contracting and expanding, respectively.

The key messages from the research indicate that we are already seeing changes in natural systems in Ireland and these are likely to continue, accelerating in scope and scale into the future. This scope and scale will continue into the future if greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated or increase.

7.8 QUALITY OF LIFE (CHAPTER 7 OF RSES)

Chapter 7 of the draft RSES sets out the RPOs in relation to quality of life. It is the acknowledgement that the place or environment in which we live or work, including its physical nature and social environment or community, has a profound impact on physical and mental health wellbeing, and quality of life. Placemaking is an essential link between spatial planning and facilitating improvements in people's quality of life, and Irish culture has a longstanding identification with place. Quality of life can be improved through, *inter alia*, planning and integration and availability and access to services.

Well-being and improving quality of life are core themes in the RSES strategy reflected in the overarching strategy statement covered under the following key elements:

- Strengthen and protect our region's diverse culture recreation, natural heritage, biodiversity and built heritage; (7).
- Safeguard and enhance our environment through sustainable development, transitioning to a low carbon and climate resilient society; (8).
- Achieve improved access to services and facilities for all citizens (10), and
- Build an inclusive outward looking international region on the global stage (11).

7.8.1 Improving Regional Quality of Life

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Inclusive Communities and Places	RPOs 167-168 support sustainable infrastructure-led planning and the generation of compact settlements, ensuring that facilities and services are easily accessible within a short distance from homes. Within the RPO it is specified that Local Authorities should ensure an appropriate level of environmental assessment when making decisions regarding new developments/infrastructure. No potential for adverse effects on the integrity of any European Sites.
Mitigation: Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Healthy Communities	RPO 169-170 relate to improving access and delivery of universal healthcare services, childcare and education.. Any infrastructural developments in relation to the provision of such services will be subject to AA. No potential for adverse effects on the integrity of any European Sites.
Mitigation: Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Diverse and Inclusive Region Age Friendly Communities	RPO 171 - 175 relate to initiatives to improve social integration including initiatives to delivery appropriate infrastructure facilities and services. No potential for adverse effects on the integrity of any European Sites.
Mitigation: Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Childcare, Education and Lifelong Learning <i>A Learning Region</i> <i>UNESCO and the Southern Region</i> <i>Skills and Talent</i>	RPO 176 is a supporting measure for the establishment of two new Technological Universities for the Southern Region, while RPO 177 relates to planning the locations of educational facilities in accessible areas for public transport or active travel. New infrastructure would be subject to a robust site selection process, informed by environmental assessment and planning. RPOs 178-182 outline the Southern Region's objectives for lifelong learning, the development of the Southern Region as a Learning Region and the promotion of coordinated infrastructure to obtain a collaborative approach to learning within the Region. In addition there is an objective to develop and increase investment in education and learning in line with the initiatives of the Regional Skills Fora. These objectives primarily relate to investment in and coordination of education within the Region and as such, are supporting measures. There is no potential for adverse effects on the integrity of any European Sites.
Mitigation: Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.	

7.8.2 Cultural Heritage and the Arts

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Enabling Infrastructure for Development of the Cultural and Creative Sector in our Region	RPO 183 - 186 relate to the development of a vibrant cultural and creative sector in the Southern Region as a key enabler for growth and development, and the provision of cultural policies and objectives which supporting sustainable development of the enabling infrastructure. The policy base specifically acknowledges the potential for upgrades/re-use of heritage buildings for developments to impact on protected species e.g. bats and that appropriate studies are required to inform decision making. Furthermore RPO 186 identifies the need to link decisions around investment in cultural heritage by LA with environmental assessments. It is noted that none of the plans listed under RPO 183 has been subject to AA in their own right and as such, any measures brought forward from these plans must be considered subject to AA.
Mitigation: Local Authorities will ensure that decisions relating to investment in arts, cultural and heritage infrastructure/facilities should be informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPO. The potential for indirect impacts from visitor pressure as a result of improved access to cultural heritage sites on natural heritage should be considered as part of decision making. Local Authorities will ensure that decisions relating to upgrades/re-use of buildings for developments incorporating cultural and creative sector space and facilities are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment including undertaking studies where regeneration / building projects may have the potential to affect protected species. This has been addressed in the RPO.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
The Gaeltacht and Our Linguistic Heritage	RPOs 187-189 relate to supporting the preparation of language plans and the designation of suitable locations as Irish language networks as part of Gaeltacht and Linguistic Heritage. RPO 188 includes reference to the development of economic and social infrastructure for remote Gaeltacht locations, including the development of a network of digital hubs. As with any infrastructure, there is potential for adverse effects on European sites depending on connectivity. Bearing this in mind, RPO 188 states the following: <i>Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making relating to the development of social and economic infrastructure including the development of communications and renewable energy are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.</i> No adverse effects on European sites as a result of Objectives.
Mitigation: Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making relating to the development of social and economic infrastructure including the development of communications and renewable energy are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPOs.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Regional Recreation and Sporting Facilities	Both RPO 190 and 191 are supporting measures for investment in sports through the Sports Capital Programme and for larger projects, the Large-Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund. As supporting measures, there is no potential for adverse effects on the integrity of any European Sites. As with any infrastructure proposed in this RSES, it must be subject to an appropriate level of environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPO. No adverse effects on European sites as a result of Objectives.
Mitigation: Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to the development of recreational and sporting infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPOs.	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Green Infrastructure Greenways and Blueways	RPOs 192-193 are a supporting measures for investment in, and ongoing maintenance of, green infrastructure, public parks and open spaces, walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors. Objectives supporting Greenway and Blueway developments may result in direct and indirect negative impacts to European Sites. Key issues associated with Blueway infrastructure include the provision of support infrastructure such as slipways and quays, water pollution from fuel from boats, noise disturbance from power boats, human disturbance from increased footfall on adjacent towpaths and people using the water, loss or disturbance of riverine or fringing habitat to provide associated infrastructure. In addition there is potential for transfer of disease and spread of invasive species as a result of boating activity. Key issues associated with Greenway developments in the absence of mitigation include direct and indirect impacts to European sites within the project Zone of Influence during the construction and operational phases of the greenway development. This could include run-off of construction materials such as wet concrete, aggregates to the receiving environment or the exposure of an area to disturbance effects to QI or SCI species of a European Site within the project ZoI. It is stated that these amenities will be <i>subject to appropriate level of environmental assessment, including all necessary reports</i>

	<i>to assess the potential impact on designated European sites and on biodiversity outside of formal protections such that proposed development does not contribute to loss of biodiversity</i>
Mitigation: Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPOs.	

7.8.3 Environmental and Built Heritage

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Natural Amenities National Parks Built Heritage	RPO 194 -199 relates to protection of natural and built heritage assets. This includes support for initiatives to revitalise historic cores in cities and improve visitor access. These RPOs have potential to indirectly impact European sites and/ or protected species as a result of disturbance from visitor pressures and pollution associated with capacity of services such as waste, water etc. These issues are addressed in the RPOs. No adverse effects on European sites as a result of Objectives.
Mitigation: Local Authorities should ensure that decision making on heritage related projects and developments are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment including assessment of impacts on other environmental receptors such as protected species. This has been addressed in the RPO.	

7.9 WATER & ENERGY UTILITIES (CHAPTER 8 OF RSES)

Chapter 8 of the draft RSES sets out water and energy utility infrastructure to service the region's targeted growth in a sustainable manner and specifically to service and underpin the successful, sustainable and infrastructure led delivery of the RSES settlement strategy. Key priorities for the region are to ensure that the settlement strategy has regard to the capacity of existing public water services, to ensure that investment is targeted to enable growth, particularly where it is concentrated in cities and Metropolitan Areas and that growth is phased such that planned water services infrastructure is delivered timely for infrastructure led sustainable growth patterns.

This chapter relates to the regional objective RPO 9 in Chapter 2 of the RSES as follows:

- Provision of infrastructure and services in a sustainable, plan and infrastructure led manner to ensure the sustainable management of water waste and other environmental resources (9).

The delivery of these services and associated infrastructure are essential for the management and conservation of water resources, particularly in light of economic development. There is potential for any development in relation to water management to impact on water dependent habitats and species (e.g. hydromorphological impacts) within European Sites and also for potential adverse impacts via infrastructural development which has potential to result in the following:

- Habitat loss and or disturbance;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Decreased water quality;
- Increased demand on water supply;
- Introduction or spread of invasive species; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>Drinking Water</p>	<p>A key priority for the Region is to ensure that water supply needs are met by new national projects to enhance the supply. Irish Water's National Water Resources Plan 2018 will identify, develop and assess options for a number of high priority water supplies to help meet potential shortfalls and minimise environmental impacts in water supplies. This will continue beyond 2018 with the inclusion of a work programme to implement mitigation measures. This National Water Resources Plan will be subject to AA and SEA in due course.</p> <p>RPO 200 is an objective that seeks to have Irish Water revise their Draft Investment Plan (2020-2024) and any subsequent investment plans to align water services with settlement strategy, particularly in Metropolitan Areas within the Southern Region. It is noted that the Investment Plan is under the responsibility of IW and as such this is an exploratory objective. If the draft plan is to be revised it will be required to undergo SEA and AA as appropriate to inform decision making. Following iterative discussion with the AA team, two additional elements were added to RPO 200 as follows:</p> <p><i>(b) Delivery and phasing of services shall be subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network</i></p>

(c) Local Authority Core Strategies shall demonstrate compliance with DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities and demonstrate phased infrastructure led growth to meet demands on the water supply, suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (for example hydromorphological pressures) and prevent adverse impacts the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.

RPO 201 supports investment and the sustainable development of a strategic water supply projects by Irish Water and Local Authorities, arising from various initiatives (e.g. leakage reduction programmes). This measure may lead to new infrastructure or upgrades to existing infrastructure which would be subject to AA at project level should they arise. It is noted that the objective offers support subject to the appropriate environmental assessment of the plans.

The delivery of these services and associated infrastructure are essential for the management and conservation of water resources, particularly in light of economic development. There is potential for any development in relation to water management to impact on water dependent habitats and species (e.g. hydromorphological impacts) within European Sites and also for potential adverse impacts via infrastructural development which has potential to result in the following:

- Habitat loss and or disturbance;
- Species disturbance;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Decreased water quality;
- Increased demand on water supply;
- Introduction or spread of invasive species; and
- In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements.

Population growth will result in increased demand on water supply and therefore there is potential for Increased abstractions leading to changes/pressures on existing hydrological/hydrogeological regimes. This could result in adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent European Sites. There is also potential for in-combination impacts with Metropolitan Areas (Cork, Limerick and Waterford) and Key Growth Settlements, in the form of multiple pressure points on European Sites.

RPO 202 identifies the need for Drinking Water Protection Plans. The objective clearly links to both the WFD and the RBMP protected areas, which include water dependence ecosystems. The inclusion of mitigation and protection measures for all protected areas in CDP will be a positive step toward ensuring no adverse effects on site integrity.

Mitigation:

Delivery of these services will be *subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process*.

In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (e.g. hydromorphological pressures).

Selection of sites to facilitate improvements in water will be supported by a robust site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.

A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p style="text-align: center;">Wastewater</p>	<p>The sustainable growth of the Region requires the provision of infrastructure and services in a plan led manner to ensure there is capacity for future development. High-quality infrastructure provides essential functions and services that support, <i>inter alia</i>, environmental systems. It is recognised that improvements are required in water and waste water practices within Ireland and steps have been taken through the provision of a single utility provider. Irish Water has prepared a Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP, 2015), under Section 33 of the Water Service No. 2 Act of 2013 to address the delivery of strategic objectives which will contribute towards improved water quality and WFD requirements, and compliance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.</p> <p>The WWSP included a list of 44 settlements discharging raw effluent, 24 of which were in the Southern Region. Whilst some upgrades have already been carried out, Irish Water aims to complete these upgrades by 2021. Irish Water is currently investing in 113 waste water projects in the Southern Region under the current Capital Investment Plan, with investment planned to accommodate future growth in the Metropolitan Areas and Key Towns of the Southern Region. Additional treatment plants are also being upgraded under Irish Water’s Capital Programmes portfolio.</p> <p>The EPA Sewage Treatment Maps¹² indicate that there are 66 urban areas within the Region that are on the EPA Priority List because they fall under one or more of the following criteria: Failing to meet EU sewage treatment standards; discharging raw sewage because there is no treatment plant; key pressure on rivers or lakes; impacting on bathing water; improvement needed to protect Pearl Mussels; or improvement needed to protect Shellfish Waters.</p> <p>RPO 203 is an objective that aims to have Irish Water revise their Draft Investment Plan (2020-2024) and any subsequent investment plans to align water services with settlement strategy and objectives of the Southern Region RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. Without the revision of the plan, there is likely to be a disconnect between adequate services and places identified for growth. This has the potential for significant adverse effects if development is allowed to progress without the necessary capacity as it would result in untreated or inadequately treated sewage entering water bodies. As such, the decision to allow growth in any area must only be confirmed where the developer and / or the LA can show the capacity exists or is committed to by IW.</p> <p>Revision of the Plan could lead to new infrastructure or upgrades to existing infrastructure which would be subject to AA at project level should they arise. The following impacts have potential to arise as a result of development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss and or disturbance; ▪ Species disturbance; ▪ Habitat fragmentation; ▪ Decreased water quality; ▪ Increased demand on water supply; ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species; and ▪ In-combination impacts with other key growth settlements. <p>RPO 204 supports investment and the sustainable development of strategic waste water treatment facilities by Irish Water in the region arising from initiatives including Investment Plans, Strategic Drainage Area Plans. As a supporting measure for investment there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site, however any development that arises from such investment would be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process. RPO 204, following iterative feedback from the AA team now also notes the need for phasing to prevent adverse effect on European sites.</p> <p>RPO 205 supports investment in the sustainable development of rural waste water</p>

¹² <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/SewageTreatment>

	<p>treatment programmes and as such would have beneficial effects for water quality and any water dependant European sites. Potential for adverse effects arises from any infrastructure needed to deliver sustainable WWT. This can be addressed through robust site selection.</p> <p>It is essential that untreated discharges in the Southern Region are eliminated and that a strategic approach for the development of the treatment of wastewater is taken, in order to future-proof treatment capacity for long-term growth and to increase compliance with the requirements of the UWWTD. This has been identified in RPO 206. Compliance with the UWWTD would have beneficial effects for water quality and any water dependant European sites. Potential for adverse effects arises from any infrastructure needed to deliver sustainable WWT. This can be addressed through robust site selection.</p> <p>RPO 207 supports strategic wastewater treatment infrastructure in Development Plans and to facilitate the separation of foul and surface water networks to accommodate the future growth of the region. The requirements of RPO 1 will apply. No adverse effects on site integrity.</p> <p>RPO 208 relates to the servicing of rural villages in order to provide an alternative to one-off housing in the countryside. This is a beneficial policy as not only does it address water pollution which has beneficial effects for water dependant ecosystems but it also supports a gradual move away from one-off housing. As discussed above, the delivery of wastewater treatment infrastructure has the potential for pathways that have the potential to adversely impact on European Sites via changes to water quality. Robust site selection can address this.</p>
<p>Mitigation:</p> <p>Delivery of these services will be <i>subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process</i>.</p> <p>Phasing of services in terms of growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Selection of sites to facilitate improvements in wastewater will be supported by a robust site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>RPOs Surface Water</p>	<p>For the management of surface waters, the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) in all public and private developments in urban areas is recommended, as is the need for diversion of storm water from combined sewers. This management should have a positive impact on water quality, biodiversity and flooding. The management of SuDS includes control structures and strategies designed to efficiently and sustainably drain surface water, while minimising pollution. These practices ultimately manage any potential impacts on surface water bodies.</p> <p>RPO 209 -210 relate to sustainable drainage. RPO 209 aims to support the relevant local authorities (and Irish Water where relevant) to improve storm water infrastructure to improve sustainable drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in the urban environment. Flood mitigation measures seek to mitigate the potential adverse impacts of climate change; however these measures can have adverse environmental impacts. See Section 7.5 for further consideration.</p> <p>RPO 210 relates to supporting relevant bodies in the incorporation of the principle of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) in all public and private development in urban areas, and the diversion of storm water from combined sewers where possible. The implementation of such will have a positive impact in terms of water quality and</p>

	<p>flooding, however there is potential for adverse impacts on European Sites, particularly in relation to flood risk management. This could occur through direct and indirect impact on water dependant SACs/SPAs due to changes in water quality or hydromorphology and loss/disturbance of Annex habitats as a result of infrastructure provision.</p> <p>See Section 7.5 in relation to green infrastructure, water quality and the River Basin Management Plan for further emphasis and objectives on water, drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems.</p>
<p>Mitigation:</p> <p>Delivery of these services will be <i>subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process</i>.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site.</p> <p>See mitigation in relation to flood risk management in Section 7.5.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>RPOs Strategic Energy Grid</p>	<p>RPO 211 -216 support sustainable development of energy infrastructure including renewable energy. This has long term positive impacts for biodiversity in general and European Sites, as it contributes to Ireland’s obligations in terms of reduction of GHG emissions and climate change. However this policy base is likely to require new grid and generation infrastructure e.g. wind farms on and offshore; wave; tidal; overhead lines and underground / sub-sea cables, all of which have potential for direct and indirect adverse effects on European Sites.</p> <p>Key issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alteration to water quality from construction activities; ▪ Permeant and temporary loss of habitat from construction / operation of new infrastructure; ▪ Spread of invasive species; ▪ Mortality from collisions / bird strikes; ▪ Disturbance from surface and sub-sea noise generation during construction; ▪ Reduced fecundity; ▪ Reduction in available feeding area / roosting sites as a result of exclusion; and ▪ Changes to migration paths. <p>Planning of any energy infrastructure, including upgrades will require careful consideration of all potential impacts at both sectoral level and at project level. EirGrid have produced their draft Grid 25 Plan 2017-2021 which is being subject to AA. An assessment of an earlier cycle of the plan gave rise to evidence base studies on the impact of grid and transmission infrastructure on biodiversity and water. The studies have been completed and provide a good starting point for scoping of issues for future developments. As with any infrastructure, robust route and site selection will be key to avoiding adverse effects on European sites.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that following iterative feedback from the AA team RPO 111, 112, and 113 all specifically note that development of energy the relevant energy infrastructure is subject to <i>appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process</i>.</p> <p>RPO 215 references the Celtic Interconnector, as a proposed electrical link between the South coast of Ireland and France that will comprise approximately 500m of subsea cable. The construction of this cable has the potential to negatively impact on biodiversity, with potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites. Potential risks include disturbance of marine mammals and loss of designated</p>

	<p>habitats. Landfall can also be a significant constraint in this regard. Coastal habitats; coastal bird populations in particular are at risk from landfall activities and from construction activities for development. The project is still in the planning stages, having carried out a feasibility study and a suite of marine surveys. The RPO states that this will be supported subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.</p> <p>RPO 216 refers to strategic energy corridors. In identifying these corridors LA must apply criteria that include the avoidance of adverse effects on European sites and species. This is particularly important with regard to avian migratory routes that could be compromised by corridor development in the long term.</p> <p>See Section 7.5 for further references and objectives to support renewable energy and energy efficiency.</p>
<p>Mitigation: RPO 1 will apply to the plans and projects noted in this section.</p> <p>The mitigation measures from the Eirgrid Grid 25 Plan will be integrated into planning for energy infrastructure by LA.</p>	

Key Policy Area	Assessment
<p>RPO Gas Networks</p>	<p>RPO 2017 and its sub-objectives, relate to promoting gas energy and renewable gas for a reduction in carbon emissions; sustainable strengthening of the gas network to service settlements in the Southern Region; supporting the development of the agricultural biogas sector and regional gas supply projects and assist the integration of renewable gas to the grid network; and to support investment in developing renewable gas and Clean Natural Gas which will help reduce GHG emissions in both the agriculture and transport sectors and support Carbon Capture and Storage initiatives, which has the potential to decarbonise power generation at scale.</p> <p>While these objectives are broadly positive in terms of supporting resource efficiency which could lead to positive benefits for climate, the development of new infrastructure to support these RPOs (including international infrastructure) could lead to significant effects and where necessary adverse effects on the integrity of the European Site network should be considered.</p> <p>Following iterative feedback from the AA team, the RPO starts with the following: <i>Subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process where required</i></p> <p>See Section 7.5 for related objectives on biogas, renewable energy and decarbonisation.</p>
<p>Mitigation: Ensure proper site selection to avoid likely significant effects on European Sites and potential for adverse effects on site integrity.</p>	

7.10 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (CHAPTER 9 OF RSES)

Chapter 9 of the draft RSES sets out Regional Policy Objectives to support the implementation and monitoring of the delivery of the Southern Region RSES.

Key Policy Area	Assessment
Implementation and Monitoring	<p>The inclusion of implementation and monitoring objectives as per RPO 218-222 is broadly positive as it provides opportunities to audit effectiveness of objectives and to monitor unforeseen impacts from across a wide policy base. However it is noted that the objectives do not generally integrate ecological monitoring or auditing. The focus is on the implementation of the RSES only.</p> <p>A commitment to monitor ecology and in particular European sites in line with the SEA monitoring protocol should be included. It is recommended that at a minimum, baseline data on environmental matters coincides with the EPA State of the Environment Reporting which is published on a 4-yearly cycle and the NPWS Article 12 and Article 17 reporting in relation to the status and condition of SAC and SPA. This takes place on a 6-yearly cycle with the next reporting period due in 2019.</p> <p>Two particular baseline data issues which will be required to inform decision making in relation to the RSES relate to bird data and visitor pressure. For both aspects there is often a deficit of information at the project level which can lead to significant delays at planning as data needs to be collected.</p>
<p>Mitigation: A regional working group should be established to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management and to address cross-boundary site and species protection.</p> <p>A repository for NIS and NIR documents should be established to facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to requiring planning permissions, particularly for large infrastructure in the region, to provide raw data in a readily searchable format to improve the evidence base available for decision makers at planning authority level.</p>	

7.11 CORK MASP

The Cork MASP provides a first step in outlining the vision for the Cork Metropolitan Area. The Cork MASP outlines a high level vision as follows: *The Cork MASP builds on the strong tradition of collaboration in Cork and initiatives such as the Cork Strategic Area Plan (CASP) and Cork 2050, joint initiative by Cork County Council and Cork City Council for the NPF.*

Cork MASP Objective 1: Cork Metropolitan Area

- (a): To strengthen the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and the primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region
- (b): To promote the Cork Metropolitan Area as a cohesive single metropolitan employment and property market where population and employment growth is integrated with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region reinforced by (ii) the continued regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of the city centre, Cork City Docklands and Tivoli suburban areas (iii) active land management initiatives to enable future infrastructure led expansion of the city and suburbs (to be assessed by Core Strategy initiatives) and (iv) the regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of metropolitan towns and other strategic employment locations in a sustainable manner.
- (c): Seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals.
- (d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.
- (e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Economic and population growth will need to be facilitated by the expansion and further development of existing services including transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, retail and housing development, regeneration of city centre, Cork City Docklands etc. The development and expansion of these services within the Cork MASP area could lead to direct and indirect impacts to qualifying habitats and species associated with European Sites within the MASP Zone of Influence if unmitigated however the objective commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

Mitigation: None

Cork MASP Objective 2: Cork City

Seek delivery of the following subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.

(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

Cork MASP Objective 2: Cork City

urbanism and place making.

(c): Seek investment to achieve regeneration and consolidation in the city suburbs.

(d): To strengthen the attributes and opportunities for the city centre, including transformative initiatives such as the City Centre Strategy and other initiatives as identified by the City Development Plan (existing and future).

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Economic and population growth will need to be facilitated by the expansion and further development of existing services including transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, retail and housing development, regeneration of city centre, Cork City Docklands etc. The development and expansion of these services within the Cork MASP area could lead to direct and indirect impacts to qualifying habitats and species associated with European Sites within the MASP Zone of Influence if unmitigated however Objective 1 of the Cork MASP commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

Mitigation: Mitigation: None

Cork MASP Objective 3: Cork Harbour

(a): To promote Cork Harbour as a unique and strategic asset in the Cork Metropolitan Area and Southern 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).

(b): To seek a specific planning framework initiative through the Core Strategies of Local Authority City and County Development Plans as appropriate to guide the sustainable future management of different uses in the Cork Harbour area, including strategic economic uses, while protecting the sensitive ecosystems and designated natural habitats.

(c): The initiative under Part (b) shall address opportunities of a waterfront city and the harbour area, the opportunities for harbour communities, enhanced transport and public transport connections, Tier 1 Port activity, industries, clusters of economic specialism, research and innovation in the marine economy, renewable energy, ecology and habitat protection, ecosystems services, tourism, greenways and blueways inter alia.

(d) The delivery of plans and projects in the Cork Harbour area as a result of this objective shall be subject to quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Where such activities occur there can be significant potential for adverse impacts on the integrity across a range of protected habitats and species depending on the activity / development but in particular European Sites with coastal, estuarine and/or marine Conservation Objectives. Activities at Cork Harbour have potential connectivity to Cork Harbour SPA; Great Island Channel SAC in particular. These sites are designated for a number of bird species and also for habitats that include mudflats, spartina swards, estuaries and salt meadows. Potential pathways for impact include noise and activity disturbance to bird species, loss and disturbance of habitats for maintenance dredging and expansion activities, deterioration in water / air quality.

Given the nature of activity already at the harbour e and in surrounding land uses, the is also potential for in combination effects with other development opportunities types identified under this Objective. It is noted that following iterative discussions the following has been added to the objective:

(d) The delivery of plans and projects in the Cork Harbour area as a result of this objective shall be subject to quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely

Cork MASP Objective 3: Cork Harbour

significant effects on European sites.

Mitigation: The Cork Harbour objective recognises the need for protection of Cork Harbour SPA in particular. Nonetheless, a MASP Objective should be included that stipulates the need for a coordinated plan for the harbour area e.g. LAP, that can be subject to AA to ensure that cross-cutting plans do not result in cumulative and in-combination impacts.

Cork MASP Objective 4: Cork Metropolitan Area Regional Interactions

In support of the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as the primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region, seek to strengthen inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity (public transport, strategic road network and digital) subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:

(a): Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and the other metropolitan areas of Galway, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, strengthen connectivity to the Atlantic Economic Corridor, to the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle and strengthen connectivity on the TEN-T Corridor.

(b): Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and Key Towns in the Southern Region, especially Key Towns in the South West which include Mallow, Clonakilty, Tralee and Killarney and Dungarvan in the South East.

(c): Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and settlements in a strategic North Cork Agri-Tech Network with Mallow Key Town, in a strategic West Cork Marine Network with Clonakilty Key Town and a central North and West Network connecting the two, initiatives which will be progressed through the County Development Plan process.

(d): Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and the ring towns of Bandon, Fermoy, Macroom, Kinsale and Youghal through the sustainable development of enhanced critical mass to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport and support Kinsale's role as a Principal Tourist Attraction.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There are potential negative changes to key indicators of conservation value of European Sites as a result of this objective as it supports inter-regional linear transport. Potential negative changes include water and air quality, disturbance of key species including Qualifying Species and Species of Conservation Interest for European Sites, reduction of habitat area and potential habitat and species fragmentation resulting from the delivery of inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity initiatives. Also potential for in-combination impacts as a result of enhanced critical mass. It is noted following iterative discussion that reference to "*subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process*" has been included. See also commitments in Objective 1 above.

Mitigation: None

Cork MASP Objective 5: Investment to Deliver Vision

a) It is an objective to seek the identification of investment packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area and seek further investments into the Cork MASP to deliver targets boosting population and jobs and to deliver on the seven Metropolitan Area Goals (see Vol 2, Section A 'Overall MASP Goals').

b) It is an objective to ensure quality infrastructure and quality of place is prioritised as an incentive to attract people to live and work in sustainable settlement patterns in the metropolitan area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

This relates to investment opportunities and quality of place.

Mitigation: None

Cork MASP Objective 6: National Enablers

a) It is an objective to seek sustainable delivery of enablers as identified in the NPF/NDP for the Cork Metropolitan Area and to progress and co-ordination between the principal stakeholders, subject to required feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes. Identification of suitable sites for regeneration and development should be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns.

b) It is an objective to implement innovative and collaborative projects through funding mechanisms such as the Urban Regeneration and Development, Rural Regeneration and Development, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies funds.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site arising from this objective. The Cork city enablers identified in the NPF are adjacent to two specific European sites which include:

- Great Island Channel SAC (001058); and
- Cork harbour SPA (004030).

A number of the enablers relate to development of the docklands and improved transport arrangements in the city particularly Ringaskiddy Port access and upgrades to the Dunkettle Interchange. Development of the docklands area has the potential for negative effects through construction related disturbance, potential for pollution from contaminated docklands, increased visitor pressure from increased populations etc. The proposed transport improvements are likely to result in additional emission to air during the construction phase and operation of upgraded road. Any such project will require appropriate assessment and/ or development of project-specific mitigation given the proximity to and connectivity with estuarine European Sites.

Mitigation: None

Cork MASP Objective 7: Integrated Land-use and Transport Planning

Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:

(a) It is an objective to prepare a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

(b) Seek investment and delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure as identified through a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy.

(c): The Core Strategies of City and County Development Plans in the Cork Metropolitan Area shall allocate the distribution of future population and employment growth with the integration of land use and transportation planning principles, public transport nodal points and targets identified through the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, which will be subject to the relevant environmental requirements including SEA and AA as appropriate.

(d): Achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led:

- Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre, Docklands and city suburban areas.
- Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Light Rail Corridor
- Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Suburban Rail Corridor
- Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along BusConnects corridors.

(e): Seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

Potential negative changes in key indicators of conservation value including water and air quality; potential disturbance to key species; potential

Cork MASP Objective 7: Integrated Land-use and Transport Planning

Sustainable Transport Infrastructure	reduction of habitat area; and potential habitat or species fragmentation. However the operation and greater utilisation of sustainable transport infrastructure, rail infrastructure and the consolidation of growth and expansion along light rail corridors could contribute to improvements in air quality to the receiving environment and by extension European Sites within the MASP ZoI. The objective clearly states support is subject to <i>the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes</i> .
<p>Rail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Light Rail Corridor ▪ Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Suburban Rail Corridor. 	
Seek investment and delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure as identified through a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy.	Potential positive impacts to European Sites within the MASP ZoI as a result of the operation of sustainable transport infrastructures. The objective clearly states support is subject to <i>the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes</i> .
Seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points.	
<p>Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. Reference has been made in the objective to the fact that support is subject to <i>the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes</i>.</p> <p>Chapter 6, RPO 156 confirms that Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.</p>	

Cork MASP Objective 8: Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcome required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <p>(a) The SRA will seek investment in the sustainable development and implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy and transport initiatives that improve connectivity between the metropolitan area, wider Cork context and wider region. The strategy shall be subject to SEA/AA and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>(b) The SRA will seek the Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans to identify the public transport corridors and station nodal points on those corridors in Cork Metropolitan Area arising from the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these public transport nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following principles are supported by the SRA for investment and sustainable delivery in the Cork Metropolitan Area such to feasibility, planning and environmental processes where applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East-West Light Rail Public Transport Corridor: A strategic east-west public transport corridor from Mahon to Ballincollig via the City Centre, serving CIT, CUH, UCC, Kent Station, Docklands, Mahon Point. The corridor requires development consolidation along it at appropriate nodal points for a high capacity service. • Rail Network: Strategic public transport services along the existing rail lines. Strategic priorities will include enhance the commuter rail service with additional stations and fleet, improve inter-city journey times and electrification of fleet. On the suburban rail network, the following key components are proposed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - P&R and new station at Blarney/Stone View - New station to serve Monard SDZ - New station to regenerate and intensify Blackpool/Kilbarry - Kent Station as a key interchange node between city centre walking/cycling, LRT and bus network.

Cork MASP Objective 8: Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

- New station Tivoli Docks
- P&R and new station at Dunkettle.
- To Cobh, improved signal operations and new station at Ballynoe interchanging with bus services.
- To Midleton, new station Carrigtwohill West, dual track and new station at Water Rock.
- Secure the long term strategic aim of reopening the rail route linking Cork and Midleton to Youghal while also allowing for the development of a greenway from Midleton to Youghal and still allow for future rail use if feasible at a later stage.
 - Core Bus Network: A comprehensive network of high frequency bus services providing radial services to other corridors and orbital services across the network. Delivery of Cork BusConnects network, Core Radial Bus Network, Orbital Bus Network, Cross City Network, Supporting Radial Bus Services, Bus Priority, Regional Bus Networks and Metropolitan Town Bus Services are all key components.
 - Movement Strategy: Delivery of the Cork City Centre Movement Strategy 2018-2024
 - Walking: Make Cork the most walkable city in Ireland, implement and further develop upon the Cork City Walking Strategy 2013-2018 and strengthen the role of walking through improved walking network, district and neighbourhood walking networks, city and town centre accessibility.
 - Cycling: Implement and further develop upon the Cork Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Plan 2017, improve and develop primary, secondary, greenway and feeder cycle networks and support cycling through infrastructures including cycle lanes, cycle parking, cycle hire schemes (Cork City Cycle Hire Scheme) and facilities in places of work.
 - Public Transport Integration: provision for interchange opportunities together with information provision and revised fare structures;
 - Road Network Improvements: Improvements to the road network to support the sustainable growth of the metropolitan area, while also providing appropriate strategic provision for the movement of goods. Investment in the road network supports sustainable travel modes (walking, cycling, bus networks), supports strategic inter urban and inter regional freight traffic, especially between ports and airports. Improvements discourage secondary local trip and urban expansion based on road corridors. Strategic road corridors identified by separate objective.
 - Other Strategic Road Priorities will include implementation of City Centre Movement Strategy, Cork Docklands and Tivoli Docks bridge (South Docks Eastern Gateway Bridge, Mill Road) and road infrastructure (South Docks and North Docks Roads, Tivoli Access).
 - Management of freight around metropolitan Cork, enabled through Port of Cork relocation to Ringaskiddy, construction, logistics and delivery centres.
 - Supporting Measures: Further measures to support the delivery of the Strategy, including parking management, Park and Ride, demand management, mobility management, behavioural change programmes, etc.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy	The objective states this shall be subject to SEA/AA and environmental assessment processes.
Sustainable Transport Infrastructure	Potential negative changes in key indicators of conservation value including water and air quality; potential disturbance to key species; potential reduction of habitat area; and potential habitat or species fragmentation. Potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of consolidated developments along transport corridors defined in this Transport Strategy.
Rail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Light Rail Corridor 	However the operation and greater utilisation of sustainable transport infrastructure, rail infrastructure and the consolidation of growth and

Cork MASP Objective 8: Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Suburban Rail Corridor. 	expansion along light rail corridors could contribute to improvements in air quality to the receiving environment and by extension European Sites within the MASP Zol. The objective clearly states support is subject to <i>the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</i>
Road Network Improvements and Other Strategic Road Priorities	See Impact assessment under Cork MASP Objective 9: Strategic Road Network Improvements.
Seek investment and delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure as identified through a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy.	Potential positive impacts to European Sites within the MASP Zol as a result of the operation of sustainable transport infrastructures. The objective clearly states support is subject to <i>the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</i>
Seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points.	
<p>It is noted that Chapter 6, RPO 156 confirms that Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA.</p> <p>RPO 157-161 also include protection policies in relation to development of road infrastructure in the region which will be applicable at the MASP level also.</p> <p>Further protection objectives for proposed Strategic Road Network Improvements are presented in Cork MASP Objective 9.</p> <p>Objectives supporting rail (RPO 162) and bus developments (RPO 163) also include protection objectives for bus and rail development.</p>	
Mitigation: None	

Cork MASP Objective 9: Strategic Road Network Improvements
<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes</p> <p>The SRA will seek investment in the implementation and sustainable development of strategic road network improvements for the Cork Metropolitan Area and its improved connectivity to the wider region. This will include the delivery of the following subject to feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of current Government programmed and proposed national road network improvement schemes relating to the Cork Metropolitan Area and associated inter-urban connecting roads • Advancing orbital traffic management solutions, through the implementation of appropriate demand management measures, on the N40 and provision of alternative local roads, as deemed necessary. Specific measures should not be introduced in isolation, but only after due consideration of the impacts on access and movement across the city and suburbs, and progressed in parallel with the introduction of the necessary appropriate alternatives to service affected traffic movements. • Enhanced regional connectivity through improved average journey times by road to Limerick and Waterford via proposed M20 Limerick to Cork and the targeted enhancement of the N25 between Cork and Waterford • Improved connectivity Cork City to Cork Airport • Dunkettle Interchange • Cork Northern Ring Road connecting the N22 to the M8 (identified in the NDP as a complementary scheme to the M20). • Cork Northern Distributor Road • Access for Monard SDZ (a key enabler for Cork under the NPF) • Cork City Docks and Tivoli Bridge and Street Infrastructure (including Eastern Gateway Bridge) Cork

Cork MASP Objective 9: Strategic Road Network Improvements

Docklands infrastructure is a key enabler for Cork under the NPF

- Improved connectivity Cork City to Cork Airport including N27 (dedicated public transport corridor).
- N27 Cork-Cork Airport (dedicated public transport corridor).
- Improved N22, N25, N27, N71 Inter Regional and Intra Regional corridors.
- Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road Linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh
- Upgrade of the R630 Regional Road linking Middleton to Whitegate Road (Energy Hub).
- Cork Science and Innovation Park Access (a key enabler for Cork under the NPF)
- Transport packages including road upgrades, relief roads, enhanced public realm, walking and cycling infrastructure for metropolitan towns and urban expansion areas.
- North East Orbital Road (access for residential lands and public transport infrastructure Ballyvolane).
- Advancing transport study measures for Little Island.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Potential negative changes in key indicators of conservation value including air and water quality; potential disturbance to key species; potential reduction of habitat area; and potential habitat or species fragmentation as a result of routing. Continued promotion of car based modes of transport will also negatively influence climate change with potential indirect effects for European sites at a national and regional scale.

Chapter 6 of the RSES provides the following protection objectives for road projects within the SR: *RPO 156 states that the provision of National Road Projects to be delivered during the period up to 2027 to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility are subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. Similar commitment is given for National Road Projects at pre-appraisal stages.*

Mitigation: None

Cork MASP Objective 10: Education and Access to Talent

(a): Seek investment into infrastructure and facilities that sustainably drives the role of Higher Education Institutes (such as UCC, CIT transitioning to the Munster Technological University with IT Tralee), other institutions, research and innovation centres and enterprise agency research and incubator facilities as catalysts for economic growth in the Cork Metropolitan Area and wider region.

(b): Seek investment in the sustainable development of initiatives of IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, the Local Enterprise Offices, South West Regional Skills Forums and the South West Regional Action Plan for Jobs in strengthening enterprise assets fostering competitive locations and conditions for enterprise growth in the Cork Metropolitan Area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the regeneration, expansion or development projects arising from this objective are located within the Zol of a European Site. Chapter 7 of the RSES provides protection objectives in relation to the development of educational and training infrastructure and facilities as follows:

RPO 177: Planned approach to location of our education provision of new school facilities within reasonable access of public transport and active travel modes. Local Authorities should ensure that a robust site selection process is followed in the selection of new school locations and that decision making is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment. New development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.

RPO 179: It is an objective to promote co-ordinated infrastructure comprised of regional education and training providers, local government agencies and industry to facilitate a collaborative approach to regional skills development aligned to the needs and opportunities of regional economies and to promoting lifelong learning to all citizens of the region. Local Authorities should ensure that the development of education and training facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.

Mitigation: Include Cross reference to RPS 179 under this objective or include the following text: 'Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects

Cork MASP Objective 10: Education and Access to Talent

on associated European sites including SPA and SAC’.

Cork MASP Objective 11: Transition to Digital Future

The SRA will seek investment in the delivery of accessible and improved high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure in the Cork Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process including:

- Support and seek investment in the actions of Local Authority Digital Strategies.
- Support Cork City Councils participation in the European Commission’s Digital Cities Challenge programme to develop a digital transformation vision and action plan for Cork to enable a better quality of life in a greener, more innovative and smarter city.
- Support the initiatives of the Cork Smart Gateway to enable a better quality of life, greener and more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area.
- Support Cork County Council’s Digital Strategy for the County, harnessing the roll out and delivery of high capacity ICT infrastructure and high speed broadband to improve “relational proximity”, where peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area.
- Support and seek investment in initiatives enhancing digital infrastructure access in our public buildings and spaces, such as Cork’s participation in the WiFi4EU Initiative.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There are potential impacts associated with the construction and retrofitting of high speed broadband infrastructure and other strategic digital infrastructure where this infrastructure adjoins, intersects or is located within proximity to European Sites or crosses sites, especially estuaries. See section 7.7.1. It is noted that the objective references investment and delivery is subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. This has been addressed in the objective through reference to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Cork MASP Objective 12: Infrastructure for Strategic Employment Locations

(a) It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

(b) Seek investment and inter agency co-ordination to the delivery of infrastructure packages to assist the sustainable growth, regeneration and integration of employment land use and sustainable transport planning for existing and future identified locations in the Cork Metropolitan Area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of infrastructure projects arising from this objective are located within the ZoI of a European Site.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the avoidance of adverse effects on any European sites. This has been addressed in the objective through reference to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Cork MASP Objective 13: Port of Cork

Cork MASP Objective 13: Port of Cork

- (a) Support sustainable development and investment in the Port of Cork balanced with the protection of the natural environment and Cork Harbour SPA, and promote its role as a Tier 1 International Port and driver for the metropolitan, regional and State economy. To support this role, the Cork MASP seeks the following subject to required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:
- -The sustainable development of port infrastructure and facilities under the port's strategic development plans balanced with the protection of Cork Harbour's natural environment.
 - -Improved quality of inter-regional transport connectivity and networks improving access to the Port of Cork particularly for freight movement and the quality of the TEN-T Corridor.
 - -Investment in strategic transport corridors as referenced in CMATS and Cork MASP Table X.
 - -The relocation of existing port activities from Cork City and investment in infrastructure to remediate sites and enable regeneration of the Cork City Docks and Tivoli.
 - -The appropriate location of SEVESO activities and relocation of these activities from the city docklands subject to required planning and environmental law processes.
 - -The sustainable development and strengthening of cruise tourism.
 - -Support the feasibility, in co-ordination with relevant stakeholders, to create a more integrated and streamlined approach between planning, environmental and foreshore consenting.
 - -Co-ordinate with the relevant Government departments and stakeholders to align the RSES and MASP with opportunities for the region under Marine Spatial Planning.
 - -Support investment in the sustainable renewal, development and key interventions that will drive forward the potential of key assets in the Cork Harbour area balanced with protection of the nature conservation values of Cork Harbour, including City Quays and Tivoli renewal, Marino Point, Cork Dockyard, Cobh, Ringaskiddy, Whitegate and Bantry.
- (b) Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Ongoing investment and development of the Port of Cork could result in significant negative effects on Cork Harbour SPA, either individually or cumulatively with existing and proposed at the Port of Cork facility if unmitigated. See section 7.7.3 also. IT is noted that following iterative discussion, the following text has been included in this MASP objective:

Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC.

This mirrors Objective RPO 142 of RSES Chapter 6 which additionally requires that *Port development in the REGION must adhere to the European Commission guidelines on the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones in order to protect the European Sites around them.*

Mitigation: None

Cork MASP Objective 14: Cork Airport

Support the sustainable development of the airport and seek investment in infrastructure and facilities that promote the role of Cork Airport as an international gateway, employment location and economic driver for the region including the following subject to required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:

- -Support the sustainable development and investment in infrastructure and facilities under the Cork Airport Masterplan.
- -Support the sustainable development of enhanced public transport connectivity to the airport including the provision of bus priority lanes on the N27 and an improvement in the alignment of the R600 south of the Airport.

Safeguard Public Safety Zones by way of land use planning under the relevant County Development Plan and Local Area Plans. Airport safeguarding priorities required include:

- Airport Noise Zones (Inner and Outer Zones).

Cork MASP Objective 14: Cork Airport

- Airport Public Safety Zones
- General Airport Safeguarding

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

The expansion and further development of Cork Airport could result in significant negative effects to European Sites within the airport's ZoI, due to increased utilisation of flight paths over and within the Zone of Influence of European Sites such as Cork Harbour SPA if unmitigated. See section 7.7.8 for further details.

However, the Chapter 6 of the RSES provides protection objective RPO 145 which states the following:

To achieve NSO: High Quality International Connectivity, the following airport development actions for the REGION are identified subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. The NSO are also linked to NPO 75 which requires SEA, AA, EIA and EclA of plans and programmes arising from the NPF. This requirement has been transferred to the RSES at RPO 1.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 145 as part of Cork MASP Objective 14: Cork Airport.

Cork MASP Objective 15: Cork Tourism

(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 seek 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.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of tourism infrastructure services and projects arising from this objective if they are located within the ZoI of a European Site. Chapter 4 provides the following tourism related protection objective for tourism infrastructure:

RPO 51 Tourism: (g): Support the relevant authorities in the development of specific monitoring protocols for visitor pressure to ensure that tourism activities are maintained within sustainable limits for the European sites in the region; and

RPO 52: Development of new or enhanced tourism infrastructure and facilities should include an assessment of the environmental sensitivities of the area and Natura Impact Assessment (NIS) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment if required in order to avoid adverse impacts on the receiving environment. Where such tourism infrastructure or facilities are developed, the managing authority/agency should ensure that effective monitoring protocols are put in place to monitor and assess the ongoing effect of tourism on sensitive features with particular focus on natural, archaeological and built heritage assets.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 51 and RPO 52 as part of Cork MASP Objective 15: Cork Tourism.

Cork MASP Objective 16: Retail

(a) Support the role of Metropolitan Cork as a Level 1 location for retail provision and the retail hierarchy for as identified in the Metropolitan Cork Joint Retail Strategy 2013 which identifies:

- Level 1: Metropolitan Cork: Cork City Centre
- Level 2: Large Metropolitan Towns: Ballincollig, Carrigaline, Cobh and Midleton.
- Level 2: District Centres: Blackpool, Douglas, Wilton, Mahon Point, Ballyvolane, Cork Docklands, Hollyhill.
- Level 3: Smaller Metropolitan Towns: Carrigtwohill. Glanmire, Passage West, Blarney, Monard.
- Level 4: Neighbourhood Centres and Large Village Centres.
- Level 5: Local centres, corner shops and smaller villages.

(b) Support the role of the Metropolitan Cork Joint Retail Strategy and seek further preparation of joint retail

Cork MASP Objective 16: Retail

strategies for Metropolitan Cork between Cork City Council and Cork County Council.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant adverse effects associated with the further development or expansion of retail developments within Metropolitan Cork where these developments support connectivity with European Sites. Chapter 4 provides the following retail related protection objectives:

RPO 53. (c) *It is an objective to prepare Retail Strategies in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines including Joint Retail Strategies where applicable. Proposed public realm or urban regeneration projects should be assessed for potential impacts on the receiving environment including capacity of existing services at project level. Where public realm or urban regeneration projects would significantly increase shopper/visitor numbers, planning authorities should ensure that projects include sustainable management of increased demand for access to city/town centre locations.*

Mitigation: Include cross reference to **RPO 53** as part of Cork MASP Objective 16: Retail.

Cork MASP Objective 17: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy

It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of parks, recreation and high quality public open space in the Cork Metropolitan Area. This Strategy may include, inter alia:

- (a) An enhanced network of regional scaled parks in Metropolitan Cork and invest in upgraded facilities including Tramore Valley Park, Marina Park, Bishop Lucey Park Redevelopment, Northwest Regional Park, Riverside Public Walk (Lee Field to the Marina). Lee Fields Walk/Cycle extension to Ballincollig, Lough Redevelopment, Tivoli Docks Park, neighbourhood parks and public parks in the Metropolitan Towns.
- (b) The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including parks, natural green spaces and ecosystems, greenways and blueways.
- (c) 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
- (d) Protect and proactively manage and integrate natural spaces.
- (e) The sustainable development of key recreation, sports and community facilities across Metropolitan Cork.
- (f) The development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Cork City Council and Cork County Council.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of plans and projects arising from this objective are located within the ZoI of a European Site.

Chapter 5 of the RSES provides a protection objective for Green Infrastructure with particular reference to RPO 118, Green Infrastructure.

Mitigation: *Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Cork MASP Objective 17: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy.*

Cork MASP Objective 18: Transformational Areas and Public Realm

Subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:

- a) Seek investment in transformational area projects and public realm enhancements in metropolitan urban areas with a focus on city centre regeneration through such initiatives as the Cork City Centre Strategy 2014 and Grand Parade/South Main Street Transformational Area.
- b) Support and seek investment in the sustainable remediation of Haulbowline Island and its transformation

Cork MASP Objective 18: Transformational Areas and Public Realm

into a public recreational amenity.

- c) Support the acquisition and development of the City Quays in Cork for a high-quality water front public realm for public use.
- d) Seek investment in the sustainable development of the Cork Events Centre.
- e) Seek investment in the strategy and investment programme of the Crawford Art Gallery.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for enhancement and development projects arising from this objective, particularly where these are located within the Zol of a European Site. This would be the case for Haulbowlin Island for example. Public realm improvements do offer opportunity for biodiversity enhancement which can be of significant benefit to network integrity if suitable however this must be balanced with impacts from visitor pressure and associated infrastructure. Impacts can include habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air/ water quality, increased emissions etc. Feasibility studies which address the potential for adverse effects on site integrity as a result of visitor pressure are required for such initiatives. The objective notes support is subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

Cork MASP Objective 19: Flood Risk Management

Seek investment in the sustainable development of the Lower Lee Flood Relief Scheme to enhance climate change resilience and flood risk management in the metropolitan area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Impact pathways include habitat loss and disturbance, deterioration in water quality, alteration of hydrological regimes, Documentation for the Lower Lee Scheme indicates that AA screening was carried out and concluded that impacts on the relevant European Sites could be precluded on the basis of their distance from the proposed Lower Lee (Cork City) Drainage Scheme and the nature and scale of the proposed works. It is noted that legal challenged followed. The sustainable development of the scheme will be subject to the outcome of the environmental and planning processes currently ongoing.

Mitigation: Development of this scheme will be subject to the outcome of the environmental and planning processes currently ongoing.

Cork MASP Objective 20: Lifelong Learning and Skills

Support Cork as a Learning City and seek investment in initiatives which supports the Cork Learning City initiative, support Cork's role in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities and support the spread of such initiatives throughout the metropolitan area and wider region.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

These are no potential for significant adverse effects to European Sites as a result of this Objective.

Mitigation: None

Cork MASP Objective 21: Healthy Cities and Health Infrastructure

(a): Support the role of Cork as a WHO Healthy City and seek investment in the delivery of recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health services infrastructure that retains and improves on this status, in support of a "healthy heart" to the Cork Metropolitan Area.

(b): Seek investment in health service infrastructure within the Cork MASP to meet existing and future regional population growth including facilities for Cork University Hospital, the Southern Region's tertiary referral

Cork MASP Objective 21: Healthy Cities and Health Infrastructure

centre and other existing hospitals, the sustainable development of a new acute hospital and new elective hospital to service the increasing population of the metropolitan area and wider Southern Region

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Expansion and development of health service infrastructure could result in significant negative effects to European Sites as a result of siting and construction should these initiatives and developments support connectivity with European Sites. Impacts include visitor pressure, noise disturbance, habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air quality from increased traffic, emissions to water.

Mitigation: The RPO should stipulate that the delivery of health service infrastructure within the Cork MASP area shall be subject to a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

Cork MASP Objective 22: Social Inclusion

a) Seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Cork City Council and Cork County Council to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion for all citizens across all our communities

b) Seek continued investment in initiatives that achieve the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas in the City and Metropolitan Area, in particular supporting the ongoing regeneration of the Cork City RAPID areas of Fairhill/Gurranebraher/Farranree, Knocknaheeny/Churchfield, Mayfield/Blackpool/The Glen and Togher/Mahon.

c) Support the development of an Inter-agency Social Enterprise Strategy to support the retention and expansion of existing social enterprises and the development of new social enterprises

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant negative effects should aspects of this objective, such as the development of regeneration projects and infrastructure be located within the ZOI of a European Site.

Chapter 7 of the RSES provides protection objective RPO 173 which states the following:

Improve equal access for abled and disabled people and universal design for public transport access, housing, social, cultural and recreational facilities and the public realm to improve quality of life equally for abled and disabled citizens in our region. Local Authorities should ensure that decision making in relation to investment in infrastructure and facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment

Mitigation: Include cross reference to **RPO 173** as part of Cork MASP Objective 22: Social Inclusion.

7.11.1 Overarching MASP Objectives provided in Chapter 3 of the RSES**RPO5 National Investment through Project Ireland 2040****National Investment through Project Ireland 2040 - RPO 5**

(a): Support sustainable delivery of Strategic Investment Priorities as identified in the NDP for the Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford Metropolitan Areas and progress co-ordination between the principal stakeholders for delivery to achieve the vision and objectives identified in each MASP.

(b): Promote the sustainable implementation of innovative, collaborative projects through the Urban Regeneration and Development, Rural Regeneration and Development, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies funds within the Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford Metropolitan Areas.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There are potential negative changes to key indicators of conservation value of European Sites as a result of this objective.

The implementation of plans and projects as a result of this Objective may result in direct or indirect impacts as a result of regeneration and development of strategic and localised projects across the MASP area.

RPO5 National Investment through Project Ireland 2040

Mitigation: The RPO should stipulate that the delivery of plans and projects as a result of investment priorities and the redevelopment and regeneration within the Cork MASP area shall be subject to robust feasibility studies and site / route selection to reduce impacts on the environment, in addition to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.

RPO 6 Investment to Deliver on the Vision for Metropolitan Areas

Regional Objective – RPO 6	<p>a) Seek the identification of investment packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford Metropolitan Areas and seek further investments into each MASP to deliver on the seven Metropolitan Area Goals (Volume 2 - Introduction to MASPs and Appendix 3) that and prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF objectives</p> <p>b) Ensure the Sustainable Place Framework is delivered and invested in within each MASP, delivering quality of place attributes as an incentive to attract people to live, work and visit sustainable settlement patterns in the metropolitan area.</p>
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Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

No specific projects noted. See analysis for Strategic Vision in Chapter 2 and Quality of Life attributes and objectives in Chapter 7.

Mitigation: None

RPO7 Holistic Approach to Delivering Infrastructure

Regional Objective - RPO 7	<p>Ensure investment and delivery of comprehensive infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF objectives to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water services, digital, green infrastructure, transport and sustainable travel, community and social, renewable energy, recreation, open space amenity, climate change adaptation, environmental improvement, arts and culture, public realm.
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Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There are potential negative changes to key indicators of conservation value of European Sites as a result of this objective.

There are potential negative changes to water and air quality, disturbance of key species including Qualifying Species and Species of Conservation Interest for European Sites, reduction of habitat area and potential habitat and species fragmentation resulting from the delivery of comprehensive, concurrent and interlinked infrastructure packages within the Cork MASP area.

Mitigation: The RPO should stipulate that the delivery of infrastructure within the Cork MASP area shall be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment in addition to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.

RPO 8 Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas

Regional Objective – RPO 8	<p>(a) The prioritisation of housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.</p> <p>(b) The identification of strategic initiatives in Local Authority Core Strategies for the MASP areas, which will achieve the compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites at a minimum and achieve the growth targets identified in each MASP.</p>
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RPO 8 Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas

Such strategic initiatives shall comply with MASP Goals to evolve innovative approaches for all MASPs. Initiatives may include:

- Support the creation and role of Active Land Management Units with a remit to focus on the Metropolitan Areas and compact growth targets.
- Partnership with the Land Development Agency to progress housing and employment delivery in city and town centres, focusing on co-ordinating and developing large, strategically located publicly owned land banks, reducing vacancy and increasing regeneration of key sites.
- Support the role of the Local Authority as a development agency to kick start regeneration processes.
- Deliver design briefs for strategic sites.
- Seek design competitions for key strategic sites that deliver greater density, mixed uses where appropriate, sustainable design, smart technology, green infrastructure and public gain through good design.
- Active land management within areas designated as site specific regeneration areas under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and other locations in need of renewal, including the use of site briefs and masterplans for a design led approach to renewal.
- The identification of Transformational Areas which combine, on an area wide basis, opportunities for regeneration of private owned underutilised sites, public owned underutilised sites, private and public buildings and upgrade of parks, streetscapes and public realm areas.
- Creation of continually updated data bases identifying brownfield, infill sites, regeneration areas and infrastructure packages to enable progress towards achieving compact growth targets.
- Through active land management initiatives, identify strategic locations for residential growth responding to the growth targets and achievement of compact growth and employment growth.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There are potential negative changes to key indicators of conservation value of European Sites as a result of this objective.

There are potential negative changes to water and air quality, disturbance of key species including Qualifying Species and Species of Conservation Interest for European Sites, reduction of habitat area and potential habitat and species fragmentation resulting from the development and regeneration of sites within the Cork MASP area.

Mitigation: The RPO should stipulate that the identification of suitable growth areas and development sites to support this objective shall be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

7.12 LIMERICK SHANNON MASP

The Limerick Shannon MASP provides a first step in outlining the vision for the Limerick and Shannon Metropolitan Areas.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 1: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area

a) It is an objective to strengthen the role of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region.

b) It is an objective to promote the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan area with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region (ii) compact growth and regeneration of Limerick city centre and suburbs, (iii) compact growth and regeneration of Shannon (iv)

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 1: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area

active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner.

c) It is an objective to seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals).

d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate

e) The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Economic and population growth will need to be facilitated by the expansion and further development of existing services including transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, retail and housing development, regeneration of Limerick city centre and suburbs etc. The development and expansion of these services within the Limerick MASP area could lead to direct and indirect impacts to qualifying habitats and species associated with European Sites within the MASP Zone of Influence if unmitigated however the objective commits to protection measures at d) and e) above.:

Mitigation: None

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 2: Limerick City

The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises that for the Southern Region to prosper and development in a sustainable manner, a strong Limerick City is paramount. It is an objective to support the regeneration and continued investment into Limerick City Centre through initiatives such as Limerick 2030 and Limerick Regeneration and to further enhance Limerick City as key economic driver for the Southern Region.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Economic and population growth will need to be facilitated by the expansion and further development of existing services including transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, retail and housing development, regeneration of city centre etc. The development and expansion of these services within the Limerick Shannon MASP area could lead to direct and indirect impacts to qualifying habitats and species associated with European Sites within the MASP Zone of Influence if unmitigated however Objective 1 of the Limerick MASP commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region..

Mitigation: None

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 3: Shannon

It is an objective to support and promote the strategic role of Shannon as a residential, innovation and employment centre and as an international centre for research and development in areas such as autonomous vehicles which will complement Shannon's role as a world leader in aviation and aerospace.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 3: Shannon***Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?***

Economic and population growth will need to be facilitated by the expansion and further development of existing services including transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, retail and housing development, regeneration of city centre etc. The development and expansion of these services for Shannon could lead to direct and indirect impacts to qualifying habitats and species associated with European Sites within the MASP Zone of Influence if unmitigated however Objective 1 of the Limerick MASP commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

Mitigation: None

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 4: Investment to Deliver Vision

a) It is an objective to seek the identification of investment packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Limerick Shannon MASP and seek further investments into the Limerick Shannon MASP to deliver on the seven Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals').

b) It is an objective to ensure quality infrastructure and quality of place is prioritised as an incentive to attract people to live and work in sustainable settlement patterns in the metropolitan area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

This relates to investment opportunities and quality of place.

Mitigation: None

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 5: National Enablers

a) It is an objective to deliver the investment priorities as identified in the NDP for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and to seek progress and co-ordination between the principal stakeholders for the delivery of the priorities as identified in the NPF. Identification of suitable sites for regeneration and development should be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns.

b) It is an objective to implement innovative and collaborative projects through funding mechanisms such as the Urban Regeneration and Development, Rural Regeneration and Development, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies funds.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the regeneration and development projects arising from this objective are located within the ZoI of a European Site. Limerick straddles both banks of the River Shannon. The lower stretches of this river (including the areas in which Limerick City is located) are designated for conservation purposes by two European Sites in particular, the Lower River Shannon SAC (001265) and the River Shannon and River Fergus SPA (004077). Both designations, overlapping in territory in places, support a considerable number of Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests, including a number of priority habitats and nutrient sensitive species, which have the potential to be negatively impacted upon.

A number of locations and infrastructure are specifically referenced in the key enablers for Limerick including the docks, the port, the technology park, UL and the Shannon Airport. Key considerations include potential for impacts on Barrigone SAC; Curraghchase SAC; Asketon Fen Complex SAC; and Lower River Shannon SAC/ River Shannon and River Fergus SPA by any road infrastructure, particularly along the existing N69 towards the Shannon Foynes Port. Improved access to the Shannon Airport also holds potential for impacts given the

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 5: National Enablers

existing sensitivity related to the River Shannon and River Fergus SPA as a result of enhancement of the *public transport network* is considered limited.

The sensitivity of the receiving environment cannot be understated given the many pressures on the River Shannon. A considerable body of work, including a comprehensive SEA and AA were undertaken to inform the Shannon Integrated Framework Plan and much of the mitigation proposed to these strategic proposals. The proposed developments will be subject to site / route selection in the first instance and later to detailed design and planning wherein consideration of the ecological sensitivities and appropriate assessment, and the likely development of specific mitigation measures to counter the adverse impacts on European Sites and their qualifying features will apply.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

The mitigation measures developed as part of the AA for the SIFP must be implemented to avoid adverse effects on site integrity.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 6: Sustainable Transportation

(a) It is an objective to prepare a Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP and it is an objective to ensure investment and implementation of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy.

(b) It is an objective that Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans will identify the public transport corridors and station nodal points on corridors in Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area arising from the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these station nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.

(c) It is an objective to support the following sustainable transport priorities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process::

- The implementation of an integrated, multi modal public transport network across the Metropolitan Area servicing strategic residential and employment growth locations.
- Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities.
- Development and promotion of existing intercity rail and commuter links from Limerick to Dublin, Cork, Galway, together with Ennis, Nenagh, Thurles and Clonmel.
- Upgrade and enhancement of the rail line between Limerick and Nenagh and onward line to Ballybrophy.
- Upgrade and enhancement of the Western Rail Corridor between Limerick and Ennis and onward line to Athenry.
- Reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line, linking Ireland's deepest port to the national rail network
- The MASP supports the ambition to create a rail link between Limerick City and Shannon Airport and this should be investigated further.
- Investigate the potential for a higher speed rail link between Dublin and Limerick City.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Potential negative changes in key indicators of conservation value including water and air quality; potential disturbance to key species; potential reduction of habitat area; and potential habitat or species fragmentation during the construction and development of these proposals. However the operation and greater utilisation of sustainable transport infrastructure, rail infrastructure and the consolidation of growth and expansion along light rail corridors could contribute to improvements in air quality to the receiving environment and by extension European Sites within the MASP Zol. The objective clearly states support is subject to *the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes*.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 6: Sustainable Transportation

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. It is noted that Chapter 6, RPO 156 confirms that Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 7: Strategic Road Infrastructure

It is an objective to deliver the sustainable development of strategic road infrastructure for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and improve transport connectivity to the wider region. This will include the delivery of the following subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:

- Improved inter regional connectivity to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area including M20 Limerick to Cork and the upgrading of the N24 to Waterford.
- Limerick Northern Distributer Route (LNDR)
- N69 Foynes to Limerick road upgrade
- Improved accessibility to Limerick Southside including the possible provision of a motorway interchange connection from the M20/M7 to Limerick Southside
- Upgrade of the N19 road access to Shannon International Airport.
- Upgrade of arterial roads from the motorway network to increase capacity including the provision of public transport infrastructure and Park and Ride, including, for example, R527 Dock Road, R445 Dublin Road, including Junction 28 and R527 Tipperary Road.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Potential negative changes in key indicators of conservation value including air and water quality; potential disturbance to key species; potential reduction of habitat area; and potential habitat or species fragmentation as a result of the upgrade and development of the strategic road infrastructure for the Limerick Shannon MASP area. Continued promotion of car based modes of transport will also negatively influence climate change with potential indirect effects for European sites at a national and regional scale.

Mitigation: Chapter 6 of the RSES provides the following protection objectives for road projects within the SRA. *RPO 156 states that the provision of National Road Projects to be delivered during the period up to 2027 to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility are subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. Similar commitment is given for National Road Projects at pre-appraisal stages.*

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 8: Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) Economic Network

- a) It is an objective to deliver the effective planning and development of the Metropolitan Areas and Key Towns along the Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) Economic Network.
- b) It is an objective to deliver excellent public transportation connections in the GESL Economic Network.
- c) It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process to deliver excellent inter-regional transport connections between the GESL, North Kerry/West Limerick/Shannon Estuary Network and the Kerry Knowledge Triangle along the AEC.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There are potential negative changes to key indicators of conservation value of European Sites as a result of this objective. There are potential negative changes to water and air quality, disturbance of key species including Qualifying Species and Species of Conservation Interest for European Sites, reduction of habitat area and potential habitat and species fragmentation resulting from the planning and development of GESL Economic Network in addition to the delivery of inter-regional transport connectivity initiatives within the Limerick Shannon MASP area. However, consolidated developments along preferential economic corridors and improvements to transport connections across the region could result in positive effects to European Sites with the MASP area Zol.

It is noted c) above clearly states support is subject to *the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and*

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 8: Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) Economic Network

environmental assessment processes.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 9: Strategic Employment Locations

It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of infrastructure projects arising from this objective if they are located within the ZoI of a European Site. As such robust feasibility and site selection will be required to support decision making. RPO 1 commits to this approach.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. This has now been added following iterative discussion.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 10: South Clare Economic / University of Limerick proposed Strategic Development Zone (SDZ)

It is an objective of the RSES to support the designation and subsequent development of the lands zoned as University in the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 as an Economic Strategic Development Zone (SDZ), subject to the provisions of the Planning Act and all environmental considerations.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

The objective supports that the lands zoned as 'University' as a proposed Economic Strategic Development Zone but recognises that the SDZ is subject to the provisions of the Planning Act and all environmental considerations. It is further noted that the lands in question were already subject to SEA and AA as part of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023. This noted that proposed developments will all be obliged to be screened for AA. The provision of a 30m buffer from the edge of the river will increase the likelihood that adverse impacts on the European site can be avoided. The

Mitigation: None

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 11: Shannon International Airport

a) The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises Shannon International Airport as a national and infrastructural driver of economic, social and tourism growth. It is an objective to develop and enhance the strategic role of Shannon International Airport and to advocate for a policy environment that supports a regional distribution of air traffic and for a greater regional focus by national agencies.

b) It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, to supports the utilisation of the existing investment in Shannon International Airport and its surrounding land bank to act as a catalyst for economic growth in the region.

c) The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises and supports the role of IASC as a significant opportunity for the Mid-West Region to become a global player in the aerospace industry. It is an objective to develop the IASC cluster at Shannon as recognised in National Aviation Policy and to work to ensure that cross-agency cooperation will continue to develop the IASC to meet industry demand.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

The expansion and further development of Shannon Airport could result in significant negative effects to European Sites as a result of air, noise and water related emissions to the Zone of Influence of European Sites

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 11: Shannon International Airport

such as Lower River Shannon SAC and River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA if unmitigated. See section 7.7.8 for details on airport related impacts.

Increased noise disturbance from air traffic movements over and within the Airport operations may lead to disturbance of special conservation interest birds in the SPA. Drainage related emissions and expansion of facilities may also lead to polluted water and suspended solids and direct habitat loss of the Shannon Airport Coastal Lagoon, a qualifying interest feature [1150] of the Lower Shannon SAC.

Chapter 6 of the RSES provides protection in the form of objective RPO 145 which states that airport development in the region *are identified subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes*. The NSO is also linked to NPO 75 which requires SEA, AA, EIA and EclA of plans and programmes arising from the NPF. This requirement has been transferred to the RSES at RPO 1.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 145 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 13: Shannon International Airport.

Ensure the protection of the structure and function of the Shannon Airport Lagoon.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 12: Shannon Foynes Port Company

a) It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, to support the continued expansion of Shannon Foynes Port and to recognise the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland by virtue of its deep waters.

b) It is an objective to support and promote the inclusion of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it would bring significant investment opportunities to the region in the form of FDI potential and as well as supporting enhanced external connectivity with Ireland's European partners.

c) It is an objective support the reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line and the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Ongoing investment and development of the Shannon / Foynes Port and associated infrastructural services could result in significant negative effects (individually or cumulatively) on Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA and other European Sites within the project Zol.

Objective RPO 142 of RSES Chapter 6 provides the following protective measures for all port developments in the southern region.

For all ports in the Southern Region, seek to:

- *Protect the marine related functions of ports in the region to ensure the future role of ports as strategic marine related assets is protected from inappropriate uses;*
- *Harness economic opportunities from the ocean economy and the role of Ports in the region in realising the full potential of the ocean economy. Particular regard should be had to the Government's integrated plan for the marine industry – Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (2012), the National Marine Research and Innovation Strategy 2017-2021 (Marine Institute Ireland, 2017), and Ireland's Ocean Economy (NUIG, 2017), as well as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Ireland's Programme of Measures; and Ireland's forthcoming Maritime Spatial Plan (due 2021);*
- *Support the role of ports, where appropriate, in facilitating the sustainable development and operation of off-shore renewable energy development; and*
- *Support appropriate enabling infrastructure development to harness our ocean wealth at regional and local levels including grid, pier and port facilities to support renewable energy and export potential.*
- *Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC*

Port development in the REGION must adhere to the European Commission guidelines on the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones in order to protect the European Sites around them.

Mitigation: Include Cross reference to **RPS 142** under this objective or include the following text: 'Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC'.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 13: Retail

- a) A Joint Retail Strategy shall be prepared in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines.
- b) It is an objective to support Limerick City Centre in maintaining its dominant retail function in the Mid-West hierarchy. The RSES supports and promotes the continued expansion and enhancement of retail development within the City Centre
- c) It is an objective to investigate the potential to develop a distinct shopping character to increase Shannon's attraction and to complement the retail function of Limerick city centre.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant adverse effects associated with the further development or expansion of retail developments within the Limerick and Shannon MASP areas where these developments support connectivity with European Sites. following retail related protection objective:

- RPO 53. (c) *It is an objective to prepare Retail Strategies in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines including Joint Retail Strategies where applicable. Proposed public realm or urban regeneration projects should be assessed for potential impacts on the receiving environment including capacity of existing services at project level. Where public realm or urban regeneration projects would significantly increase shopper/visitor numbers, planning authorities should ensure that projects include sustainable management of increased demand for access to city/town centre locations.*

Mitigation: Include cross reference to **RPO 53** as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 10: Retail.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 14: Education and Access to Talent

- a) It is an objective to support the existing educational facilities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area which includes University of Limerick/ Mary Immaculate/ Limerick Institute of Technology and the Shannon College of Hotel Management as critical drivers of economic development and the fostering of an innovative, knowledge-based economy for the Metropolitan Area.
- b) The MASP recognises that the Mid-West Action Plan for Jobs (APJ) and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum works collaboratively with all the agencies focusing on key actions and opportunities that the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area can offer in terms of employment generation and the fostering of the knowledge based economy, in particular relating to clustering of expertise e.g. aviation, med-tech, agri-food etc. It is an objective that the Mid-West APJ and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum continue their work to deliver significant benefits to the Metropolitan Area and Mid-West.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the regeneration, expansion or development projects arising from this objective are located within the ZoI of a European Site. Chapter 7 of the RSES provides protection objectives in relation to the development of educational and training infrastructure and facilities as follows:

RPO 177: *Planned approach to location of our education provision of new school facilities within reasonable access of public transport and active travel modes. Local Authorities should ensure that a robust site selection process is followed in the selection of new school locations and that decision making is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment. New development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.*

RPO 179: *It is an objective to promote co-ordinated infrastructure comprised of regional education and training providers, local government agencies and industry to facilitate a collaborative approach to regional skills development aligned to the needs and opportunities of regional economies and to promoting lifelong learning to all citizens of the region. Local Authorities should ensure that the development of education and training facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.*

Mitigation: Include cross reference to **RPO 177** and **RPO 179** as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 11: Education and Access to Talent.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 15: Tourism

- a) It is an objective to support investment in infrastructure, increased capacity of Shannon International Airport, road and rail accessibility, to maximise the potential of tourism, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.
- b) It is an objective to support the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a tourism destination. This will require the promotion of the tourism assets of the Mid-West SPA which include, inter alia, Ireland's Lakelands, the Shannon Estuary and its islands, greenways, blueways, Munster Vales the Burren, Cliffs of Moher, West Clare NST tourism route, Loop Head, Bunratty, Holy Island, Lough Derg, St. Johns Castle.
- c) It is an objective to ensure collaboration between Local Authorities and tourism agencies to develop attractions such as the Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartland's.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of tourism infrastructure services and projects arising from this objective are located within the Zol of a European Site.

Chapter 4 provides the following protection objective for tourism infrastructure:

RPO 51 Tourism

- g): Support the relevant authorities in the development of specific monitoring protocols for visitor pressure to ensure that tourism activities are maintained within sustainable limits for the European sites in the region

RPO 52 Tourism and Environment

Development of new or enhanced tourism infrastructure and facilities should include an assessment of the environmental sensitivities of the area including an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) if required in order to avoid adverse impacts on the receiving environment. Where such tourism infrastructure or facilities are developed, the managing authority/agency should ensure that effective monitoring protocols are put in place to monitor and assess the ongoing effect of tourism on sensitive features with particular focus on natural, archaeological and built heritage assets.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 51 and 52 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 12: Tourism.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 16: Digital Connectivity and Innovation

- a) It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and access for all to digital infrastructure in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.
- b) It is an objective to seek investment in the initiatives of Local Authority Digital Strategies and investment in initiatives to deliver a greener, more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area.
- c) It is an objective to deliver high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband so peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There are potential impacts associated with the construction and upgrade of high speed broadband infrastructure and other strategic digital infrastructure where this infrastructure adjoins, intersects or is located within proximity to European Sites. This includes habitat loss and/ or disturbance, collision with masts and wires leading to injury or mortality of avian species, deterioration of water quality from loss of suspended solids and polluting substances. See section 7.7.1.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. This has been included in the RSES at RPO 1.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 17: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 17: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy

a) It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of parks, recreation and high quality public open space in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. This Strategy may include, inter alia:

- The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including (inter alia) Parks, Greenway, Blueways, natural green spaces and ecosystems.
- The identification of key requirements for recreation, sports and community facilities.
- Identification of a location for Regional Scale Park within the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as well as the development of neighbourhood parks and open spaces.
- Identification of measures which improve and strengthen the metropolitan area's natural environment and habitats for flora and fauna.
- The development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council and relevant stakeholders.

b) It is an objective to support and encourage sustainable recreation and tourism opportunities represented by the Shannon Estuary, the potential to create new walkways by linking existing areas of open space and woodland and the opportunity to develop Greenways for cycling and walking, subject to the protection of Natural Heritage Areas and Natura 2000 sites. 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 subject to the protection of Natural Heritage Areas and Natura 2000 sites.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of plans and projects arising from this objective are located within the ZoI of a European Site in the absence of mitigation. However, it is noted that Chapter 5 of the RSES provides a protection objective for Green Infrastructure with particular reference to RPO 118, Green Infrastructure. Furthermore the need to consider the sensitivities of European sites as a result of increased recreation and tourism, additional wording has been included at b) above to address data / knowledge gaps prior to decision making.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 16: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 18: Public Realm and Placemaking

It is an objective to deliver improvements in the public realm in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area to create more active and vibrant urban centres which are attractive as locations of choice to live, work and visit. Examples of projects which can strengthen placemaking and public realm in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area include but are not confined to:

- A 'World Class' Waterfront – a renaissance of Limerick's entire Waterfront;
- The 'Limerick Cultural Centre' – an iconic destination building on the Waterfront;
- 'Great streets' – a transformation of the City's three main streets – O'Connell Street, Catherine Street and Henry Street;
- A new City Square/Plaza – to define the focal point or 'heart' of the City Centre;
- Colbert Station renewal – a new public transport interchange and enhanced station environment;
- Renewal of the Georgian Quarter – a concentrated programme to restore the Georgian part of the City to its former glory; and
- Improvements and enhancement to Shannon Town Centre to create a sense of place, to upgrade public realm and promote redevelopment.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Public realm improvements offer opportunity for biodiversity enhancement which can be of significant benefit to network integrity if suitable measures / actions are applied however this must be balanced with potential negative impacts from visitor pressure and construction of associated infrastructure. Impacts can include habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air/ water quality, increased emissions etc. Improvements

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 18: Public Realm and Placemaking

and enhancements in Limerick / Shannon could result in adverse effects on site integrity of the Lower Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA which include species of interest such as Whopper Swan, Sea/Brook / River lamprey, otter and habitats such as mudflats and sandflats. Feasibility studies and site selection which address the potential for adverse effects on site integrity as a result of visitor pressure are required for such initiatives.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to feasibility studies and a robust site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 19: Lifelong Learning and Skills

a) It is an objective to support investment in Higher Education Institutes, Education and Training Board, apprenticeships and skills development in the Metropolitan Area as an enabler for jobs growth. This includes, inter alia, investment in LIT, UL, associated research institutes and facilities, the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and initiatives applied to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area under the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum and Mid-West Action Plan for Jobs.

b) It is an objective to support Limerick as a Learning City, and Limerick's role in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. It is also an objective to seek investment in initiatives under the Learning City initiative and to support the spread of such initiatives in the metropolitan area and region wide.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

a) Development and expansion of educational institutes and facilities could result in significant negative affects due to European Sites, where such developments are located within, are proximal to or include connectivity with European Sites. Chapter 7 of the draft RSES includes a number of protection policies relevant to this objective including RPO 177 and 179 which require robust site selection and appropriate environmental assessment.

b) These are no potential for significant adverse effects to European Sites as a result of this Objective.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 177 and RPO 179 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 18: Lifelong Learning and Skills.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 20: Social Inclusion

a) It is an objective to seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion for all citizens across all our communities.

b) It is an objective to seek investment in initiatives that achieve the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas in the Metropolitan Area, in particular supporting the ongoing regeneration of the Limerick City RAPID areas of Ballynanty and Kileely; Kings Island-Custom House; Southside and Rathkeale.

c) It is an objective to support the development of an inter-agency Social Enterprise Strategy to support the retention and expansion of existing social enterprises and the development of new social enterprises.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant negative effects should aspects of this objective, such as the development of regeneration projects and infrastructure be located within the ZoI of a European Site.

Chapter 7 of the RSES provides protection objective RPO 173 which states the following:

Improve equal access for abled and disabled people and universal design for public transport access, housing, social, cultural and recreational facilities and the public realm to improve quality of life equally for abled and disabled citizens in our region. Local Authorities should ensure that decision making in relation to investment in infrastructure and facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 173 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 19: Social Inclusion.

Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 21: Healthy Cities and Health Infrastructure

- a) It is an objective to seek investment in health service infrastructure within the Limerick Shannon MASP to meet existing and future regional population growth including supporting University Hospital Limerick to develop a consolidated integrated health district incorporating acute care, primary care, health education, innovation and research. It is an objective to grow and develop health care facilities as proposed by the University Hospital Limerick in their Strategic Plan.
- b) It is an objective to support the role of Limerick as a WHO Healthy City and seek investment in the delivery of recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health services infrastructure that retains and improves on this status.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Expansion and development of health service infrastructure could result in significant negative effects to European Sites as a result of siting and construction should these initiatives and developments support connectivity with European Sites. Impacts include visitor pressure, noise disturbance, habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air quality from increased traffic, emissions to water.

Mitigation: The RPO should stipulate that the delivery of health service infrastructure within the Limerick Shannon MASP area shall be subject to a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

7.13 WATERFORD MASP

The Waterford MASP provides a first step in outlining the vision for the Waterford Metropolitan Area.

Waterford MASP Objective PO 1: Waterford Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan
<p>a) It is an objective to strengthen the role of the Waterford Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to promote the Waterford Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan area with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region (ii) compact growth and regeneration of the Metropolitan Area across the city centre and suburbs, (iii) active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner.</p> <p>c) It is an objective to seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Waterford Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals).</p> <p>d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>e) The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
<p>Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?</p> <p>Economic and population growth will need to be facilitated by the expansion and further development of existing services including transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, retail and housing development, regeneration of Limerick city centre and suburbs etc. The development and expansion of these services within the Limerick MASP area could lead to direct and indirect impacts to qualifying habitats and species associated with European Sites within the MASP Zone of Influence if unmitigated however the objective commits to the following:</p> <p><i>(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</i></p>
<p>Mitigation: None</p>

Waterford MASP Objective PO 2: The Waterford Metropolitan Area and the Wider Region
<p>In support of the role of the Waterford Metropolitan Area as the primary driver of economic and population growth in the South-East SPA in conjunction with Key Towns of Carlow, Clonmel, Dungarvan, Kilkenny and Wexford, seek to strengthen inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity (public transport, strategic road network and digital) subject to robust route/site selection and the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:</p> <p>(a): Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and the other metropolitan areas of Dublin, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, strengthen connectivity to the Southern Region Ports, Atlantic Economic Corridor and strengthen connectivity on the TEN-T Corridor.</p> <p>(b): Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and Key Towns in the Southern Region, especially Key Towns in the South East</p>

Waterford MASP Objective PO 2: The Waterford Metropolitan Area and the Wider Region

(c): Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and the Key Towns and settlements in **South Tipperary Urban Network and Transport Corridor**, the **Wexford- Rosslare Euro Port Change Location**, and potential connection to the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor with a view to an Extended East Coast Corridor from Rosslare Europort to Larne which would include Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford as strategic locations on the Corridor. These initiatives which will be progressed through the County Development Plan process, to support the economic spread from the Waterford Metropolitan Area to stimulate employment led growth and regeneration across the wider region.

(d) Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and Hinterland Towns of Carrick-on-Suir, New Ross & Environs and Tramore.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

The strengthening of inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity will require the expansion and further development of existing services including modes of public transport, road infrastructure and digital infrastructure. The development and expansion of these services within the Waterford MASP area could lead to direct and indirect impacts to qualifying habitats and species associated with European Sites within the MASP Zone of Influence if unmitigated however objective PO 1 above commits to the following:

(d) *Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.*

(e): *The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region..*

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective PO 3: Investment to Deliver Vision

- a) To seek the identification of investment packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Waterford MASP and seek further investments into the Waterford MASP to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Objectives at Section 3.4 and Goals at Appendix 3.
- b) To develop the Waterford Metropolitan Area as a Concentric City, with balanced and compact growth north and south of the River Suir, supported by integrated land-use and transportation.
- c) To ensure quality infrastructure and quality of place is prioritised as an incentive to attract people to live and work in sustainable settlement patterns in the metropolitan area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

This relates to investment opportunities and quality of place.

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective PO 4: National Enablers

The SRA support the investment priorities as identified in the NPF and NDP for the Waterford Metropolitan Area and will seek progress and co-ordination between the principal stakeholders for delivery of these priorities for enabling the Waterford Metropolitan Area achieve its vision and objectives. Identification of suitable sites for regeneration and development should be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns. The SRA will support the sustainable implementation of innovative, collaborative projects through the Urban Regeneration and Development, Rural Regeneration and Development, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies funds within the Waterford Metropolitan Area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Waterford City is intimately associated with the River Suir, which flows in an easterly direction through its centre. The river is designated as an SAC with a considerable number of qualifying features including Freshwater pearl mussel and two priority woodland habitats. The River Suir converges downstream of Waterford City with the River Nore and River Barrow (collectively a single European Site) also supporting a

Waterford MASP Objective PO 4: National Enablers

considerable number of water dependant species.

- Lower River Suir SAC (002137); and
- River Barrow and River Nore SAC (002162).

In the wider environs there are also a number of European Sites for which the more strategic objectives listed could have an impact, in the absence of further detail and/ or mitigation measures:

- Tramore Dunes and Backstrand SAC (000671)
- Tramore Back Strand SPA (004027)
- Glendine Wood SAC (002324)
- Comeragh Mountains SAC (001952)
- Mid Waterford Coast SPA (004193)
- Dungarvan Harbour SPA (004032)
- Helvick Head SAC (000665)
- Helvick Head to Ballyquin SPA (004192)

The NPF enablers identified a number of priorities relating for Waterford and its environs, namely delivering of the north quays SDZ regeneration project including a new pedestrian/public transport bridge over the River Suir and an extension of the Deise greenway.

Although the two enablers provide some idea of specific locations, there is little by way of detail. The North Quays Strategic Development Zone has the capacity to become the catalyst for sustainable and economic and social development within Waterford, in keeping with the aims of the NPF. However, the identification of a bridge at this early stage without any location specific information and without detail of its potential instream construction requirements could result in potential for negative impacts on the Lower River Suir in the first instance and other downstream European Sites downstream. A robust alternatives assessment within the context of the SDZ and the river crossing will be required to support this objective at the regional level.

The identification of the greenway extension is considered positive in that it aims to divert reliance of vehicles and hence reduce emissions to the air. Without further detail however, or a scientific assessment of route options and development of any necessary mitigation measures has, at this stage, the potential for negative impacts to proximal European Sites. Any such project would be subject to Appropriate Assessment.

These enablers could lead to direct and indirect impacts to qualifying habitats and species associated with European Sites within the MASP Zone of Influence if unmitigated however objective PO 1 above commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective PO 5: Investment in Infrastructure

SRA seeks investment and stakeholder co-ordination on the sustainable development of infrastructure capacity (physical, multi-modal transport networks, digital/smart, green and social/community) to enable the Waterford Metropolitan Area fulfil its potential as a regional driver subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Potential negative changes in key indicators of conservation value including water and air quality; potential disturbance to key species; potential reduction of habitat area; and potential habitat or species fragmentation if unmitigated. The objective clearly states support is subject to *the outcome of* environmental assessments

Waterford MASP Objective PO 5: Investment in Infrastructure

and the planning process. Furthermore objective PO 1 above commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

The operation and greater utilisation of sustainable transport infrastructure, rail infrastructure and the consolidation of growth and expansion along light rail corridors could contribute to improvements in air quality to the receiving environment and by extension European Sites within the MASP Zol.

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective PO 6: Investment in Sustainable Transport

(a) It is an objective to prepare a Waterford Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP with all relevant stakeholders and it is an objective to ensure investment and implementation of the Waterford Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy.

(b) Local Authorities and public bodies including state transport agencies shall prioritise investment in the following road and rail infrastructure in the Metropolitan Area in support of Modal Shift from the private car to sustainable transport subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, including measures to address environmental issues associated with brownfield development:

- Relocation of the Railway Station to the North Quays;
- Improved connectivity between the city centre and the North Quays and wider Ferrybank area including provision of a pedestrian/public transport bridge;
- New Link Road from Abbey Road to Belmont to improve sustainable connectivity and linkages between residential areas;
- Bus Services: Extensive bus network across the Metropolitan Area with longer operational hours and increased frequencies to encourage the significant modal shift from the private car to sustainable transportation;
- Development of new sustainable travel routes including greenways & blueways. Potential for further extensions exists which could build a metropolitan wide cycle network with the Déise Greenway established as a sustainable economic corridor through the county;
- Development of a more walkable City;
- Development of the 10 minute city concept for Waterford to drive integration of sustainable mobility with land-use planning, zoning, transport infrastructure (particularly public transport modes) in local level planning.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

The development of sustainable transport may result in potential negative changes in key indicators of conservation value including water and air quality; potential disturbance to key species; potential reduction of habitat area; and potential habitat or species fragmentation as part of the construction phase of these projects. However the operation and greater utilisation of sustainable transport infrastructure, rail infrastructure and the consolidation of growth and expansion along light rail corridors could contribute to improvements in air quality to the receiving environment and by extension European Sites within the MASP Zol.

The objective clearly states support is subject to *the outcome of* environmental assessments and the planning process including measures to address environmental issues associated with brownfield development. Furthermore objective PO 1 above commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best

Waterford MASP Objective PO 6: Investment in Sustainable Transport

practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

The operation and greater utilisation of sustainable transport infrastructure, rail infrastructure and the consolidation of growth and expansion along light rail corridors could contribute to improvements in air quality to the receiving environment and by extension European Sites within the MASP Zol.

Chapter 5 of the RSES also includes protection objectives for Green Infrastructure developments as follows:

RPO 118: Green Infrastructure

a)It is an objective to promote the concept of connecting corridors for the movement of wildlife and encourage the retention and creation of features of biodiversity value, ecological corridors and networks that connect areas of high conservation value such as woodlands, hedgerows, earth banks, watercourses and wetlands. The RSES recognises the necessity of protecting such corridors and to necessity to encourage the management of features of the landscape that support the Natura 2000 network

b)Green Infrastructure shall be integrated into the preparation of statutory land-use plans in the region, which will include identifying Green Infrastructure and strengthening this network.

c)All Development Plans and Local Area Plans shall protect, enhance, provide and manage Green Infrastructure in an integrated and coherent manner addressing the themes of biodiversity protection, water management and climate action; and should also have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species.

It is noted that Chapter 6, **RPO 156** confirms that Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 6: Investment in Sustainable Transport.

Waterford MASP Objective PO 7: Improved Regional Connectivity to and from Waterford

The Regional Assembly will support the development of improved Regional Connectivity through development of strategic transport infrastructure to support the sustainable development of the South-East Waterford City Region subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Local Authorities and public bodies including state transport agencies shall prioritise investment in the following road and rail infrastructure subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

- Improvements to the Waterford - Limerick/Shannon Strategic Transport Corridor to include upgrading of N24 and Rail line for faster journey times and improved public transport frequencies on public bus and rail services.
- Improvements to the Waterford - Cork Strategic Transport Corridor to include upgrading of N25 and additional options for Park and Ride into Cork and Waterford.
- Improvements to the Waterford – Rosslare Europort & Wexford Strategic Transport Corridor to include improved road and rail connectivity into Rosslare Europort from Waterford, recognising the important role of Rosslare Europort as a passenger and freight port for the Waterford Metropolitan Area and wider-Southern Region.
- Measures to support Modal Change through transfer of freight from road to rail through increased use of freight sidings (or creation of new rail connections) at the ports and other locations throughout the South-East Waterford City Region.
- Retention of the Waterford -Rosslare Rail line for future freight rail connectivity for Rosslare Europort.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There are potential negative changes to key indicators of conservation value of European Sites as a result of

Waterford MASP Objective PO 7: Improved Regional Connectivity to and from Waterford

this objective during the construction and development of these proposals.

There are potential negative changes to water and air quality, disturbance of key species including Qualifying Species and Species of Conservation Interest for European Sites, reduction of habitat area and potential habitat and species fragmentation resulting from the construction and development of inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity initiatives within the Waterford MASP area. However the operation and greater utilisation of sustainable transport infrastructure, rail infrastructure and the consolidation of growth and expansion along transit corridors could contribute to improvements in air quality to the receiving environment and by extension European Sites within the MASP Zol.

The objective clearly states support is subject to *the outcome of* environmental assessments and the planning process. Furthermore objective PO 1 above commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

The operation and greater utilisation of sustainable transport infrastructure, rail infrastructure and the consolidation of growth and expansion along light rail corridors could contribute to improvements in air quality to the receiving environment and by extension European Sites within the MASP Zol.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 6: Investment in Sustainable Transport.

Waterford MASP Objective PO 8: Vibrant Urban Centre

Support the Local Authorities and Public Bodies and seek investment /implementation of actions to develop a vibrant urban centre focused on Waterford City Centre including priority for investment in the infrastructure to deliver New Bridges connecting the North Quays / wider North Shore & Ferrybank area to the City Centre, Relocation of the Railway Station located on the North Quays with more direct access to city centre on the south shore, improved access into the City Centre for City Bus Services and improved services with more Bus Priority on city streets and through neighbourhoods and development of additional Greenway links through the City Centre subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

(a) Support the improvements to the public realm and streetscapes.

(b) Seek investment in the culture, arts and heritage of the City Centre and wider Metropolitan Area, enhancing facilities, infrastructure, attractions and visitor experience for citizens and tourists.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Urban centre improvements offer opportunity for biodiversity enhancement which can be of significant benefit to network integrity if suitable measures / actions are applied however this must be balanced with potential negative impacts from visitor pressure and construction of associated infrastructure. Impacts can include habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air/ water quality, increased emissions etc. Improvements and enhancements in Waterford City could result in adverse effects on site integrity of the Lower River suir SAC which include species of interest such as Sea/Brook / River lamprey, otter and habitats such alluvial woodland. Feasibility studies and site selection which address the potential for adverse effects on site integrity as a result of visitor pressure are required for such initiatives.

Mitigation: A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to feasibility studies and a robust site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.

Visitor Experience Development Plans will require AA.

Visitor Experience Development Plans will specifically include a clear plan to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of European sites within the zone of influence of the plan including specific consideration of how

Waterford MASP Objective PO 8: Vibrant Urban Centre

supporting infrastructure like car parks and shops can influence the level of pressure on habitats and species in the immediate vicinity.

Waterford MASP Objective PO 9: Development of North Quays SDZ

Local Authorities and Public Bodies shall implement actions to support the extension of the City centre into the North Quays and develop a vibrant urban centre focused on the North Quays including priority for investment in the infrastructure to deliver New Bridges connecting the City Centre on the south bank of the River. All such development and infrastructure shall address brownfield and contaminated land issues and shall be, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the investments and associated development projects arising from this objective are located within the ZOI of a European Site if unmitigated. It is noted that the objective clearly states such development is subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective PO 10: Strategic Residential Lands

Local Authorities and Public Bodies shall support the delivery of the Priority Infrastructure identified above to support the delivery of strategic housing development in support of the overall development and planned growth of the Waterford Metropolitan Area, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

The objective clearly states support is subject to *the outcome of* environmental assessments and the planning process. Furthermore objective PO 1 above commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective PO 11: Technological University of the South-East (TUSE)

Local Authorities and Public Bodies shall support the development of the necessary infrastructure and connectivity to support the development of the Multi-Campus TUSE and support its future expansion so as to transform and grow the Waterford Metropolitan Area, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

The objective clearly states support is subject to *the outcome of* environmental assessments and the planning process. Furthermore objective PO 1 above commits to the following:

(d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.

Waterford MASP Objective PO 11: Technological University of the South-East (TUSE)

(e): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective PO 12: Development of Waterford Port

Local Authorities and Public Bodies shall support the development of the necessary port infrastructure and associated road and rail connectivity required to support the development of the Port of Waterford Belview and to support the role of the Port as an Economic Driver for the South-East Waterford City Region, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Ongoing investment and development of the Waterford Port could result in significant negative effects on Lower River Suir SAC and River Barrow and River Nore SAC, either individually or cumulatively with existing and proposed Waterford Port facility if unmitigated.

Objective RPO 142 of RSES Chapter 6 provides the following protective measures for all port developments in the southern region.

For all ports in the Southern Region, seek to:

- Protect the marine related functions of ports in the region to ensure the future role of ports as strategic marine related assets is protected from inappropriate uses;
- Harness economic opportunities from the ocean economy and the role of Ports in the region in realising the full potential of the ocean economy. Particular regard should be had to the Government's integrated plan for the marine industry – Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (2012), the National Marine Research and Innovation Strategy 2017-2021 (Marine Institute Ireland, 2017), and Ireland's Ocean Economy (NUIG, 2017), as well as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Ireland's Programme of Measures; and Ireland's forthcoming Maritime Spatial Plan (due 2021);
- Support the role of ports, where appropriate, in facilitating the sustainable development and operation of off-shore renewable energy development; and
- Support appropriate enabling infrastructure development to harness our ocean wealth at regional and local levels including grid, pier and port facilities to support renewable energy and export potential.
- Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC. Port development in the REGION must adhere to the European Commission guidelines on the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones in order to protect the European Sites around them.

Mitigation: Include Cross reference to **RPS 142** under this objective

Waterford MASP Objective 13: Waterford Airport

The Regional Assembly will support the further development of Waterford Airport and, in particular, the development of:

- an extension of the existing runway to accommodate larger aircraft;
- improved transport linkages and services between the airport, Waterford City and the entire South-East Region, i.e. roads and public transport;
- measures to encourage additional operators offering services from this location; and
- the expansion and development of aviation-related industries at the airport.

In this regard, Development Plans should incorporate policies to protect longer-term flight path public safety zones and to control uses which could adversely impact on the airport's operations or the potential for new

Waterford MASP Objective 13: Waterford Airport

runway development and extensions sufficient to handle larger aircraft.

Local Authorities should ensure that consideration of airport-related infrastructure and facilities is informed by an adequate level of environmental assessment including assessment of potential impacts on designated European sites.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

The expansion and further development of Waterford Airport could result in significant negative effects to European Sites within the airport's Zol, due to noise disruption from intensification of ATM over and within the Zone of Influence of European Sites such as Tramore Backstrand SPA and as a result of increased concentrations of pollutants entering surface waters with connectivity to downstream SACs including Tramore Dunes and Backstrand SAC.

RPO 144 in chapter 6 includes a commitment to developing a regional airport strategy. In line with RPO 1 and with reference to PO 1 above, this strategy will need to undergo AA to inform decision making about the potential adverse effects on downstream water quality and the structure and function of the backstrand habitats and protected bird species for any intensification of use at the airport.

Mitigation: An AA should be undertaken on the airport Strategy proposed in RPO 144 in Chapter 6 to inform decision making on appropriate limits in relation to development of Waterford Airport to ensure no adverse effects on site integrity.

Waterford MASP Objective PO 14: Enterprise Supports

a) It is an objective to support the existing educational facilities in the Waterford Metropolitan Area as critical drivers of economic development and the fostering of an innovative, knowledge-based economy for the Metropolitan Area.

b) The MASP recognises that the South-East Action Plan for Jobs (APJ) and the South-East Regional Skills Forum works collaboratively with all the agencies focusing on key actions and opportunities that the Waterford Metropolitan Area can offer in terms of employment generation and the fostering of the knowledge-based economy. It is an objective that the South-East APJ and the South-East Regional Skills Forum continue their work to deliver significant benefits to the Metropolitan Area and Mid-West.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the regeneration, expansion or development projects arising from this objective are located within the Zol of a European Site.

Chapter 7 of the RSES provides mitigatory Objectives in relation to the development of educational and training infrastructure and facilities as follows:

RPO 177: Planned approach to location of our education provision of new school facilities within reasonable access of public transport and active travel modes. Local Authorities should ensure that a robust site selection process is followed in the selection of new school locations and that decision making is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment. New development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.

RPO 179: It is an objective to promote co-ordinated infrastructure comprised of regional education and training providers, local government agencies and industry to facilitate a collaborative approach to regional skills development aligned to the needs and opportunities of regional economies and to promoting lifelong learning to all citizens of the region. Local Authorities should ensure that the development of education and training facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 177 and RPO 179 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 11: Education and Access to Talent.

Waterford MASP Objective PO 15: Tourism

a) It is an objective to support investment in infrastructure, including increased capacity of road, rail, ports and Waterford Airport to maximise the potential of tourism subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Waterford MASP Objective PO 15: Tourism

b) It is an objective to support the Waterford Metropolitan Area as a tourism destination. This will require the promotion of the tourism assets of the South-East SPA which include, inter alia, Ireland's Ancient East, the Munster Vales, greenways, blueways, and other significant tourist locations in the South-East.

c) It is an objective to ensure collaboration between Local Authorities and tourism agencies to develop attractions such as the Irelands Ancient East, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of tourism infrastructure services and projects arising from this objective are located within the ZoI of a European Site.

Chapter 4 provides the following protection objective for tourism infrastructure:

RPO 52 Tourism and Environment

Development of new or enhanced tourism infrastructure and facilities should include an assessment of the environmental sensitivities of the area including an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) if required in order to avoid adverse impacts on the receiving environment. Where such tourism infrastructure or facilities are developed, the managing authority/agency should ensure that effective monitoring protocols are put in place to monitor and assess the ongoing effect of tourism on sensitive features with particular focus on natural, archaeological and built heritage assets.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 52 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 12: Tourism and retail.

Waterford MASP Objective 16: Retail

Within one year of adoption of the RSES/MASP a Joint Retail Strategy shall be prepared for the Waterford Metropolitan Area in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Joint Retail Strategy shall include – inter alia - the defined area of the Core City Shopping Area, the location of Suburban or District Shopping Centres, a map to indicate sustainable travel routes to/from each shopping area.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant adverse effects associated with the further development or expansion of retail developments within the Waterford Metropolitan Area where these developments support connectivity with European Sites.

However Chapter 4 of the RSES provides a mitigatory Objective for retail developments as follows:

RPO 53 Retail:

- To improve the physical appearance, vitality and vibrancy of city centre, town centre and village locations, through collaboration between Planning Authorities and Retail Traders Associations in regeneration / public realm projects and other measures.
- To ensure that retail development is focussed on urban and village centres with the application of a sequential approach to consideration of retail development which does not fall into this category.

To prepare Retail Strategies in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines including Joint Retail Strategies where applicable. Proposed public realm or urban regeneration projects should be assessed for potential impacts on the receiving environment including capacity of existing services at project level. Where public realm or urban regeneration projects would significantly increase shopper/visitor numbers, planning authorities should ensure that projects include sustainable management of increased demand for access to such locations including the impact of additional demand for car parking and /or measures to address provide for sustainable access to city/town centre locations.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 53 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 16: Joint Retail Strategy.

Waterford MASP Objective 17: Strategic Employment Locations

Local Authorities and Public Bodies shall support the development of the identified Strategic Employment

Waterford MASP Objective 17: Strategic Employment Locations

Locations and other potential sites/locations and provision of associated transport and services necessary to support the overall development of the Waterford Metropolitan Area, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of infrastructure projects arising from this objective are located within the Zol of a European Site, if unmitigated. The objective clearly states that support is subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. This will necessitate robust site selection including criteria to avoid adverse effects on any European site in line with commitments in RPO1 and Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 1.

Mitigation: The objective clearly states that support is subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. This will necessitate robust site selection including criteria to avoid adverse effects on any European site in line with commitments in RPO1 and Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 1.

Waterford MASP Objective 18: Metropolitan Wide Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy

To achieve a healthy, green and connected city and metropolitan area, the preparation of a Metropolitan Wide Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy will be required under the Waterford MASP subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. The Metropolitan Wide Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy shall provide for the following elements:-

- a) development of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Waterford City and Kilkenny County Council and relevant stakeholders to deliver a network of parks, Greenway and Blueway corridors, natural areas and habitats, functional spaces relating to flooding and drainage and pedestrian and cycling connections between metropolitan settlements. This shall include support for the Déise Greenway Extensions to WIT and New Ross.
- b) investment in green infrastructure and green amenities to reach international best practice and invest in delivering a parks, recreation and amenity strategy for the Waterford Metropolitan Area.
- c) identification of a location for Regional Scale Park within the Waterford Metropolitan Area as well as the development of neighbourhood parks and open spaces
- d) development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Waterford City and Kilkenny County Council and relevant stakeholders.
- e) Development of an Integrated Framework Plan for the Sustainable Development of Waterford Harbour, in order to harness the economic and recreational potential and protect the environmental qualities of the area for all users
- f) support and encourage recreation and tourism opportunities represented by the extensive shore line, the potential to create new walkways by linking existing areas of open space and woodland and the opportunity to develop the abandoned railway line between Waterford and New Ross as a Greenway for cycling and walking, subject to the protection of natural heritage including the European sites (the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137) and the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code 002162).

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the delivery of plans and projects arising from this objective are located within the Zol of a European Site in the absence of mitigation. However, it is noted that Chapter 5 of the RSES provides a protection objective for Green Infrastructure with particular reference to RPO 118, Green Infrastructure. Furthermore the overall objective notes that the preparation of a Metropolitan Wide Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy will be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. This shall include an AA of the strategy when developed. Additional wording at e) and f) above add further protection to avoid adverse effects on site integrity as a result of the objective.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 18: Environment

Waterford MASP Objective 19: University Hospital Waterford (UHW)

It is an objective to support the development of University Hospital Waterford as a centre of excellence for the South East capable of providing high quality health care for the expanding population of the Metropolitan Area and wider South-East City region area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

The Regional Assembly will support the development of additional Acute Care Services and additional health services/facilities as identified in the National Development Plan Strategic Priorities and provision of a Second Cath Lab Facility

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Expansion and development of health service infrastructure, services and facilities could result in significant negative effects to European Sites should these initiatives and developments support connectivity with European Sites.

Expansion and development of health service infrastructure could result in significant negative effects to European Sites as a result of siting and construction should these initiatives and developments support connectivity with European Sites. Impacts include visitor pressure, noise disturbance, habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air quality from increased traffic, emissions to water. The RPO stipulates that the delivery of health service infrastructure within the Waterford MASP area shall be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning processes.

Mitigation: None.

Waterford MASP Objective 20: Lifelong Learning and Skills

It is an objective to support measures to develop Waterford as a Learning City including community education initiatives and support for lifelong learning and skills training including the development of the necessary infrastructure and facilities subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

a) Development and expansion of educational institutes and facilities could result in significant negative affects due to European Sites, where such developments are located within, are proximal to or include connectivity with European Sites. Chapter 7 of the draft RSES includes a number of protection policies relevant to this objective including RPO 177 and 179 which require robust site selection and appropriate environmental assessment.

b) These are no potential for significant adverse effects to European Sites as a result of this Objective.

Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 177 and RPO 179 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 18: Lifelong Learning and Skills.

Waterford MASP Objective 21: Social Inclusion

It is an objective to support and seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Local Authorities to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion for all citizens across all our communities subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the regeneration and upgrade of community infrastructure associated with this objective is located within the ZoI of a European Site. The RPO stipulates that the delivery of infrastructure within the Waterford MASP area shall be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning processes.

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective 22: Healthy Cities

It is an objective to support the role of Waterford as a WHO Healthy City and seek investment in the delivery of recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health services infrastructure that retains and improves on this status, in support of Healthy Waterford, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Expansion and development of health service infrastructure could result in significant negative effects to European Sites as a result of siting and construction should these initiatives and developments support connectivity with European Sites. Impacts include visitor pressure, noise disturbance, habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air quality from increased traffic, emissions to water. The RPO stipulates that the delivery of health service infrastructure within the Waterford MASP area shall be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning processes.

Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective 23: Community Infrastructure

Community infrastructure including health and education shall be retrofitted where facilities are needed to improve for existing communities and provided in tandem with future population growth. An interagency approach to promoting social inclusion is central to the Waterford MASP of which Lifelong Learning and Healthy City initiatives are essential components, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

Expansion and development of health service infrastructure could result in significant negative effects to European Sites as a result of siting and construction should these initiatives and developments support connectivity with European Sites. Impacts include visitor pressure, noise disturbance, habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air quality from increased traffic, emissions to water. The RPO stipulates that the delivery of health service infrastructure within the Waterford MASP area shall be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning processes.

In addition, Chapter 7 of the RSES provides protection objectives in relation to the development of educational and training infrastructure and facilities as follows:

RPO 177: Planned approach to location of our education provision of new school facilities within reasonable access of public transport and active travel modes. Local Authorities should ensure that a robust site selection process is followed in the selection of new school locations and that decision making is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment. New development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.

RPO 179: It is an objective to promote co-ordinated infrastructure comprised of regional education and training providers, local government agencies and industry to facilitate a collaborative approach to regional skills development aligned to the needs and opportunities of regional economies and to promoting lifelong learning to all citizens of the region. Local Authorities should ensure that the development of education and training facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.

Mitigation: Mitigation: None

Waterford MASP Objective 24: Regeneration of Disadvantaged Areas

It is an objective to seek continued investment in initiatives that achieve the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas in the City and Metropolitan Area, in particular supporting the ongoing regeneration of the Waterford RAPID areas, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.

Potential Impact on the Integrity of a European Site?

There is the potential for significant effects to a European site where the regeneration and development projects arising from this objective are located within the Zol of a European Site. Impacts include visitor pressure, noise disturbance, habitat and species disturbance, deterioration in air quality from increased traffic,

Waterford MASP Objective 24: Regeneration of Disadvantaged Areas

emissions to water. The RPO stipulates that the delivery of health service infrastructure within the Waterford MASP area shall be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning processes.

Mitigation: None

7.14 ASSESSMENT OF IN COMBINATION EFFECTS WITH OTHER PLANS OR PROJECTS

The assessment of in-combination effects with other plans or projects is a crucial and often difficult aspect of Article 6(3) assessment, particularly at the plan level. This step aims to consider the policy and framework within which the draft RSES is being developed and to identify at this early stage any possible in-combination effects of the draft RSES with other plans and projects. In theory, there are many other plans/ projects that interact with or have the potential to combine pressures and threats to European sites; however, the in-combination assessment is a matter of applying a practical and realistic approach.

In line with MN2000 guidance, a stepwise approach has been taken to consideration of in-combination effects, outlined in **Table 7.2**, as follows:

- Identify plans / projects that might act in combination;
- Identify the types of impact that might occur;
- Define boundaries of the assessment;
- Identify pathways for impact; and
- Impact prediction and assessment.

Table 7-2 – In-Combination Impacts with Other Plans and Strategies

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>Northern and Western RSES and Eastern Midlands RSES (In prep)</p> <p>Regional strategies are being prepared for the other two regional assembly areas. Similar objectives in terms of delivering on the NPF but with regional rather than national focus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>These plans are subject to AA. Potential for in-combination effects as activity and development in these areas may have indirect impacts on land use, population growth and scale of development outside their administrative boundary. AA will be undertaken at all levels in the planning hierarchy, evolving alongside greater certainty / detail in proposals through the regional, county and local level, in all cases ensuring that proposals are in keeping with the objectives of the Habitats Directive.</p>
<p>National Planning Framework (Ireland 2040 Our Plan)</p> <p>The National Planning Framework is a long-term strategy for the next 20 years and it will focus on ensuring compatibility between future growth of cities/ towns within Ireland alongside environmental sustainability. It is intended that the National Planning Framework will both provide the focus to guide and inform future planning and set the framework for integrated investment decisions. It is intended that the national policy will be detailed through the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies in order to set out long term national, regional and local development frameworks from within which sectors will work together to ensure proper planning and sustainable development. Both the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic are being subject to the AA process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alteration to air quality; ▪ Disturbance. 	<p>Potential for in-combination effects as it sets the policy framework on which RSES is based. However, it is a policy¹³ of the National Planning Framework to ensure the resilience of our natural resources and cultural assets. Linkage to wider policies such as for European Sites under the Birds and Habitats Directives and the Water Framework Directive is recognised and the need to set high level planning policies in protecting and making responsible use of our natural environment. The plan has been subject to AA.</p>
<p>National Development Plan 2018-2027</p> <p>The National Development Plan sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the implementation of the National Planning Framework (NPF). This will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions in Ireland over the next two decades, to cater for an expected population increase</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and 	<p>The NDP is a high level budgetary and finance document which identifies priorities for capital investment. Given the nature of the capital investment the majority of the projects referenced and funded under the NDP have been or will be subject to EIA/AA. The NDP does not confer planning, it identifies strategic need.</p>

¹³ http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/towards_a_national_planning_framework_december_2015.pdf, Appendix II – Page 2

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
of over 1 million people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species 	
<p>Water Services Strategic Plan</p> <p>Irish Water has prepared a Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP, 2015), under Section 33 of the Water Service No. 2 Act of 2013 to address the delivery of strategic objectives which will contribute towards improved water quality and WFD requirements. The WSSP forms the highest tier of asset management plans (Tier 1) which Irish Water prepare and it sets the overarching framework for subsequent detailed implementation plans (Tier 2) and water services projects (Tier 3). The WSSP sets out the challenges we face as a country in relation to the provision of water services and identifies strategic national priorities. It includes Irish Water's short, medium and long term objectives and identifies strategies to achieve these objectives. As such, the plan provides the context for subsequent detailed implementation plans (Tier 2) which will document the approach to be used for key water service areas such as water resource management, wastewater compliance and sludge management. The WSSP also sets out the strategic objectives against which the Irish Water Capital Investment Programme is developed. The current version of the CIP outlines the proposals for capital expenditure in terms of upgrades and new builds within the Irish Water owned asset.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>The WSSP has undergone SEA and AA, which highlighted the need for additional plan/project environmental assessments to be carried out at the tier 2 and tier 3 levels. No likely significant in-combination effects are envisaged.</p>
<p>Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme, under the Floods Directive</p> <p>The Office of Public Works (OPW) is responsible for the implementation of the Floods Directive 2007/60/EC which is being carried out through a Catchment based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme. As part of the directive Ireland is required to undertake a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment, to identify areas of existing or potentially significant future flood risk and to prepare flood hazard and risk maps for these areas. Following this, Flood Risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Disturbance; ▪ In-combination impacts within the same scheme 	<p>CFRAM Studies and their product Flood Risk Management Plans have undergone appropriate assessment. Any future flood plans will have to take into account the design and implementation of water management infrastructure as it has the potential to impact on hydromorphology and potentially on the ecological status and favourable conservation status of water bodies. The establishment where flooding is occurring is an importing consideration for the RSES and spatial planning in general, with regard to the siting of houses, services and infrastructure. The AA of the CFRAMs considered the potential for impacts from hard engineering</p>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>Management Plans (FRMPs) are developed for these areas setting objectives for managing the flood risk and setting out a prioritised set of measures to achieve the objectives. The CFRAM programme is currently being rolled out and Flood Risk Management Plans have been prepared. These plans have been subject AA.</p>		<p>solutions and how they might affect hydrological connectivity and hydromorphological supporting conditions for protected habitats and species. No likely significant in-combination effects are envisaged.</p>
<p>Culture 2025 Culture 2025 is a Framework Policy to 2025 which sets the vision for the future of culture and the arts in Ireland and prioritises actions. It recognises the diverse and multi-faceted nature of culture in Ireland and the contribution of 'culture' to sense of self, national identity and the arts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Disturbance of species; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>This strategy includes a number of aims relating to regeneration and reuse of building stock. Potential in-combination impacts relate to urban regeneration, infill development and reuse of protected/ vacant / derelict buildings (e.g. potential habitats for bats). However at a project level any project will be subject to AA and any necessary mitigation. Therefore, no potential for in-combination impacts are envisaged.</p>
<p>Healthy Ireland – a Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2015-2025 The main aims of Healthy Ireland are: to increase the numbers of people experiencing good health (mental and physical) at all life stages; reduce health inequalities with a focus on social factors; protect the public and increase preparedness for threats to public health; and to encourage every individual and society as a whole to collaboratively engage with its own health and wellbeing. The first Implementation Plan has been published covering 2015-2017.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Species disturbance. 	<p>Healthy Ireland is a long-term strategy concerned with the health and wellbeing of people and communities, The plan encourages healthier lifestyles such as walking and cycling which, in combination with the RSES policies for greenways, could lead to species disturbance particularly along coasts and rivers. As noted elsewhere, robust route / site selection must be applied for all linear infrastructure to avoid potential for impacts.</p>
<p>Towards Nearly Zero Energy Buildings in Ireland – Planning for 2020 and Beyond Proposed approach to Irish compliance with the EPBD commitments, prepared by the DECLG in November 2012. By 2020 all new dwellings in Ireland will have a Maximum Permitted Energy Performance Coefficient (MPEPC) and Maximum Permitted Carbon Performance Coefficient (MPCPC) of 0.30 and 0.35 in accordance with the common general framework set out in Annex I of EPBD.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of 	<p>This framework includes a number of aims which are linked to the aims under the RSES related to climate change and the transition to a low-carbon economy. Potential in-combination impacts relate to construction of infrastructure. However at a project level each project will be subject to AA and any necessary mitigation. Therefore, no potential for in-combination impacts are envisaged.</p>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>Climate Action Plan 2019</p> <p>The plan focusses on energy, transport, waste, agriculture and buildings. The plan includes new governance structures necessary to implement changes and sets out specific targets for each sector.</p>	<p>invasive species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species 	<p>Potential for in-combination effects as it sets out actions which directly relate to RSES through land use planning energy and transportation in particular. Many of the consolidation policies already identified through the NPF and further elaborated in the RSES are aligned with the actions promoted through the CAP. The main thrust of the plan is positive and would not be expected to conflict with any aspects of the RSES but to positively influence it going forward.</p>
<p>National Climate and Energy Plan (in prep)</p> <p>The plan brings together energy and climate planning and describes how Ireland will achieve the EUs main climate targets. The plan must cover the key areas of (i) energy security; (ii) internal energy market; (iii) energy efficiency; (iv) decarbonisation; and (v) research, innovation and competitiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/ or water movement; ▪ Disturbance; ▪ In-combination impacts within the same scheme 	<p>The first draft of the plan has been subject to public consultation and will continue to evolve over the short term. Supporting decarbonisation and as such the main thrust of the plan is positive as it addresses climate change aspects however renewable energies such as wind energy have potential for adverse effects on European sites and protected species. In the short to medium term, the move toward electrification of transport and heat will still rely on non-renewable sources of electricity generation.</p> <p>The Plan will be subject to SEA and AA screening.</p>
<p>The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (2002/91/EC recast by Directive 2010/31/EU)</p> <p>Contains a range of provisions to improve the energy performance of new and existing buildings. One of the key measures in this Directive is that all new buildings must be nearly zero energy buildings by 31 December 2020 (public buildings by 31 December 2018).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>No risk of likely significant in-combination effects will result as the primary purpose of the Directive is to improve energy efficiency and therefore environmental quality.</p>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP)</p> <p>Presents the national ambition to deliver a 20% reduction in energy demand across the whole of the economy by 2020, along with a 33% reduction in public sector energy use. Ireland's third NEEAP was published 2014 and the fourth was produced in early 2017.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>This plan would not be expected to conflict with any aspects of the RSES but to positively contribute to it going forward subject to AA of the 4th review.</p>
<p>National Climate Change Adaptation Framework 2012</p> <p>The framework provides strategic focus to ensure adaptation measures are taken across different sectors and levels of government to reduce Ireland's vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. There is a requirement for each government department to prepare sectoral plans. With the establishment of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 there is now a statutory basis on which National Climate Change Adaptation Frameworks and Sectoral Adaptation Plans are to be established. It is expected that the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework will be finalised later in 2017 followed by the development of sectoral adaptation plans. The policies and measures developed by the Adaptation Framework are likely to focus on infrastructural measures which have the potential to impact on hydromorphology which has specific relevance for the RSES and Natura Directives. In addition, a climate Mitigation Plan is also being prepared by the DCCA and this too will contain specific measures to mitigate against climate change. The focus in this plan is the transport, energy, built environment and agriculture sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/ or water movement; ▪ Disturbance; ▪ In-combination impacts within the same scheme 	<p>Ireland will have to adhere to the goals and targets set by the EU in relation to climate and energy and the National Policy Position on climate action sets a fundamental national objective to achieve the transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. The policy states that greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change are to be addressed in parallel national strategies, through a series of National Mitigation Plans and a series of National Climate Change Adaptation Frameworks respectively.</p> <p>Alongside the focus towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions Ireland also needs to increase its share of renewable energy. Renewable energy sources include a range of possibilities, although to date much of the focus has been on wind energy and the focus is often in remote and upland areas including peatlands and forestry. In both cases, environmental sensitivities which relate to water dependant habitats and species can be a significant issue at project level and this must be part of broader considerations on the inter-dependency of national policy positions, especially where defined targets have been set. As part of policies and frameworks being developed going forward, consideration should be given to these sensitive areas and guidance developed in terms of future development.</p>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>European Framework Policy's Seventh Action Programme and Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe</p> <p>Both focus on encouraging a resource efficient, low carbon economy. Both have energy and climate targets. The Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe's main aim is to <i>"to decouple economic growth from resource use and its environmental impacts, and proposed a long-term vision, 2020 milestones and a number of short-term actions to start the transition"</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Disturbance to habitats/ species. 	<p>The RSES shares common goals with these European lead programmes; a reduction in climate change impacts and increasing energy efficiency. Therefore, they are complimentary to the RSES and as such no significant in-combination effects are envisaged.</p>
<p>Energy 2020 – A strategy for competitive, sustainable and secure energy</p> <p>Sets out three key requirements of energy supply; security, competitiveness and sustainability. Also sets out the following targets;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the share of renewable energy in the EU's energy mix to at least 20% of consumption; and ▪ Improve energy efficiency by at least 20%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Disturbance to habitats/ species. 	<p>The RSES shares common goals with Energy 2020; including increasing energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewable energy in the European energy mix. Therefore, the National Planning Framework will contribute towards the plan and as such has no significant in-combination effects are envisaged.</p>
<p>The Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC)</p> <p>Policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU to implement 2020 strategy. The national 2020 target for Ireland is to source 16% from renewable resources (i.e. 40% electricity, 12% heat and 10% transport).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>The RSES shares common goals with the Renewable Energy Directive; increasing energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewable energy in the European energy mix. The potential for in-combination effects would be expected to be in relation to electricity generation infrastructure and energy source production (e.g. biomass, feedstock). However, the main thrust of the plan is positive and would not be expected to conflict with any aspects of the RSES but to positively influence it going forward.</p>
<p>The EU Policy Framework for Climate and Energy in the period from 2020 to 2030</p> <p>Sets targets for the period 2020 to 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target of 27% renewable energy in the EU; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; 	<p>This policy framework underwent impact assessment before publishing. This framework includes a number of aims which are linked to the RSES. The overall drive of both is to increase the use of renewable energy, increase energy efficiency and both contain measures aimed at increasing electricity interconnection.</p>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase energy efficiency by 27% by 2020; and ▪ Reaching electricity interconnection target of 15% between EU countries by 2030. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	Therefore, there is potential for in-combination impacts.
<p>Energy Roadmap 2050</p> <p>This roadmap does not set specific energy targets at this point but does aim to achieve an 80% to 95% reduction in greenhouse gases compared to 1990 levels by 2050.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	The key aim of the Roadmap is a guide to a low carbon Europe. This plan will be complimentary to the RSES and as such no significant in-combination impacts are envisaged.
<p>The National Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (in prep)</p> <p>The main objective of this plan will be to guide the development of renewable electricity projects to ensure Ireland meets its future needs for renewable electricity in a sustainable manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	This plan is undergoing its own AA but it is not yet completed. A key issue to be addressed will be the method of renewable electricity generation and associated ecological impacts. The potential for in-combination effects is unclear as the plan is not sufficiently developed at this stage, however, would be expected to be in relation to electricity generation infrastructure and potential emissions to air. However, the main thrust of the plan is positive and no in-combination effects are predicted.
<p>The National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP)</p> <p>The NREAP is produced as a requirement of the Renewable Energy Directive, and sets out Ireland's "national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources consumed in transport,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; 	This plan was not subject to AA, but some actions arising out of it have since been subject to AA owing to judicial review. The plan is positive in that its aims are to accelerate the uptake on renewable energy, thereby reducing the dependence on fossil

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<i>electricity and heating and cooling in 2020</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive. 	fuels. The RSES will contribute to reaching the targets set in the NREAP and as such the plans are complementary.
<p>Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP)</p> <p>The OREDP identifies the opportunity for the sustainable development of Ireland’s abundant offshore renewable energy resources for increasing indigenous production of renewable electricity, thereby contributing to reductions in our greenhouse gas emissions, improving the security of our energy supply and creating jobs in the green economy. The OREDP sets out key principles, policy actions and enablers for delivery of Ireland’s significant potential in this area. In this way, the OREDP provides a framework for the sustainable development of Ireland’s offshore renewable energy resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	This plan was subject to AA. No significant in-combination impacts are envisaged at plan level. Projects arising from the OREDP, and successors to the OREDP, will be required to undergo AA Screening which will ensure no in-combination effects further down the planning hierarchy.
<p>Harnessing our Ocean Wealth - an Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland 2012</p> <p>Ireland aims to have the ocean become a key component for economic recovery and sustainable growth. As a national asset the potential of the Irish Sea is seen as something to be harnessed as outlined in Harnessing our Ocean Wealth an Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland 2012. Three high-level goals have been developed: Ireland will utilise market opportunities to improve the maritime economy and create sustainable growth; Improve the health of the sea ecosystems for economic benefit, and goods and services such as food, climate, health and well-being; and Encourage engagement with the sea to increase awareness of its value. There are two key targets: Double the value of our ocean wealth to 2.4% of GDP by 2030; and increase the turnover from our ocean economy to exceed €6.4bn by 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Hydromorphological impacts through infrastructure expansion; ▪ Alterations to water quality ▪ Disturbance to habitats and/or species; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	This increased productivity and activity proposed in Harnessing our Ocean Wealth is likely to have implications for coastal areas e.g. impacts to coastal and marine European Sites as a result of a greater intensity of development and activity. The RSES includes a number of marine policies which also see greater productivity in the maritime space and as such there is potential for in-combination effects.

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>White Paper ‘Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future (2015 – 2030)</p> <p><i>“A complete energy policy update, which sets out a framework to guide policy between now and 2030”.</i></p> <p>This instrument ensures supplies of energy to the public and private sector remain secure, affordable and competitive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to water quality; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats and/or species; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>Ireland’s White Paper underwent consultation and was developed with cognisance of environmental impact. This plan has similar aims to the NPF with the key focus being a reduction in national greenhouse gas emissions. The RSES is also seeking to address GHG emissions at the regional level. No likely significant in-combination effects are envisaged.</p>
<p>Grid25 Implementation Programme 2011-2016 and Ireland’s Grid Development Strategy, Your Grid Your Tomorrow</p> <p>The Grid25 Implementation Programme (IP) was a practical strategic overview of how the early stages of Grid25 were intended to be implemented. The IP identified the best current understanding of those parts of the transmission system that were envisaged as likely to be developed over the five years. Ireland’s Grid Development Strategy, Your Grid Your Tomorrow, published in 2017 outlines that Grid25 will be replaced in 2017 with an updated Implementation Programme and will be subject to environmental assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; and ▪ Disturbance. 	<p>There is potential for in-combination effects with the RSES in terms of infrastructure requirements resulting in habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation and the associated ecological impacts. These plans are subject to AA therefore no significant in-combination impacts are envisaged at plan level.</p>
<p>National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure in Transport 2017-2030</p> <p>Supports the provision of refuelling infrastructure for alternative fuels, common technical standards and appropriate consumer information. The alternative fuel options could include electricity, hydrogen, biofuels and natural gas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>This plan underwent SEA and AA. The potential for in-combination effects is expected to be in relation to the production and generation of alternative fuels which could have resultant impacts such as emissions to air and land use change, and requirement for infrastructure. This plan would not be expected to conflict with any aspects of the RSES but to positively contribute to it going forward.</p>
<p>The Bioenergy Plan (draft)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; 	<p>This plan is currently undergoing its own AA but it is not yet</p>

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<p>Aims to develop cost-effective harnessing of sustainable, indigenous, renewable energy resources. Also aims to reduce harmful emissions from traditional fuels.</p> <p>This plan will underpin the development of the sector in the period up to 2020 and lay foundations for its longer term growth and in contributing to renewable energy targets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat degradation or fragmentation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alteration to air quality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats and/or species; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>completed. The potential for in-combination effects is expected to be in relation to the production of biomass for energy which can result in habitat loss and the associated ecological impacts as well as emissions to air during combustion. This plan would not be expected to conflict with any aspects of the RSES but to positively influence/inform it going forward.</p>
<p>National Peatlands Strategy (NPS) and Raised Bog SAC Management Plans</p> <p>Establishes principles in relation to Irish peatlands in order to guide Government policy. Aims to provide a framework for which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution. Aims to meet nature conservation obligations while having regard to national and local economic, social and cultural needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Ammonia Deposition; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alteration to air quality; ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>Potential for in combination effects as land use changes could have adverse impacts on peatlands even where activities are undertaken at a considerable distance from a site. However, the RSES includes specific protection of peatlands in terms of land use (see RPO 101) and supports the sustainable use of peatlands in a manner which ensures there is no net contribution to biodiversity loss arising from development supported in this strategy.</p>
<p>Food Wise 2025</p> <p>Food Wise 2025 strategy identifies significant growth opportunities across all subsectors of the Irish agri-food industry. Growth Projection includes increasing the value added in the agri-food, fisheries and wood products sector by 70% to in excess of €13 billion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Land use change or intensification ▪ Water pollution ▪ Nitrogen deposition ▪ Disturbance to habitats/ species 	<p>Growth is to be achieved through sustainable intensification to maximise production efficiency whilst minimising the effects on the environment however there is increased risk of nutrient discharge to receiving waters and in turn a potential risk to biodiversity and Europe Sites if not controlled. With the required mitigation in the Food Wise Plan, no significant in-combination impacts are predicted. Mitigation measures included cross compliance with 13 Statutory Management Requirements, EIA Agricultural Regulations 2011, GLAS, and Screening for AA of licencing and permitting in the forestry and seafood sectors.</p>
<p>The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; 	<p>Spatial planning under the RSES is closely aligned with land use</p>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>A key agricultural policy with the main objectives of ensuring a decent standard of living for farmers and the provision of stable and safe food supply at affordable prices for consumers. The CAP through various iterations is the principal policy that drives agricultural management throughout the European Union. It recognises the economic and rural importance of agriculture through a system subsidies and support programmes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>change related to agriculture and rural growth and continued development of the rural economy. Some likely significant impacts are addressed through the Rural Development Plan 2014-2020 through the requirement for Appropriate Assessment, monitoring and introducing several pieces of legislation under the Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters (Regulations 2014, S.I. 31/2014). There is potential for in-combination impacts as the rural economy is promoted under the RSES.</p>
<p>Action Plan for Rural Development</p> <p>Action Plan for Rural Development sets out the Government’s approach for rural places in Ireland to grow and adapt through supportive measures which encourage innovation and build on the existing strengths of rural communities in Ireland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>No AA appears to have been carried out for the Action Plan for Rural Development which includes over 230 actions focussed on developing the rural economy. As such there is potential for in combination impacts with the RSES and other agricultural plan and policies. AA screening of the Action Plan is required to offset the potential for in-combination effects.</p>
<p>Rural Development Programme 2014-2020</p> <p>Provides a new suite of rural development measures designed to enhance the competitiveness of the agri-food sector, achieve more sustainable management of natural resources and ensure a more balanced development of rural areas. Includes provisions under Green Low Carbon Agri-Environment Scheme (GLAS); Bio-Energy; nutrient management planning; “Carbon Navigator” software tool and Targeted Agriculture Modernisation Scheme (TAMS).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; and 	<p>The RDP for 2014 – 2020 has been subject to SEA¹⁴, and AA¹⁵. The AA assessed the potential for impacts from the RDP measures e.g. for the GLAS scheme to result in inappropriate management prescriptions; minimum stocking rates under the Areas of Natural Constraints measure leading to overgrazing in sensitive habitats with dependent species, and TAMS supporting intensification. Mitigation included project specific AA for individual building, tourism or agricultural reclamation projects, consultations with key stakeholders during detailed measure development, and site-based monitoring of the effects of RDP measures. With such</p>

¹⁴<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/ruralenvironment/ruraldevelopment/ruraldevelopmentprogramme2014-2020/StrategEnvironmAssessSumState090615.pdf>

¹⁵<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/agarchive/ruralenvironment/preparatoryworkfortherdp2014-2020/RDP20142020DraftAppropriateAssessmentReport160514.pdf>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>Within the RDP are two targeted agri-environment schemes; Green Low Carbon Agri-Environment Scheme (GLAS) and Targeted Agriculture Modernisation Scheme (TAMS). They provide the role of a supportive measure to improve water quality and thus provide direct benefits in achieving the measures within the RSES.</p> <p>The achievement of the objectives outlined within GLAS, to improve water quality, mitigate against climate change and promote biodiversity will be of direct positive benefit in achieving the measures within the RSES and the goals of the Natura Directives. The scheme has an expected participation for 2014-2020 of 50,000 farmers which have to engage in specific training and tasks in order to receive full payment. Farmers within the scheme must have a nutrient management plan which is a strategy for maximising the return from on and off-farm chemical and organic fertilizer resources. This has a direct positive contribution towards protecting waterbodies from pollution through limiting the amount of fertiliser that is placed on the land. The scheme prioritises farms in vulnerable catchments with 'high status' waterbodies and also focuses on educating farmers on best practices to try and improve efficiency along with environmental outcomes.</p> <p>The TAMS scheme is open to all farmers and is focused on supporting productive investment for modernisation. This financial grant for farmers is focused on the pig and poultry sectors, dairy equipment and the storage of slurry and other farmyard manures. Within the TAMS scheme are two further schemes; the Animal Welfare, Safety and Nutrient Storage Scheme and the Low Emission Slurry Spreading Scheme. Both schemes are focused on productivity for farmers but have the ability to contribute towards a reduction in point and diffuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>measures in place, it was concluded that there would be no significant in-combination impacts on European sites.</p>

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source pollution through improved nutrient management.		
<p>Forest Policy Review: Forests, Products and People – A Renewed Vision (2014) / Forestry Programme 2014 - 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ireland’s forestry sector is striving to increase forestry cover and one of the recommended policy actions in the Forest Policy Review: Forests, Products and People – A Renewed Vision (2014) is to increase the level of afforestation annually over time and support afforestation and mobilisation measures under the Forestry Programme 2014-2020. Two key objectives within the Forestry Programme 2014-2020 that will influence the RSES are to increase Ireland’s forest cover to 18% and to establish 10,000 ha of new forests and woodlands per annum. As part of this programme there are a number of schemes that promote sustainable forest management and they include the Afforestation Scheme, the Woodland Improvement Scheme, the Forest Road Scheme and the Native Woodland Conservation Scheme. Under the Native Woodland Conservation Scheme funding is provided to restore existing native woodland which promotes Ireland’s native woodland resource and associated biodiversity. Native woodlands provide wider ecosystem functions and services which once restored can contribute to the protection and enhancement of water quality and aquatic habitats. New guidance and plans are also being developed to address forestry adjacent to water bodies, Freshwater Pearl Mussel Plans for 8 priority catchments and a Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan (NPWS). The mitigation measures within these plans will be particularly important in terms of protecting sensitive habitats and species from such forestry increases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Alterations to air quality; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>Ireland’s Forestry Programme 2014 – 2020 has undergone AA¹⁶. A key recommendation is that all proposed forestry projects should be subject to an assessment of their impacts and the proximity of Natura 2000 habitats and species should be taken into account when proposals are generated.</p>
<p>Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) and Nitrates Action Programme (currently being updated)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; 	<p>No risk of likely significant in-combination effects from the Directive as the primary purpose of is to improve environmental</p>

¹⁶<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/forestry/publicconsultation/newforestryprogramme2014-2020/nis/ForestryProgrammeNaturalImpactStatement290914.pdf>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>This Directive has the objective of reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and preventing further pollution. The NAP is Ireland's response to implementing the directive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Nutrient enrichment; and ▪ Alteration to air quality. 	<p>quality. Furthermore it is noted that the latest update to the NAP is undergoing AA and an NIS is in preparation. This will ensure appropriate mitigation is included to prevent significant in-combination effects from occurring.</p>
<p>The EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) and Our Sustainable Future: A Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland (2012) (national)</p> <p>The overarching sustainable development policy document in the EU. During the 2009 review the EU noted a number of unsustainable trends that require urgent action including a decrease in high energy consumption in the transport sector in line with the 2020 Strategy. At national level, Our Sustainable Future: A Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland (2012) has followed the model used in the EU SDS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>There is potential for in-combination effects with the RSES in terms of infrastructure requirements resulting in habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation and the associated ecological impacts. However, the main thrust of the plan is positive and would not be expected to conflict with any aspects of the RSES but to positively influence it going forward.</p>
<p>National Mitigation Plan 2017</p> <p>Plan outlining the measures and actions of four specific sectors to mitigate climate change in the areas of transport, energy, the built environment and agriculture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; ▪ Disturbance; and ▪ In-combination impacts within the same scheme. 	<p>The NMP was subject to its own SEA and AA. The framework supports climate change mitigation. No risk of likely significant in-combination effects.</p>
<p>Smarter Travel 'A New Transport Policy for Ireland' 2009-2020</p> <p>Sets out five key goals: to reduce overall travel demand; to maximise the efficiency of the transport network; to reduce reliance on fossil fuels; to reduce transport emissions; and to improve accessibility to transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of 	<p>There is potential for in-combination effects with the RSES in terms of infrastructure requirements resulting in habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation and the associated ecological impacts, potential collision impacts and/or disturbance. However the main thrust of the plan is overall positive as it relates to reducing emissions and reliance on fossil fuels in the transport sector and therefore will positively influence/inform the RSES going forward.</p>

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<p>Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)</p> <p>The primary purpose of this Directive and the various pieces of national legislation that have enacted through the implementation of River Basin Management Plans, is to achieve good status for all water bodies, with no deterioration in water body status.</p>	<p>invasive species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>No risk of likely significant in-combination effects will result as the primary purpose of the Directive is to improve ecological status. The proper management of agriculture, forestry and infrastructural development will contribute to achieving the objectives of the WFD as developed through the RBMP. The second cycle draft River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 has been published together with an NIS including mitigation to offset negative effects.</p>
<p>Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC)</p> <p>The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) has adopted an ecosystem-based approach to protect and manage the marine environment. This forms an integral component of maritime spatial planning within the EU and requires Member States to develop a strategy to achieve or maintain good environmental status in their marine waters by 2020. Ireland has developed a Programme of Measures that will meet targets set in order to achieve or maintain good environmental status. This is of direct relevance to the RBMP which is required under the WFD which sets a goal of achieving good ecological status for all EU ground and surface waters (including intertidal, transitional and coastal waters), which directly complements the goal of good environmental status under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>The MSFD Programme of Measures¹⁷ have not been subject to AA as all measures included within the POMs are currently being applied in Ireland under existing directive implementation e.g. WFD POMs, marine planning and licensing etc.</p>
<p>Maritime Spatial Planning Directive 2014/89/EU</p> <p>The Maritime Spatial Planning Directive obliges all coastal Member States to establish maritime spatial plans as soon as possible and at the latest by 31st March 2021. This will help promote sustainable growth of maritime activities recognising the ever increasing use and exploitation of the maritime space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Loss of ecosystem services, 	<p>Ireland is addressing its obligations under the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive through the preparation of the National Marine Planning Framework. A draft framework has been prepared and this is now the subject of statutory consultation alongside SEA and AA processes. Mitigation has been proposed under the AA to offset potential for adverse effects. The intention is these</p>

¹⁷ http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/public-consultation/files/outcome/msfd_poms_summary_report.pdf

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
and its resources by a number of sectors such as fishing, shipping, leisure, aquaculture and renewable energy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Species mortality; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>measures will cascade through the planning system and align with those already in place as a result of the AA for the National Planning Framework.</p> <p>Potential for in-combination effects as it sets policy framework on which relates to social. Economic and environmental issues which are directly relevant to the RSES. It is a policy of the Framework to ensure the resilience of our natural resources and cultural assets. Linkage to wider policies such as for European Sites under the Birds and Habitats Directives and the Marine Framework Directive are recognised and the need to set high level planning policies in protecting and making responsible use of our natural environment.</p>
<p>EU Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)</p> <p>This Directive establishes a regime, which sets groundwater quality standards and introduces measures to prevent or limit inputs of pollutants into groundwater.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat degradation; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>No risk of likely significant in-combination effects will result as the primary purpose of the Directive is to improve environmental quality.</p>
<p>The Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive (96/61/EC)</p> <p>Objective is to achieve a high level of protection of the environment through measures to prevent in the first instance or to reduce emissions to air, water and land from industrial sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat degradation; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	<p>Particularly relevant to the electricity generation and transport sector. No risk of likely significant in-combination effects will result as the primary purpose of the Directive is to improve environmental quality.</p>
<p>European Union Biodiversity Strategy to 2020</p> <p>Aims to halt or reverse biodiversity loss and speed up the EU's transition towards a resource efficient and green economy as per the Convention on Biological Diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and 	<p>No risk of likely significant in-combination effects will result as the primary purpose of the Strategy is to halt the loss of habitat and species. One target is to increase the contribution of agriculture and forest to biodiversity, integrating more biodiversity needs into CAP and forest management plans. Opportunities exist in the implementation of the RSES to assist in achieving the objectives of the Strategy through consideration and integration of environmental issues throughout the spatial planning hierarchy.</p>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	
<p>Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000 (2014-2020) This plan identifies the range of actions needed to help improve the status of Ireland's habitats and wildlife.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species. 	No risk of likely significant in-combination effects as this plan is entirely positive in its actions. The framework supports climate change mitigation. The framework will assist in ensuring the Natura 2000 Network adapts to climate change.
<p>Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 Ireland's third iteration of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), for conserving and restoring Ireland's biodiversity covering the period 2017 to 2021. The aims are to achieve Ireland's Vision for Biodiversity through addressing issues ranging from improving the management of protected areas to increasing awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystem services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved habitat and species protection 	As the BAP is aimed at environmental protection, there are no in-combination effects.
<p>National Transport Strategy The NTA's Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) provides a framework for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services over the period 2016 - 2035.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss or destruction; ▪ Habitat fragmentation or degradation; ▪ Alterations to air quality; ▪ Disturbance to habitats/species; ▪ Alterations to water quality and/or water movement; and ▪ Introduction or spread of invasive species 	This Transport Strategy has informed the RSES. The RSES is required by legislation to be consistent with the National Transport Authority's Transportation Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area. The strategy has undergone AA.
<p>National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2010-2020 The National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2010-2020, prepared by the EPA identifies priority actions to prevent hazardous waste, improve the collection rate of hazardous waste in certain categories, movement towards self-sufficiency in hazardous waste management for Ireland and the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction of hazardous substances into the environment 	Non-compliances with the Environmental Quality Standards for Priority Substances and Priority Hazardous Substances in Ireland is very low and not of significant concern with the exception of two ubiquitous substances (mercury and PAHs). Good chemical status can only be achieved if there are no breaches of Environmental Quality Standards for any priority substance. In relation to the

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>identification and regulation of legacy issues in relation to hazardous waste. In addition three Regional Waste Plans (Eastern-Midlands; Southern; and Connaught-Ulster) were published in 2015 to provide a framework for the prevention and management of wastes for the three defined regional area. These documents include policies and actions complementary to the draft RSES, in particular those addressing remediation of historic and illegal landfills.</p>		<p>RSES, this will influence for example, certain agricultural practices including the application of herbicides and pesticides and the use of sheep dip.</p> <p>The National Hazardous Waste Management Plan has been subject to Screening for AA. The revised plan has been screened out for AA, however, any specific plan or project proposal relating to or arising out of the recommendations in the revised plan will need to be subjected to the AA processes at the level of the more details sectoral plans and ultimately at individual project level¹⁸. As such, no in-combination effects are expected with the RSES.</p>
<p>National Water Resources Plan (in prep.)</p> <p>This Framework will deliver a sustainable water supply on a catchment and water resource zone basis, meeting growth and demand requirements through drought and critical periods. The resources plan will need to take account of WFD objectives and the programme of measures proposed in the relevant catchments and water resource zones. Specific measures in the plan with relevance to Irish Water include those for urban wastewater and urban runoff and also as part of other measures in relation to the lead in drinking water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased abstractions leading to changes/ pressure on existing hydrology/ hydrogeological regimes. 	<p>The plan will seek to develop sustainable water supplies but must consider particularly critical drought periods when assimilation capacity for diffuse runoff may be reduced. The potential for in-combination impacts is unclear as the plan and its associated SEA and AA reporting is not available at this stage however in the context of the RSES, there is a commitment to phasing of development / growth and availability of services in advance of planning.</p>
<p>Lead in Drinking Water Mitigation Plan</p> <p>The Government published a National Strategy to reduce exposure to Lead in Drinking Water in June 2015. In support of this strategy Irish Water, as the national public water utility has prepared the Irish Water Lead in Drinking Water Mitigation Plan in collaboration with the HSE and EPA. The plan proposes orthophosphate dosing of the water supply at various treatment sites as orthophosphate is a corrosion inhibitor that creates a coating on lead and other metal pipes which prevents the lead dissolving into the water. Orthophosphate dosing takes a period of 6-18 months to develop a full coating, after</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction of orthophosphate into the water environment/ nutrient enrichment/ eutrophication 	<p>An AA of the Lead Mitigation Plan has been undertaken¹⁹. Mitigation measures proposed included a lead services replacement Standard Operating Procedure to ensure best industry practice for the management of site operation.</p> <p>Another measure, Corrective Water Treatment i.e. orthophosphate treatment, is proposed as an interim measure to reduce lead concentrations in drinking water. A bespoke environmental assessment methodology has been developed for the plan, in consultation with the EPA and NPWS, to ensure that risks to water bodies in the context of achieving WFD objectives and Birds and Habitats Directives, can be assessed and mitigated as the dosing</p>

¹⁸ http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/waste/haz/NHWM_Plan.pdf

¹⁹ <https://www.water.ie/projects-plans/lead-mitigation-plan/public-consultation/Lead-in-Drinking-Water-Mitigation-Plan-Natura-Impact-Statement.pdf>

Plan/ Programme/ Policy	Key Types of Impacts	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>which dosing must be maintained in order to sustain the protective coating. As such, the Lead in Drinking Water Mitigation Plan has the potential to significantly impact on the objectives of the RSES</p>		<p>programme is rolled out. Subject to the AA process which has been specified for each dosing location, and appropriate mitigation measures being identified, it is expected that there will be no in-combination effects on European sites.</p>
<p>National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan (2015) The National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan was prepared in 2015, outlining the measures needed to improve the management of wastewater sludge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat loss and disturbance from new / upgraded infrastructure; ▪ Species disturbance; ▪ Changes to water quality or quantity; ▪ Nutrient enrichment /eutrophication. 	<p>The plan was subject to both AA and SEA and includes a number of mitigation measures which were identified in relation to transport of materials, land spreading of sludge and additional education and research requirements. This plan does not specifically address domestic wastewater loads, only those relating to Irish Water facilities. A plan is proposed in relation to national drinking water sludge management to complement the NWSMP, but no details on the drinking water sludge plan are yet available. In relation to the plan as it stands, no in-combination effects are expected with the implementation of proposed mitigation measures.</p>

8 AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT RSES

8.1 PROPOSED MATERIAL AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT RSES

The draft RSES went on public display in December 2018. Following the end of the consultation period in March 2019, the SRA reviewed all of the submissions received. This is recorded in the Directors Report on Submissions to the Draft RSES which can be viewed on at <https://www.southernassembly.ie/regional-planning/public-consultation>.

On foot of this review of submissions, a series of proposed *Material Amendments* to the draft plan were identified. To inform the proposed Material Amendment stage of the RSES, the amendments were screened for likely significant effects and where necessary, they were assessed for adverse impacts on the integrity of European sites in accordance with Section 24 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The reporting in relation to the screening/ assessment is included in **Appendix G** to this NIR. In summary, the majority of proposed material amendments were considered to have no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) from that already identified in the draft RSES [**Chapter 7** of this NIR] having regard to the suite of relevant RPOs included in the draft RSES [See Table 7.1].

In a limited number of cases, additional assessments were considered necessary. Specifically, this included new RPOs which had not previously been considered and significant amendments with potential for further environmental impacts. In one example (RPO 6 (former RPO B) it was recommended to delete wording relating to the 'early delivery of the M24', which was subsequently deleted as part of the iterative process. This screening/ assessment was put on public display alongside the proposed Material Amendments. These documents were put on display from 12th September 2018 - 11th October 2019.

8.2 MINOR MODIFICATIONS

Following the end of the second consultation period in in October 2019, the SRA reviewed all of the submissions received. This is recorded in the Directors Report on Proposed Material Amendments to the S RSES which can be viewed on at <https://www.southernassembly.ie/regional-planning/public-consultation>.

In many instances, the amendments previously assessed were confirmed following consultation and, in several cases, minor non-material amendments were proposed to address issues of consistency, environmental mitigation and other minor matters. These changes have been assessed in the context of this NIR and this is recorded in **Appendix G**. In summary, none of the proposed minor amendments were considered to have potential for likely significant effects.

9 MITIGATION MEASURES / RECOMMENDATIONS

Mitigation measures are aimed at avoiding or reducing the potential adverse effects of a plan or project on a European site, during or after completion, and form an integral part of the specifications of the project (EC, 2000). In addition, they must ensure the continuity of biological processes and protect the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network (EC, 2011).

Mitigation is defined in the Commission services guidance document ‘Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the “Habitats” Directive 92/43/EEC’ as ‘measures aimed at minimising or even cancelling the negative impact of a plan or project, during or after its completion’ (paragraph 4.5.2). The research for this guidance document suggests that mitigation measures should be considered in accordance with a hierarchy of preferred options as illustrated in **Figure 8-1** below. The overall objective is to avoid sensitivities.

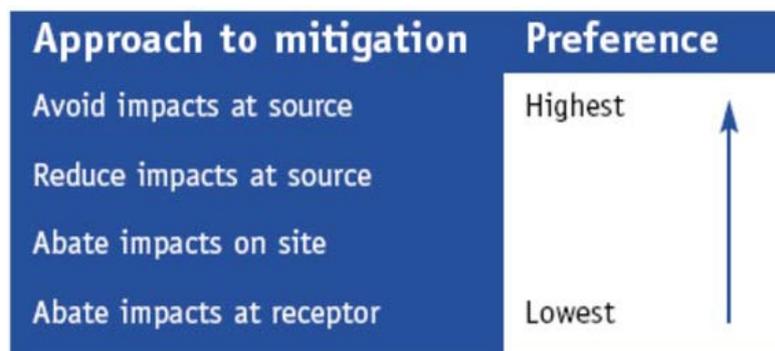


Figure 8-1 – Hierarchy of Preferred Mitigation Options

9.1 OVERALL MITIGATION STRATEGY

It is noted that actions arising out of the RSES shall be required to conform to the relevant regulatory provisions aimed at preventing pollution or other environmental effects likely to adversely affect the integrity of European Sites, where applicable and appropriate. In addition, all lower level plans and projects arising from the implementation of the RSES will themselves be subject to screening for AA and where relevant, AA.

Mitigation proposed is aligned with and has been drawn up in parallel with the allied SEA Environmental Report. The overall strategy responds to the level of detail available at the RSES level and the role for other inter-related plans and programmes which have defined competent authorities which interact with the RA.

The overarching mitigation strategy is therefore, that potential Likely Significant Effects (LSE) or Adverse Effects on Site Integrity (AESI) will be considered fully at project level during pre-planning design and AA, when the specific effects of a development option can be reduced or eliminated through targeted project-specific surveys and iterative design, in order to limit the potential for LSEs or AEIS.

Targeted and ‘appropriate’ evaluation and analysis will be undertaken at initially CDP level and ultimately project stage, supported where necessary with site-specific or project-specific surveys or studies. Project level Screening for appropriate assessment and if applicable Natura Impact

Statements shall be prepared for all projects falling out of the RSES as required by Chapter 1 of the draft RSES which states:

- (a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft RSES should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate*
- (b): The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.*

In addition to this overarching RPO, which sets out the SRA commitment to protecting the European sites with which they share connectivity, there has been significant iterative feedback on the emerging policy base in the context of avoiding and mitigating adverse effects on European sites, across the broad RSES policy base. This iterative feedback resulted, in the first instance, in a number of environmental protection policies being incorporated directly in to the draft RSES. These protection policies have in turn underpinned the individual policy objectives considered in the NIR. This broad protection policy base is presented in **Table 7.1** in Chapter 7 and covers a key mitigation strategy for the AA, built around the need for feasibility studies and robust route and site selections, to inform decision making and further appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes once projects are developed. The status of these protection policies is also clarified in Table 7.1 and confirmation that they are included in the final RSES. Further objective specific mitigation measures have also been identified within the NIR and are identified in the next section.

9.1.1 Specific Mitigation Proposals for the SRA RSES

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
Chapter 1	None	n/a
Chapter 2	<p>An explicit RPO should be included to protect and manage the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>The requirements of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive are not specifically considered under the AA process (except in so far as they support a qualifying feature) but it is recommended that the SRA includes a specific RPO, which ensures that ecological connectivity within the Plan area is maintained or improved, which will in turn improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Develop an ecological resource map for the region.</p>	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>(d) Development Plans shall include an objective for the protection of European sites and Natural Heritage Areas (designated and notified proposed NHAs).</p> <p>Further, RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M) allows the scope for environmental monitoring and developing resources to assist environmental monitoring including an ecological resource map for the region in co-ordination with the relevant stakeholders (including the EPA) where it states:</p> <p>The Southern Regional Assembly will put in place a robust and transparent monitoring system to ensure that the progress of the regional objectives are tracked against baseline data at regular intervals during the life of the Strategy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Making baseline data available as a shared evidence base, as appropriate, for the Region to local authorities and other public bodies which will inform the preparation and implementation of a local authority's Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans; b. Carrying out regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data (including environmental data), if available, from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories;

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>c. Supporting the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection;</p> <p>d. Establishing a monitoring committee with cross-sectoral and cross-regional representation to oversee progress and contribute to the process. The process will facilitate the involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the implementation of the RSES to provide input on progress.</p>
Chapter 3 - Tralee	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
	<p>should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of sites and if necessary, the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage, if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated; then the proposals will only make provision for the level and</p>	<p>likely significant effects on the environment, will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1, sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable, that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
	<p>location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p> <p>Flood relief schemes should be subject to robust site selection processes in addition to the appropriate environmental assessments.</p>	<p>development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: local authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 15 (former RPO 10) Tralee integrates proposed mitigation in</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>the following sections ():</p> <p>(b): To seek investment to sustainably support strengthening these attributes and infrastructure subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments, including key inter regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) on the strategic road network to the Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas, the Atlantic Economic Corridor and between Tralee Killarney and Killorglin (Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle).</p> <p>(d) Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive Lee Estuary.</p>
Chapter 3 - Killarney	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECPs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
	<p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>Tourism action plans should undertake carrying capacity assessments to identify visitor pressures, and site/route selection studies with appropriate environmental assessments for proposed development/infrastructural projects to avoid potential adverse impacts to European Sites.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary, the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage, if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented</p>	<p>environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment, will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS), as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1, sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable, that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns.</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
	<p>without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p>	<p>The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to ‘environmentally sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 18 (former RPO 11) Killarney integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections (italics):</p> <p>b): To seek investment to sustainably support its compact growth and regeneration, attributes and infrastructure, including key inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) on the strategic road network between Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas, the Atlantic Economic Corridor and between Tralee-Killarney and Killorglin (Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle) subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p> <p>(g): Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the downstream freshwater ecosystem in the National Park (River Deenagh, Lough Leane).</p>
Chapter 3 - Mallow	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECs.</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
	<p>and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection</p>	<p>These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1, sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable, that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
	<p>to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage, if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated, then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p> <p>Flood relief schemes should be subject to robust site selection processes in addition to the appropriate environmental assessments.</p>	<p>required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 19 (former RPO 12) Mallow integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections :</p> <p>b): Seek investment to support attributes and the sustainable delivery of infrastructure, including enhanced inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) along the strategic road network N20/M20 corridor to the Cork and Limerick-Shannon metropolitan areas and Atlantic Economic Corridor, subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p> <p>d): Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the Local Authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive River Blackwater.</p>
Chapter 3 -	Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and	Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed

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Clonakilty	<p>species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p>	<p>mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECPs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment, will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable, that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the</p>

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	<p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p> <p>Flood relief schemes should be subject to robust site selection processes in addition to the appropriate environmental assessments.</p>	<p>Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure</p>

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		<p>that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 23 (former RPO 13) Clonakilty integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections :</p> <p>(a): To strengthen sustainably the employment-led growth and regeneration of Clonakilty as an economic driver for West Cork, build upon inherent strengths, in particular food production and tourism, while protecting and enhancing the natural environment of Clonakilty Bay</p> <p>c): Seek investment to support attributes and the sustainable delivery of infrastructure, including enhanced inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) for all key settlements along the N71 road corridor to the Cork metropolitan area, Port of Cork and Cork Airport assets, subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>

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Chapter 3 - Ennis	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment, will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1, sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage,</p>

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	<p>of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary, the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage, if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated, then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p>	<p>the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns</p>

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		<p>should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders, to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 13 (former RPO 14) Ennis integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections :</p> <p>c. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Ennis, subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments;</p>
Chapter 3 - Nenagh	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECs.</p>

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	<p>integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary, the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Support for [linear] infrastructure and traffic management plans are subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage, if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be</p>	<p>These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment, will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1, sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable, that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising), is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where</p>

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	<p>adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p>	<p>required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to ‘environmentally sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders, to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth, does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water</p>

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		<p>dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 20 (former RPO 15) Nenagh integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections:</p> <p>b. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Nenagh subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p>
Chapter 3 - Thurles	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g.</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route</p>

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	<p>hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary, the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Support for [linear] infrastructure and traffic management plans are subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES, shall recognise that at the project consent stage, if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts, which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated, then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be</p>	<p>selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives, that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment, will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1, sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable, that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising), is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns.</p>

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	<p>concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p>	<p>The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to ‘environmentally sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis, in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders, to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of</p>

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		<p>new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 21 (former RPO 16) Thurles integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections :</p> <p>c. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Thurles including support for the delivery of projects submitted under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p> <p>e. Future growth of the town should be planned for, on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water, to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive River Suir</p>
Chapter 3 – Newcastle West	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECPs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p>

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	<p>contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>Tourism action plans should undertake carrying capacity assessments to identify visitor pressures, and site/route selection studies with appropriate environmental assessments for proposed development/infrastructural projects to avoid potential adverse impacts to European Sites.</p> <p>In order to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary, the potential of sites to avoid adverse</p>	<p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment, will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclIA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out, that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable, that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising), is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective</p>

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	<p>effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Support for [linear] infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage, if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated, then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p>	<p>that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs, as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of</p>

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		<p>water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 22 (former RPO 17) Newcastle West integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections :</p> <p>c. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>
Chapter 3 - Kilkenny	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECPs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for</p>

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	<p>should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p>	<p>projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns</p>

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		<p>should be considered to refer to ‘environmentally sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 12 (former RPO 18) Kilkenny City integrates proposed</p>

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		<p>mitigation in the following sections (italics):</p> <p>e) To support urban generation through investment in the Abbey Quarter & other initiatives to improve the Public Realm and regenerate underused land in the City and to support implementation</p>
Chapter 3 - Carlow	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECPs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment</p>

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	<p>should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p> <p>Linear/ strategic infrastructure and associated infrastructure development (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.</p>	<p>Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including</p>

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		<p>EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 14 (former RPO 19) Carlow integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections (italics):</p> <p>(vii): To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Carlow subject to the outcome of the planning</p>

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		<p>process and environmental assessments</p> <p>(x): To support development of underused lands along the River Barrow as a strategic natural asset for the town. Any future development of underused lands along the River Barrow or proposals for an additional bridge should be subject to further studies to inform the exact nature and intensity that could be accommodated without giving rise to adverse effects on sensitive Natura 2000 habitats and consider any in combination effects arising from proposals for a bridge.</p>
Chapter 3 - Wexford	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
	<p>existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p> <p>Linear/ strategic infrastructure and associated infrastructure development (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid</p>	<p>accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility</p>

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	<p>impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.</p>	<p>studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 16 (former RPO 20) Wexford integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections (<i>italics</i>):</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		f) To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Wexford subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments
Chapter 3 - Clonmel	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECPs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EcIA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse</p>

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	<p>assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p> <p>Linear infrastructure and associated infrastructure (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.</p>	<p>effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying</p>

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		<p>capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 17 (former RPO 21) Clonmel integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections (<i>italics</i>):</p> <p>f. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Clonmel subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p>
Chapter 3 - Gorey	Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and	Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed

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	<p>species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse</p>	<p>mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECPs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the</p>

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	<p>effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p> <p>Linear infrastructure and associated infrastructure (such as park and ride facilities) will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.</p>	<p>Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure</p>

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		<p>that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 25 (former RPO 22) Gorey integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections (italics):</p> <p>g): To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Gorey subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>
Chapter 3 - Dungarvan	<p>Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Increasing population growth should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and</p>

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	<p>is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site.</p> <p>Policy wording in the RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be</p>	<p>AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where</p>

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	<p>adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p> <p>Linear infrastructure and associated infrastructure will be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection, to reduce/ avoid impacts on the environment. Furthermore, they will require appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes as appropriate.</p>	<p>required.</p> <p>RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns is an overarching objective that applies environmentally sustainable criteria in support of infrastructure development and compact growth of Key Towns. The RPO is in addition to further tailored RPOs for each Key Town.</p> <p>Sub part (i) specifically requires: Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>Sub part (j) states: Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>Sub part (k) states: Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water</p>

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		<p>dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Sub part (L) states: In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>RPO 24 (former RPO 23) Dungarvan integrates proposed mitigation in the following sections (italics):</p> <p>f. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Dungarvan (including amenities and facilities for the community and voluntary sector) subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>
Chapter 3 - General	<p>Area action plans shall be prepared for each of the 14 growth areas and shall assess potential for impact pathways in relation to European sites and the potential for ex-situ impacts. Action plans will ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site as a result of objectives and policies included in each plan. Phasing of services in tandem with growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p>	<p>Chapter 1 includes a section entitled Environment and Environmental Appraisal which integrates the proposed mitigation measures and explicitly states:</p> <p>The RSES is the regional tier within the planning framework, guided at the national level by the NPF, it will be supported by further robust local level planning through CCDP and LECPs. These in turn will be subject to appropriate statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making</p>

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	<p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>The RSES shall recognise that at the project consent stage if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.</p>	<p>in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>In addition, the following RPOs in Chapter 3 address mitigation:</p>

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		<p>RPO 3 (former RPO 2): Local Authority Core Strategies states: In preparing Core Strategies, local authorities shall determine a hierarchy of settlement and appropriate growth rates in accordance with the guiding principles (including environmental protection) and typology of settlement in the RSES</p> <p>RPO 4 (former RPO 3): Infrastructure Investment states : Infrastructure investment shall be aligned with the spatial planning strategy of the RSES.</p> <p>RPO 5 (former RPO 4): Population Growth and Environmental Criteria states: Increased population growth should be planned with regard to environmental criteria, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assimilative capacity of the receiving environment; • Proximity of Natura 2000 sites and potential for adverse effects on these sites, and their conservation objectives; • Areas with flood potential.
Chapter 4 - Rural Economy CAP	As SEA and AA were not undertaken on these plans / programmes the SRA should condition any support for same on the outcome of AA for the individual initiatives it intends to support. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.	The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows: (a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of

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		<p>biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p>
Chapter 4 - Action Plan for Rural Development and Rural Development Programme	As SEA and AA were not undertaken on these plans / programmes the SRA should condition any support for same on the outcome of AA for the individual initiatives it intends to support. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a</p>

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		<p>minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p>
<p>Chapter 4 - Digital and Physical Infrastructure in Rural Areas</p> <p>Rural Partnership Models</p>	<p>Mitigation measures in sectoral plans will be applicable to the delivery of any projects arising from RPO 44. However, the policy should reinforce such mitigation by referencing the fact that any plans or individual projects relating to the development and/or establishment of digital and physical infrastructure are subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p>	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p>

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		<p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>Further, RPO 136 (former RPO 132) National Broadband Plan (NBP) states: t is an objective to seek to expedite the implementation of the National Broadband Plan and the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA for the NBP to all locations in the Region and seek reporting procedures to the Southern Regional Assembly on progress and targets being achieved from the relevant State Departments and agencies through effective implementation mechanisms for the RSES.</p>
<p>Chapter 4 - Innovative Hubs and Centres of Excellence</p> <p>Innovation in rural Areas</p>	<p>RPO 46 and 48 will require robust feasibility and site selection, which includes explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European sites and where relevant potential for adverse effects on the integrity of a European site will be carried out in advance of any site development.</p>	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider</p>

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<p>Diversification</p> <p>Economic clusters and Ecosystems</p> <p>Multinational Corporation</p>		<p>environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p>
Chapter 4 - Tourism	<p>Any plans relating to the development of new or expansion/renewal of existing facilities and amenities shall be subject to the commitments under RPO 1 and the outcome of appropriate planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>The feasibility of plans in the context of site sensitivity and the sustainable limits of specific sites will need to be established before any targeted initiatives. See RPO 52.</p>	<p>In addition to RPO 1, RPO 54 (former RPO 52) Tourism and the Environment specifically states : Development of new or enhanced tourism infrastructure and facilities should include an assessment of the environmental sensitivities of the area including an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) if required in order to avoid adverse impacts on the receiving environment. Where such tourism infrastructure or facilities are developed, the managing authority/agency should ensure that effective monitoring protocols are put in place to monitor and assess the ongoing effect of tourism on sensitive features with particular focus on natural, archaeological and built heritage</p>

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		assets.
Chapter 4 - Retail	Support for infrastructural development is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.	Regarding RPO 55 (former RPO 53) Retail, retail strategies provide a high level policy guidance for the location of retail development. Environmental considerations regarding the retail hierarchy will be addressed through the lower tiered development plan and local area plan processes and project consent stages. RPO 1 addresses the mitigation required to ensure the appropriate level of environmental assessment is undertaken at these stages.
Chapter 4 - Low Carbon Economy	In line with RPO 1, robust feasibility and site selection, which includes explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European sites and where relevant potential for adverse effects on the integrity of a European site will be carried out in advance of any site development.	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura</p>

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		<p>2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p>
<p>Chapter 4- National Policy Statement on Bio-economy</p> <p>Bio-economy and rural areas</p>	<p>The feasibility study shall consider the potential for adverse effects on European sites. Furthermore, it shall develop siting criteria for different bioenergy types to inform future suitable location within the region.</p> <p>The mitigation measures committed to as part of the Appropriate Assessments of Foodwise 2025 and Forestry Programme 2014-2020 and the yet to be published Bio-energy Plan must be fully applied if the policies on bio-energy in the region are to avoid adverse effects on European sites. The relevant measures shall be detailed and considered in the feasibility study.</p>	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA</p>

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		<p>processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>Further, RPO 57 (former RPO 55) National Policy Statement on Bio-economy states: It is an objective to support the National Policy Statement on Bio-economy (2018), subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA undertaken where necessary and the exploration of opportunities in the circular resource-efficient economy including undertaking a bio-economy feasibility study for the Region to identify areas of potential growth (including opportunities presented in the EU Bio-economy Strategy updated in 2018 for urban bio-economies and piloting circular bio economy cities) to inform investment in line with the national transition objective to a low carbon climate resilient and circular economy.</p> <p>RPO 58 (former RPO 56) Bio-economy and Rural Areas states it is an objective to facilitate the development of the rural economy through supporting a sustainable and economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together the bio-economy, subject to required environmental assessment processes where necessary and balanced with while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting the natural landscape.</p>
Chapter 4- Bio-economy and Rural Areas	A feasibility study will be undertaken to inform decision making in relation to development of the Lisheen site to determine what development may be appropriate given the proximity of the site to	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and</p>

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<p>National Bio-economy Hub in Lisheen</p> <p>Health Place Audit</p>	<p>the Lower River Suir SAC and how it can be achieved while ensuring the conservation objectives of the SAC are not compromised. It is noted that the site can only be developed where it can be determined, beyond reasonable scientific doubt that adverse effects can be avoided in the integrity of any European sites.</p> <p>Local economy and community plans will be subject to AA when prepared. This will include areas already in existence such as Lisheen which may not have previously been subject to AA. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p>	<p>development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>Further, RPO 59 (former RPO 57) National Bio-economy Hub in Lisheen states : It is an objective to support the sustainable development of the Lisheen Bio-economy Hub site into a significant economic and employment driver with the potential to significantly contribute towards meeting Ireland's climate change targets as a strategic site of European significance. Such initiatives as the Lisheen site shall be subject to robust environmental assessment including Flood Risk Assessment (if required) and</p>

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		satisfy AA requirements so as to AA requirements and avoid adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites.
Chapter 4- Locations for Employment Development	Robust feasibility and site selection, which includes explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European sites and where relevant potential for adverse effects on the integrity of a European site will be carried out in advance of identifying further strategic employment zones.	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p>

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<p>Chapter 4- Trade; International good practice; Bidding capacity; Common and shared evidence base; Future Proof Anticipating economic structural changes</p>	<p>With reference to RPO 71 Shared Evidence Base, it is recommended that the shared evidence base extend to environmental performance also.</p>	<p>RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M) allows the scope for environmental monitoring and developing a shared evidence base to assist environmental monitoring in co-ordination with the relevant stakeholders (including the EPA) where it states:</p> <p>The Southern Regional Assembly will put in place a robust and transparent monitoring system to ensure that the progress of the regional objectives are tracked against baseline data at regular intervals during the life of the Strategy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Making baseline data available as a shared evidence base, as appropriate, for the Region to local authorities and other public bodies which will inform the preparation and implementation of a local authority’s Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans; b. Carrying out regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data (including environmental data), if available, from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories; c. Supporting the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection; d. Establishing a monitoring committee with cross-sectoral and

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		cross-regional representation to oversee progress and contribute to the process. The process will facilitate the involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the implementation of the RSES to provide input on progress.
Chapter 4- Marine Economy Maritime Spatial Consistency and Alignment	<p>As per the RPO 76, support for any project will be subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>The mitigations arising from the AA of the upcoming MSP shall be fully integrated into the developing marine economy.</p> <p>Given the number of overlapping and competing plans already in place and anticipated for the coastal and maritime areas, it is recommended that the SRA establish a cross-boundary working group to develop interim strategies for protection of coastal and marine based European sites until such time as the MSP and associated AA mitigation is available. This early and proactive work will help inform data gaps and identify pressures which can in turn assist in assessment of the MSP in due course.</p>	<p>The mitigation is addressed through RPO 1. In addition, the following RPOs address the theme and integrate mitigation as follows:</p> <p>RPO 76 (former RPO 74) Marine Economy: It is an objective to ensure alignment, and consistency between land use and ocean-based planning, and to ensure co-ordination, which supports the protection of the marine environment and the growth of the marine economy.</p> <p>RPO 77 (former RPO 75) Maritime Spatial planning - Consistency and Alignment: It is an objective to support the integration of different uses in the marine environment and ensure consistency and alignment between high-level plans such as the National Marine Planning Framework, regional based approaches to maritime spatial planning and localised coastal management plans and local integrated coastal zone management plans. It is important to be cognisant of the need to promote cross-boundary management of coastal areas within the Region. Any development of plans in coastal zones should be informed by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.</p> <p>RPO 78 (former RPO 76) First Mover under the National Marine Planning Framework: It is an objective to support the sustainable</p>

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		<p>development of the potential of the marine environment foster opportunities for innovation in the maritime economy and drive forward the Region as a first mover under marine spatial planning while preserving the environmental and ecological conservation status of our marine natural resource. Initiatives arising from this objective shall be subject to robust feasibility and site selection, which includes flood risk assessments and explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European sites and potential for adverse effects on their integrity in advance of any development. The RSES encourages close interaction between higher education, state agencies, and enterprise to position the Region in as a leader in this field.</p> <p>Further, RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M) allows the scope for environmental monitoring and developing resources to improve baseline data to assist implementation of RSES and complementary strategies including the National Marine Planning Framework in co-ordination with the relevant stakeholders where it states:</p> <p>The Southern Regional Assembly will put in place a robust and transparent monitoring system to ensure that the progress of the regional objectives are tracked against baseline data at regular intervals during the life of the Strategy. This includes:</p> <p>a. Making baseline data available as a shared evidence base, as appropriate, for the Region to local authorities and other public bodies which will inform the preparation and implementation of a local authority's Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Local</p>

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		<p>Economic and Community Plans;</p> <p>b. Carrying out regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data (including environmental data), if available, from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories;</p> <p>c. Supporting the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection;</p> <p>d. Establishing a monitoring committee with cross-sectoral and cross-regional representation to oversee progress and contribute to the process. The process will facilitate the involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the implementation of the RSES to provide input on progress.</p>
<p>Chapter 4- Renewable Offshore Energy</p> <p>Marine Clusters</p>	<p>In respect of the first RPO, full plan and project required mitigation as required in the OREDP.</p>	<p>The mitigation is addressed through RPO 1. In addition, the following RPOs address the theme and integrate mitigation as follows:</p> <p>RPO 85 (former RPO 83): Renewable offshore energy: To promote regional cooperation in terms of offshore renewable energy development, environmental monitoring and awareness of the benefits of realising the Region’s offshore energy potential. Initiatives arising from this objective shall be subject to robust feasibility and site selection, which includes explicit consideration</p>

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		<p>of likely significant effects on European Sites and potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites in advance of any development.</p> <p>RPO 147 (former RPO 142) Economic opportunities of ports states: is an objective for all ports in the Region to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the marine related functions of ports in the region including landside accessibility to ensure the future role of ports as strategic marine related assets is protected from inappropriate uses. Harness sustainable economic opportunities from the ocean economy and the role of Ports in the region in realising the full potential of the ocean economy. Particular regard should be had to the Government’s integrated plan for the marine industry – Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (2012), the National Marine Research and Innovation Strategy 2017-2021 (Marine Institute Ireland, 2017), and Ireland’s Ocean Economy (NUIG, 2017), as well as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Ireland’s Programme of Measures; and Ireland’s forthcoming National Marine Planning Framework subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA undertaken where necessary ; • . Support the role of ports, where appropriate, in facilitating the sustainable development and operation of off-shore renewable energy development; and • Support sustainable and appropriate enabling infrastructure development to harness our ocean wealth at regional and local

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		<p>levels including grid, pier and port facilities to support renewable energy and export potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC. • Port development in the region must adhere to the European Commission guidelines on the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones in order to protect the European Sites around them. • Any economic activity which utilises the marine resource shall also have regard to Ireland’s obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) which requires achieving and maintaining Good Environmental Status (GES) of coastal and marine waters (comprising both the water column and the seabed beneath it).
<p>Chapter 5 - Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030</p> <p>National Mitigation Plan and National Adaptation Framework</p>	<p>As per RPO 1, any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>Guidance and training in relation to AA and the obligation of public authorities shall be provided for the Regional Climate Action Offices and Local</p>	<p>RPO 1 addresses the proposed mitigation.</p> <p>Regarding the proposed mitigation measures for effective engagement with Regional Climate Action Offices and Local Authorities, the narrative in Chapter 5 is strengthened to state at regional and local level, we need to focus on the ability of the system in all its component parts to anticipate, accommodate and recover the effects of hazardous impacts, including the integration of emergency planning into climate change adaptation. The next step is to develop this approach in</p>

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	<p>Authority staff to upskill them in relation to impacts on European sites in relation to climate mitigation and adaptation measures in the region.</p>	<p>partnership with the Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO) and the local authorities who have all adopted Climate Adaptation Strategies.</p> <p>The Regional Assembly has a key role to adopt a joint regional approach to adaptation planning in partnership with CARO and the local authorities, where there are opportunities to share knowledge, experience and resources or to avail of economies of scale.</p> <p>Regarding the structure and brief for the work of the CAROs, a high level regional objective will not set out a specific brief or structures which will evolve through the work of the CARO with each Local Authority in the implementation of Climate Adaptation Strategies.</p> <p>RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M) allows the scope for engagement with CAROs and Local Authorities to assist implementation of RSES and complementary strategies including Climate Adaptation Strategies.</p> <p>The Southern Regional Assembly will put in place a robust and transparent monitoring system to ensure that the progress of the regional objectives are tracked against baseline data at regular intervals during the life of the Strategy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Making baseline data available as a shared evidence base, as appropriate, for the Region to local authorities and other public bodies which will inform the preparation and implementation of a

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		<p>local authority's Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans;</p> <p>b. Carrying out regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data (including environmental data), if available, from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories;</p> <p>c. Supporting the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection;</p> <p>d. Establishing a monitoring committee with cross-sectoral and cross-regional representation to oversee progress and contribute to the process. The process will facilitate the involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the implementation of the RSES to provide input on progress.</p> <p>Further, RPO 90 (new at MA Stage former RPO F) Regional De-carbonisation also addresses the proposed mitigation and states: It is an objective to develop a Regional De-carbonisation Plan to provide a framework for action on de-carbonisation across all sectors. The Plan shall include existing and future targets for each sector. Implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures shall be established with stakeholders, including the Climate Action Regional Offices, following the adoption of the RSES to identify the scope and role of the Plan, the requirements for SEA,</p>

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		AA and the timescale for its preparation.
<p>Chapter 5 - Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector</p> <p>Electric Vehicle Infrastructure</p> <p>CNG refuelling stations and TEN-T corridors</p> <p>Decarbonisation in the Agricultural Sector</p>	<p>Apply the mitigation measures included in the National Forestry Programme 2014-2020.</p> <p>In line with RPO 1, any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p>	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>RPO 104 (former RPO 100) Energy Storage and Carbon Capture is also important in support of the National Forestry Programme</p>

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		<p>where it states: It is an objective to support investment in initiatives to develop innovation, advances in technology and pilot projects for the sustainable development of energy storage and carbon capture within the Region and to work with key stakeholders in developing sustainable forestry, including initiatives for native tree planting and better management of peatland and soil management to support carbon sequestration and enhancement of biodiversity.</p> <p>RPO 91 (former RPO 87): Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector states:</p> <p>It is an objective to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Seek initiatives that will achieve the de-carbonisation of the transport sector, moving to the use of clean generated electricity bio-gas, hydrogen and other non-fossil fuels for private and public transportation and provision of clean energy and lower carbon fuelling stations by 2030; b) Pursue policies to reduce reliance on private cars and achieve modal shift to sustainable transportation in conjunction with policies to achieve compact growth and reduce congestion; c) Seek the development of clean energy and lower carbon fuelling and electric vehicle charging stations and infrastructure at the appropriate locations which take into consideration electric,

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		<p>hydrogen, CNG/biogas inter-alia.</p> <p>RPO 94 (former RPO 90): Decarbonisation in the Agricultural Sector states:</p> <p>It is an objective to support initiatives that advance an approach to achieve carbon neutrality for agriculture and land-use that does not compromise sustainable food production through:</p> <p>(i) Programmes including the Green Low-Carbon Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS) and the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP) under Ireland’s Rural Development Programme 2014-20;</p> <p>(ii) Support for the Departments of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and Communications Climate Action and Environment to enhance the competitiveness of the agriculture sector with an urgent need for mitigation to reduce GHGs as well as adaptation measures. The All-of-Ireland Government Plan on Climate Action and Ag-Climatise will guide action in this area.</p>
Chapter 5 - Renewable Energy Interconnection Infrastructure Energy Storage and	RPO 93 and RPO 96 will require a dedicated feasibility study to inform the decision making on new energy efficient and renewable energy sources and productions to ensure that the sourcing of the energy does not have indirect negative impacts on any European site. The source of the renewable energies must be considered as part of the assessment of impacts on European	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to ‘environmentally sustainable development’ that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of</p>

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<p>Carbon Capture</p> <p>Clean Electric Heat Technologies</p> <p>Future proofing and Retrofitting</p> <p>Non-Fossil Fuel and Heat Sources</p>	<p>sites.</p> <p>The RES for the region will be subject to AA and will take account of the life cycle impacts from RE.</p> <p>In line with RPO 1 proposals for development and infrastructure will need to be subject to robust site and/or route selection that addresses environmental concerns such as landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity as a minimum.</p> <p>Development of international interconnections will require robust route and site selection and environmental assessment, including AA.</p>	<p>biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p>
<p>Chapter 5 -Floods Directive</p> <p>Flood Management</p> <p>Risk</p> <p>FRMP</p>	<p>Mitigation: In line with RPO 1, any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p>	<p>RPO 1 addresses the proposed mitigation.</p> <p>Further, RPO 117 (former RPO 112) Flood Risk Management and Biodiversity states: It is an objective to avail of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and amenity and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats, including where flood risk management measures are planned. Plans and projects that have the potential to negatively impact on Natura 2000 sites</p>

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Flooding and Planning System Flooding and Biodiversity Flooding and Capital Works Flood Relief Schemes		<p>are subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>RPO 116 (former RPO 111) Planning System and Flood Risk Management states: Consideration must be given to future appropriate land-use policies in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines, The Planning System and Flood Risk Management 2009. Strategic and local flood risk assessments and plans should be prepared where appropriate, which should include consideration of potential impacts of flood risk arising from climate change. It is an objective to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SUDS, non-porous surfacing and green roofs) to create safe places in accordance with the Guidelines.</p>
Chapter 5 - RBMP SUDs RBMP and Spatial Planning	<p>Any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>Specific reference should be made to the DHPLGs forthcoming guidance on the integration of River Basin Management Planning with land-use planning.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies.</p> <p>Regarding River Basement Management Plans, RPO 121 (former RPO 115) Effective Collaboration to Implement River Basin Management Plans and Water Framework Directive states:</p> <p>It is an objective to:</p> <p>a) Ensure a cross-agency collaborative approach to implementing the River Basin Management Plan. Planning authorities will be consistent with the Plan through their land use plans and strategies;</p>

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		<p>b) Ensure effective co-ordination between the requirements of the Floods Directive and the Water Framework Directive;</p> <p>c) Promote a catchment-based approach to water management to facilitate cross boundary collaboration and shared responsibility at a regional level. The RSES supports bottom-up community initiatives through the integrated catchment management approach. The RSES recognises that there are opportunities for a collaborative regional approach to address issues such as invasive species.</p> <p>d) The RSES supports the work of the Local Authority Waters Programme in promoting an integrated approach to catchment management as part of the implementation of the RSES.</p> <p>RPO 123 (former RPO 117) River Basin Management Plan and Spatial Planning states: a) The RSES recognises that planning is critically important to the management of water resources. It is an objective to encourage the better integration of water issues into Planning Authority land-use plans and strategies;</p> <p>b) It is an objective to encourage the integration of river corridors with green infrastructure in settlements. The guidance document “Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment” published by Inland Fisheries Ireland provides an integrated watercourse protection strategy</p>

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<p>Chapter 5 - Green Infrastructure</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Corridors</p>	<p>Any proposed GI should be supported by a quality site/route selection process that addresses environmental concerns such as landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity as a minimum.</p> <p>Any future development of greenways, blueways, peatways, cycleways or walkways shall include an assessment of the impacts from increased visitor pressures, in particular, on sensitive European sites and the design will consider the provision of protective measures to avoid disturbance/visitor pressure.</p> <p>As per RPO 1, any plans or projects relating to the development and/or establishment of infrastructure are subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies.</p> <p>Further, RPO 124 (former RPO 118) Green Infrastructure states:</p> <p>a) It is an objective to promote the concept of connecting corridors for the movement of wildlife and encourage the retention and creation of features of biodiversity value, ecological corridors and networks that connect areas of high conservation value such as woodlands, hedgerows, earth banks, watercourses and wetlands. The RSES recognises the necessity of protecting such corridors and the necessity to encourage the management of features of the landscape that support the Natura 2000 network;</p> <p>b) Green infrastructure will be integrated into the preparation of statutory land-use plans in the Region, which will include identifying Green infrastructure and strengthening this network;</p> <p>c) All Development Plans and Local Area Plans shall protect, enhance, provide and manage Green infrastructure in an integrated and coherent manner addressing the themes of biodiversity protection, water management and climate action; and should also have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species;</p> <p>d) Any future development of greenways, blueways, peatways, cycleways or walkways will include an assessment by the relevant authorities of any impacts that may arise from increased visitor</p>

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		<p>pressures, in particular, on sensitive European sites and the design of the network will consider the provision of protective measures on sites sensitive to disturbance/visitor pressure.</p> <p>RPO 125 (former RPO 119) Green Infrastructure Corridors states: Transport infrastructure provides potential opportunities to act as Green infrastructure corridors. It is an objective to support local authorities acting together with relevant national infrastructure providers to co-develop infrastructural management plans to enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>In addition, RPO 201 (former RPO 193) National Trails, Walking Routes, Greenway and Blueway Corridors includes the following: It is an objective to support investment in the development of walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors within the Region between our Region’s settlements and potential for sustainable linkages to create interregional greenways. Proposals for investment in walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors should be based on rigorous site/route selection studies and Local authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to such developments is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment, including all necessary reports to assess the potential impact on designated European sites and on biodiversity outside of formal protections such that proposed development does not contribute to loss of biodiversity.</p>

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Chapter 5 – Landscape, Water, Air, Noise, Light	<p>Any plans and projects arising from the RSES will be subject to AA when prepared and prior to adoption / permission. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and appropriate mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>RPO 124-125: Any projects required to achieve this objective will be subject to RPO 1 which requires AA and EclA to inform development.</p> <p>RPO 128: The establishment of Dark Sky Parks will include and assessment of the potential to impact on European sites within the zone of influence</p>	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to ‘environmentally sustainable development’ that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p>
Chapter 6 - Digital Connectivity, Infrastructure and Smart Cities and	Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to the broadband roll out and other ICT infrastructure including international digital transmission	<p>The proposed mitigation has been addressed through the final wording of the RPO 1 Environmental Assessment as follows:</p> <p>(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and</p>

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Region	<p>infrastructure such as subsea cables</p> <p>The mitigation measures provided for in the NIS for the National Broadband Plan should be fully applied.</p> <p>Any plans relating to the development and/or establishment of ICT infrastructure are subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p>	<p>development in the RSES should be considered to refer to ‘environmentally sustainable development’ that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>(b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>(c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>Further, RPO 136 (former RPO 132) National Broadband Plan (NBP) states: It is an objective to seek to expedite the implementation of the National Broadband Plan and the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA for the NBP to all locations in the Region and seek reporting procedures to the Southern Regional Assembly on progress and targets being achieved from the relevant State Departments and agencies through effective implementation mechanisms for the</p>

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		RSES.
Chapter 6 - International Connectivity Freight Strategy	Any plans relating to the development and/or establishment of transport infrastructure are subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 141 (former RPO 136) Regional Freight Strategy states: It is an objective to support the development of a RSES Regional Freight Strategy which includes the consideration of rail freight, the asset of our region's rail network and innovations in the freight handling and transport sector potential for electrification, lower carbon fuels and technology to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through in consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, National Transport Authority, Local Authorities, Irish Rail, relevant delivery agencies and the port and airport authorities. Support the feasibility of delivering a national rail freight and passenger hub in the region and reinstatement of freight lines on our region's rail network. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Regional Freight Strategy and the timescale for its preparation. The requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives shall be considered, as appropriate, in relation to a Regional Freight Strategy.
Chapter 6 - Ports and Harbours	As per the RPO, support for these projects is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes Any economic activity in the SRA which utilises the marine resource should also have regard to Ireland's obligations under the Marine Strategy	RPO 1 applies. Further, RPO 147 (former RPO 142) Economic opportunities of ports states: It is an objective for all ports in the Region to:

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	<p>Framework Directive (MSFD) which requires achieving and maintaining Good Environmental Status (GES) of coastal and marine waters (comprising both the water column and the seabed beneath it).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the marine related functions of ports in the region including landside accessibility to ensure the future role of ports as strategic marine related assets is protected from inappropriate uses. Harness sustainable economic opportunities from the ocean economy and the role of Ports in the region in realising the full potential of the ocean economy. Particular regard should be had to the Government’s integrated plan for the marine industry – Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (2012), the National Marine Research and Innovation Strategy 2017-2021 (Marine Institute Ireland, 2017), and Ireland’s Ocean Economy (NUIG, 2017), as well as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Ireland’s Programme of Measures; and Ireland’s forthcoming National Marine Planning Framework subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA undertaken where necessary ; • . Support the role of ports, where appropriate, in facilitating the sustainable development and operation of off-shore renewable energy development; and • Support sustainable and appropriate enabling infrastructure development to harness our ocean wealth at regional and local levels including grid, pier and port facilities to support renewable energy and export potential. • Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port development in the region must adhere to the European Commission guidelines on the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Estuaries and Coastal Zones in order to protect the European Sites around them. • Any economic activity which utilises the marine resource shall also have regard to Ireland's obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) which requires achieving and maintaining Good Environmental Status (GES) of coastal and marine waters (comprising both the water column and the seabed beneath it).
Chapter 6 - Airports (Cork, Shannon, Kerry & Waterford)	<p>Any plans relating to increased infrastructure, ATM or other intensification of use at Cork, Shannon, Kerry and Waterford airports must be subject to AA. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>SRA should seek to support an appraisal of the existing drainage systems in operation at the airports to ensure they are capturing pollutants to avoid downstream impacts on water quality which provide a direct link to European sites.</p> <p>SRA should seek to support a dedicated study into the impact of aircraft movements on any SPAs within the zone of influence of each of the regions airports with particular reference to bird response.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies.</p> <p>In addition, RPO 149 (former RPO 144) Regional Airport Strategy states: It is an objective to support the development of an Airport Strategy for the Southern Region to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, Airport Authorities, TII, NTA and other relevant stakeholders in the Southern Region. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Airport Strategy for the Southern Region and the timescale for its preparation. The requirements for a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment shall be considered, as appropriate, in relation to a Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region.</p> <p>Regarding monitoring of impacts of airport activity, RPO 229</p>

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	<p>This will ensure a strong evidence base is in place to inform projects which may be required under this policy area.</p>	<p>Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M) allows the scope for engagement with stakeholders and strengthening baseline data for monitoring.</p> <p>The Southern Regional Assembly will put in place a robust and transparent monitoring system to ensure that the progress of the regional objectives are tracked against baseline data at regular intervals during the life of the Strategy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Making baseline data available as a shared evidence base, as appropriate, for the Region to local authorities and other public bodies which will inform the preparation and implementation of a local authority's Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans; b. Carrying out regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data (including environmental data), if available, from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories; c. Supporting the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection;

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		d. Establishing a monitoring committee with cross-sectoral and cross-regional representation to oversee progress and contribute to the process. The process will facilitate the involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the implementation of the RSES to provide input on progress.
Chapter 6 - Integration of Land Use and Transport Planning	<p>The guiding principles for integration of transport planning and land use planning should explicitly reference the protection of the Natura 2000 networks and the ecological linkages which support it. This has been addressed in the draft RSES.</p> <p>AA of local transport plans should be considered in addition to the statutory assessments needed for a LAP.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies.</p> <p>In addition, RPO 151 (former RPO 146) Integration of land use and transport integration includes the requirement: The protection of the Natura 2000 networks and the ecological linkages connected to the Natura 2000 network.</p>
Chapter 6 - Sustainable Mobility	<p>As per the RPO, support for these projects is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Robust route and site selection is also required to inform decision making on where best to locate facilities such as park and ride to avoid introducing indirect visitor pressure.</p>	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 160 (former RPO 155) Smart and Sustainable Mobility includes the requirement it is an objective to deliver on NSO: Sustainable Mobility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.
Chapter 6 - Metropolitan Area	The actions arising from the transport strategies will be subject to AA when prepared. This will ensure avoidance of adverse effects on the	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 164 (former RPO 156): Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies states: It is an objective to develop Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies for Cork,

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Transport Strategies	<p>integrity of European Sites in the first instance and mitigation measures if required.</p> <p>Proposals for higher densities within DP will need to establish potential for visitor pressure and pressure on services to accommodate these densities without leading to adverse effects on any European site.</p>	<p>Limerick-Shannon and Waterford by the NTA, TII, Local Authorities and relevant stakeholders integrating priorities for the metropolitan areas identified in the RSES Regional Transport Strategy and support investment in actions under these strategies subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes for the sustainable development of transport infrastructure and services in the metropolitan areas over a 20-year period. Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.</p> <p>Regarding infrastructure to service demand from higher densities, this is addressed through RPOs including RPO 4 (former RPO 3): Infrastructure Investment , RPO 5 (former RPO 4): Population Growth and Environmental Criteria , RPO 9 (former RPO 7): Holistic Approach to Delivering Infrastructure, RPO 175 (former RPO 167) Infrastructure-led Planning, RPO 208 (former RPO 200) Irish Water and Water Supply, RPO 209 (former RPO 201) Strategic Water Supply Projects, RPO 211 (former RPO 203) Irish Water and Wastewater and RPO 212 (former RPO 204) Strategic Wastewater Treatment Facilities</p>
Chapter 6 - Investment in Improved Strategic Road Connectivity	<p>As per the RPO, support for road infrastructure is subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies.</p> <p>In addition, both RPO 167 (former RPO 159): National Road Projects and RPO 168 (former RPO 160): Investment in Regional and Local Roads integrate the following:</p>

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	<p>Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to all strategic infrastructure projects referenced and feasibility studies will consider a full range of reasonable alternative modes and technologies.</p>	<p>The provision of National Road Projects to be delivered during the period up to 2027 to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes are supported.</p> <p>Under this RPO, where works to any part of the strategic road network are supported, the potential for improved sustainable transport shall be considered. The potential for nature-based design solutions for mitigation design shall be considered.</p> <p>The progression of the following National Road Projects at pre-appraisal stages to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility, subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>The provision of the following projects are also supported as strategic regional priorities to achieve NSO Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the recommendations of the three MASPs, the preparation of associated Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and the preparation of Local Transport Plans for key settlements and other urban centres where applicable. These measures are also subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental processes.</p>
Chapter 6 - Rail	As per the RPO, support for rail networks is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 170 (former RPO 162) Rail states: It is an objective to seek to strengthen investment in the maintenance, improvement and strengthening of the rail network

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	<p>and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Detailed and robust route and site selection will be required to inform decision making in relation to the rail projects and feasibility studies will consider a full range of reasonable alternative modes and technologies.</p>	<p>in the Region subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.</p>
Chapter 6 - Bus	<p>As per the RPO, support for bus networks is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Reference to “subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes” should also be included for bus as per roads above.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 171 (former RPO 163 Bus) states: It is an objective through the functions of the NTA, to seek the development of bus networks in the region focused on the following subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process, during the period of the RSES.</p>
Chapter 6 - Rural Transport	<p>As per the RPO, support for these projects is subject to the outcome of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>An assessment of visitor pressure, including seasonal pressure will be required to inform appropriate planning around key tourism sites.</p> <p>An AA of plans, for significant initiatives, similar to the WAW should be undertaken prior to</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 54 (former RPO 52) Tourism and the Environment states: Development of new or enhanced tourism infrastructure and facilities should include an assessment of the environmental sensitivities of the area including an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) if required in order to avoid adverse impacts on the receiving environment. Where such tourism infrastructure or facilities are developed, the managing authority/agency should ensure that effective monitoring protocols are put in place to monitor and assess the ongoing effect of tourism on sensitive features with particular</p>

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	development of infrastructure and services.	focus on natural, archaeological and built heritage assets.
Chapter 6 - Walking and Cycling	<p>The mitigation measures provided for in the NIS for the National Cycle Plan should be fully applied.</p> <p>Such initiatives shall commit to feasibility and route selection studies with a view to identifying and subsequently avoiding high sensitivity feeding or nesting points for birds and other sensitive fauna.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 174 (former RPO 166) Walking and Cycling includes:</p> <p>Delivery of the cycle network set out in the three regional cities' metropolitan area Cycle Network Plans, inclusive of key commuter routes and greenways subject to SEA and AA where required;</p> <p>Support sustainable pedestrian and cyclist greenway initiatives and the potential for inter connections between greenways subject to robust site selection processes and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>A buffer distance shall be maintained between walking, cycling, Greenway and Blueway corridors and from coastal areas, particularly those subject to current and future erosion, as well as rivers and canals to ensure protection of riparian zones and;</p> <p>Such initiatives shall commit to feasibility and route selection studies with a view to identifying and subsequently avoiding high sensitivity feeding or nesting points for birds and other sensitive fauna.</p>
Chapter 7 - Inclusive Communities and	Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 175 (former RPO 167) Infrastructure-led Planning states: It is an objective to support sustainable infrastructure-led planning for future population and

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Places	planning process.	jobs growth in our Region, ensuring the development of social infrastructures in tandem with population and jobs growth, reflecting the RSES settlement strategy and key principles to tackle regional disparities and the legacies of deprivation in the Region. Local authorities should ensure that decision making in relation to new development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.
Chapter 7 - Healthy Communities	Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 175 (former RPO 167) Infrastructure-led Planning states: It is an objective to support sustainable infrastructure-led planning for future population and jobs growth in our Region, ensuring the development of social infrastructures in tandem with population and jobs growth, reflecting the RSES settlement strategy and key principles to tackle regional disparities and the legacies of deprivation in the Region. Local authorities should ensure that decision making in relation to new development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.
Chapter 7 - Diverse and Inclusive Region Age Friendly Communities	Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 175 (former RPO 167) Infrastructure-led Planning states: It is an objective to support sustainable infrastructure-led planning for future population and jobs growth in our Region, ensuring the development of social infrastructures in tandem with population and jobs growth, reflecting the RSES settlement strategy and key principles to tackle regional disparities and the legacies of deprivation in the Region. Local authorities should ensure that decision making in

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		relation to new development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.
<p>Chapter 7 - Childcare, Education and Lifelong Learning</p> <p>A Learning Region</p> <p>UNESCO and the Southern Region</p> <p>Skills and Talent</p>	<p>Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 175 (former RPO 167) Infrastructure-led Planning states: It is an objective to support sustainable infrastructure-led planning for future population and jobs growth in our Region, ensuring the development of social infrastructures in tandem with population and jobs growth, reflecting the RSES settlement strategy and key principles to tackle regional disparities and the legacies of deprivation in the Region. Local authorities should ensure that decision making in relation to new development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.</p>
<p>Chapter 7 - Enabling Infrastructure for Development of the Cultural and Creative Sector in our Region</p>	<p>Local Authorities will ensure that decisions relating to investment in arts, cultural and heritage infrastructure/facilities should be informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPO.</p> <p>The potential for indirect impacts from visitor pressure as a result of improved access to cultural heritage sites on natural heritage should be considered as part of decision making.</p> <p>Local Authorities will ensure that decisions relating</p>	<p>In addition, RPO 175 (former RPO 167) Infrastructure-led Planning states: It is an objective to support sustainable infrastructure-led planning for future population and jobs growth in our Region, ensuring the development of social infrastructures in tandem with population and jobs growth, reflecting the RSES settlement strategy and key principles to tackle regional disparities and the legacies of deprivation in the Region. Local authorities should ensure that decision making in relation to new development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.</p>

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	<p>to upgrades/re-use of buildings for developments incorporating cultural and creative sector space and facilities are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment including undertaking studies where regeneration / building projects may have the potential to affect protected species. This has been addressed in the RPO.</p>	<p>In addition, RPO 192 (former RPO 184) Cultural Policies and Objectives states:</p> <p>Local authority Development Plans, Local Enterprise Community Plans and Local Area Plans should include cultural policies and objectives supporting the sustainable development of enabling infrastructure including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workspaces for cultural uses; • Delivery and optimisation of high-speed broadband to support the digital media and remote working; • Support investment in training and education initiatives for cultural employment opportunities; • Provision and upgrade of cultural facilities; • Support the adaptation and bringing back into use of heritage buildings; • Where large scale housing is planned, to ensure adequate provision is made for a range of community facilities including cultural facilities. Local authorities should ensure that decisions relating to upgrades/re-use of buildings for developments incorporating cultural and creative sector space and facilities are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment including undertaking studies where regeneration /building

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		projects may have the potential to affect protected species.
Chapter 7 - The Gaeltacht and Our Linguistic Heritage	Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making relating to the development of social and economic infrastructure including the development of communications and renewable energy are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPOs.	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 196 (former RPO 188) Gaeltacht includes the requirement: Local authorities should ensure that decision-making relating to the development of social and economic infrastructure including the development of communications and renewable energy are informed by an appropriate level of community consultation and environmental assessment.
Chapter 7 - Regional Recreation and Sporting Facilities	Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to the development of recreational and sporting infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPOs.	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 199 (former RPO 191) Larger Sports Projects states it is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of larger sports projects in the Region under the Large-Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund. Local authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to the development of recreational and sporting infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.
Chapter 7 - Green Infrastructure Greenways and Blueways	Any development should be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This has been addressed in the RPOs.	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 201 (former RPO 193) National Trails, Walking Routes, Greenway and Blueway Corridors includes the following: It is an objective to support investment in the development of walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors within the Region between our Region's settlements and potential for sustainable linkages to create interregional greenways. Proposals for investment in walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors should be based on rigorous site/route selection studies and Local authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to such

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		developments is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment, including all necessary reports to assess the potential impact on designated European sites and on biodiversity outside of formal protections such that proposed development does not contribute to loss of biodiversity.
Chapter 7 - Natural Amenities National Parks Built Heritage	Local Authorities should ensure that decision making on heritage related projects and developments are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment including assessment of impacts on other environmental receptors such as protected species. This has been addressed in the RPO.	RPO 1 addresses the mitigation. In addition, RPO 203 (former RPO 195) Revitalisation of Historic Cores states It is an objective to promote the initiatives of local authorities, the Heritage Council, local communities, heritage property owners and other stakeholders pursuing the revitalisation of historic cores in our cities, towns and villages. Local authorities should ensure that visitor pressures do not impact negatively on the capacity of local services (including water, waste water) if facilities such as car parking. In this regard, heritage-led initiatives shall consider historical setting /landscape character and potential for negative effects related to visitor pressures. Local authorities should ensure that decision-making on heritage-related projects and developments are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment including assessment of impacts on other environmental receptors such as protected species.
Chapter 8 - Drinking Water	<p>Delivery of these services will be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.</p> <p>In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within</p>	<p>Regarding RPOs 208-210 (former RPOs 200-202) for Water Supply, RPO 1 applies where it requires :</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the</p>

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	<p>the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (e.g. hydromorphological pressures).</p> <p>Selection of sites to facilitate improvements in water will be supported by a robust site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary, the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site.</p>	<p>environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>Further, RPO 208 (former RPO 200) Irish Water and Water Supply integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Local Authority Core Strategies shall demonstrate compliance</p>

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		<p>with DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities and demonstrate phased infrastructure led growth to meet demands on the water supply, suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (for example hydro morphological pressures) and prevent adverse impacts the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>RPO 209 (former RPO 201) Strategic Water Supply Projects requires:</p> <p>It is an objective to support investment and the sustainable development of strategic water supply projects by Irish Water and relevant local authorities, arising from initiatives including Investment Plans, 25 Year Water Supply Plans for our Region's cities and metropolitan areas, leakage reduction programmes and initiatives through the National Water Resources Plan subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.</p>
Chapter 8 - Wastewater	<p>Delivery of these services will be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.</p> <p>Phasing of services in terms of growth and settlement is essential to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>Selection of sites to facilitate improvements in wastewater will be supported by a robust site selection process and subject to detailed</p>	<p>Regarding RPOs 211-218 (former RPOs 203-210) for Waste Water and Surface Water, RPO 1 as outlined above applies. In addition, RPO 212 (former RPO 204) Strategic Wastewater Treatment Facilities integrates the following:</p> <p>It is an objective to support investment and the sustainable development of strategic water supply projects by Irish Water and relevant local authorities, arising from initiatives including Investment Plans, 25 Year Water Supply Plans for our Region's cities and metropolitan areas, leakage reduction programmes and initiatives through the National Water Resources Plan subject to</p>

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	<p>environmental assessment.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site.</p>	<p>appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.</p>
<p>Chapter 8 - RPOs</p> <p>Surface Water</p>	<p>Delivery of these services will be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.</p> <p>A set of site selection criteria should be developed by SRA to assist local authorities in decision making. This should include explicit consideration of the potential for likely significant effects as a distinct criterion for short-listing of site and if necessary the potential of sites to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site.</p> <p>See mitigation in relation to flood risk management in Section 7.5.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 218 (former RPO 210) Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) states: It is an objective to support the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) in all public and private development in urban areas. The local authorities shall include objectives requiring the incorporation of SUDs in local authority development plans and Local Area Plans, and promoting greater rainwater harvesting by households and businesses for the diversion of storm water from combined sewers (where possible), so that within developments and in the wider public realm, opportunities for SUDs and rainwater harvesting maximise capacity to cater for infill, brownfield and new development in sewer networks and treatment plants.</p> <p>RPO 117 (former RPO 112) Flood Risk Management and Biodiversity states: It is an objective to avail of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and amenity and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats, including where</p>

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		flood risk management measures are planned. Plans and projects that have the potential to negatively impact on Natura 2000 sites are subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.
Chapter 8 - RPOs Strategic Energy Grid	RPO 1 will apply to the plans and projects noted in this section. The mitigation measures from the Eirgrid Grid 25 Plan will be integrated into planning for energy infrastructure by LA.	Regarding RPOs 220-224 (former RPOs 212-216) for the strategic energy grid, RPO 1 as outlined above also applies. Each relevant RPO also integrates the requirement “subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process”.
Chapter 8 - RPO Gas Networks	Ensure proper site selection to avoid likely significant effects on European Sites and potential for adverse effects on site integrity.	RPO 1 applies. In addition, RPO 225 (former RPO 217) Gas Network includes: Subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process where required, it is an objective to: Promote renewable gas leading to carbon emission reduction in agriculture, industry, heating and transport as well as sustainable local employment opportunities. Support the transition of the gas network to a “carbon neutral” gas network by 2050, which will drive Ireland and the Region to becoming a low carbon society.
Chapter 9 - Implementation and Monitoring	A regional working group should be established to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management and to address cross-boundary	This is addressed through RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M) which states:

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	<p>site and species protection.</p> <p>A repository for NIS and NIR documents should be established to facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to requiring planning permissions, particularly for large infrastructure in the region, to provide raw data in a readily searchable format to improve the evidence base available for decision makers at planning authority level.</p>	<p>The Southern Regional Assembly will put in place a robust and transparent monitoring system to ensure that the progress of the regional objectives are tracked against baseline data at regular intervals during the life of the Strategy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Making baseline data available as a shared evidence base, as appropriate, for the Region to local authorities and other public bodies which will inform the preparation and implementation of a local authority's Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans; b. Carrying out regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data (including environmental data), if available, from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories; c. Supporting the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection;

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		<p>d. Establishing a monitoring committee with cross-sectoral and cross-regional representation to oversee progress and contribute to the process. The process will facilitate the involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the implementation of the RSES to provide input on progress.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Objective 3: Cork Harbour</p>	<p>The Cork Harbour objective recognises the need for protection of Cork Harbour SPA in particular. Nonetheless, a MASP Objective should be included that stipulates the need for a coordinated plan for the harbour area e.g. LAP, that can be subject to AA to ensure that cross-cutting plans do not result in cumulative and in-combination impacts.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP. RPO 1 requires:</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EcIA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a</p>

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		<p>minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>Further, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Regarding Cork MASP Objective 3 Cork Harbour, proposed mitigation is addressed by integrating the following in the objective:</p> <p>(a): To promote Cork Harbour as a unique and strategic asset in</p>

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		<p>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).</p> <p>(b): To seek a specific planning framework initiative through the Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans as appropriate to guide the sustainable future management of different uses in the Cork Harbour area, including strategic economic uses, while protecting the sensitive ecosystems and designated natural habitats.</p> <p>(c): The initiative under Part (b) shall address opportunities of a waterfront city and the harbour area, the opportunities for harbour communities, enhanced transport and public transport connections, Tier 1 Port activity, industries, clusters of economic specialism, research and innovation in the marine economy, renewable energy, ecology and habitat protection, ecosystems services, tourism, greenways and blueways inter alia.</p> <p>(d) The delivery of plans and projects in the Cork Harbour area as a result of this objective shall be subject to quality site selection processes that consider environmental constraints and undertake environmental assessments including EclA, SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p>

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<p>Cork MASP Objective 7: Integrated Land-use and Transport Planning</p>	<p>A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. Reference has been made in the objective to the fact that support is subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Chapter 6, RPO 156 confirms that Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP. RPO 1 requires:</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where</p>

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		<p>required.</p> <p>Further, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Cork MASP Policy Objective 7 Integrated Landuse and Transport Planning includes the following: Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA and AA as appropriate.</p> <p>RPO 164 (former RPO 156): Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies states as follows: It is an objective to develop Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford by the NTA, TII, Local Authorities and relevant stakeholders integrating priorities for the metropolitan</p>

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		<p>areas identified in the RSES Regional Transport Strategy and support investment in actions under these strategies subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes for the sustainable development of transport infrastructure and services in the metropolitan areas over a 20-year period. Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Objective 10: Education and Access to Talent</p>	<p>Include Cross reference to RPS 179 under this objective or include the following text: 'Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC'.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>

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Cork MASP Objective 11: Transition to Digital Future	A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. This has been addressed in the objective through reference to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Further, Cork MASP Policy Objective 11 Transition to Digital Future includes the following: The SRA will seek investment in the delivery of accessible and improved high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure in the Cork Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p>
Cork MASP Objective 12: Infrastructure for Strategic	A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that	Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following

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Employment Locations	addresses environmental concerns which shall include the avoidance of adverse effects on any European sites. This has been addressed in the objective through reference to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.	<p>mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Further, Cork MASP Policy Objective 12 Infrastructure for Strategic Employment Locations includes: (a): It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p>
Cork MASP Objective 14: Cork Airport	Include cross reference to RPO 145 as part of Cork MASP Objective 14: Cork Airport.	Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following

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		<p>mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Further, Cork MASP Policy Objective 14 Cork Airport states: (a): It is an objective to support the sustainable development of the airport and seek investment in infrastructure and facilities that promote the role of Cork Airport as an international gateway, employment location and economic driver for the region including the following subject to the outcome of required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the sustainable development and investment in infrastructure and facilities under the Cork Airport Masterplans and updates to the Cork Airport Special Local Area Plan (subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA/AA undertaken).

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		<p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 150 (former RPO 145) High Quality International Connectivity – Airports, it is implicit that all RPO’s under Chapter 6 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Objective 15: Cork Tourism</p>	<p>Include cross reference to RPO 51 and RPO 52 as part of Cork MASP Objective 15: Cork Tourism.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 53 (former RPO 51) Tourism and RPO 54 (former RPO 52) Tourism and the Environment, it is implicit that all RPO’s under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required.</p>

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Cork MASP Objective 16: Retail	Mitigation: Include cross reference to RPO 53 as part of Cork MASP Objective 16: Retail.	<p>Regarding RPO 55 (former RPO 53) Retail, retail strategies provide a high level policy guidance for the location of retail development. Environmental considerations regarding the retail hierarchy will be addressed through the lower tiered development plan and local area plan processes and project consent stages. RPO 1 addresses the mitigation required to ensure the appropriate level of environmental assessment is undertaken at these stages.</p> <p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 55 (former RPO 53) Retail, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required</p>
Cork MASP Objective 17: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy	Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Cork MASP Objective 17: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy.	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p>

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		<p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Further, Cork MASP Policy Objective 17 Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation & Greenbelt Strategy states:</p> <p>The implementation of Greenway initiatives that provide important economic, leisure and tourism, health, active and sustainable travel and environmental benefits to the metropolitan area including the Lee to Sea Greenway initiative subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p> <p>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</p> <p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 124 (former RPO 118) Green Infrastructure, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required</p>
Cork MASP	A MASP Objective should be included that	Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in

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Objective 18: Transformational Areas and Public Realm	stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.	<p>the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
Cork MASP Objective 19: Flood Risk Management	Development of this scheme will be subject to the outcome of the environmental and planning processes currently ongoing.	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Objective 21: Healthy Cities and Health Infrastructure</p>	<p>The RPO should stipulate that the delivery of health service infrastructure within the Cork MASP area shall be subject to a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Objective 22: Social Inclusion</p>	<p>Include cross reference to RPO 173 as part of Cork MASP Objective 22: Social Inclusion.</p>	<p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 181 (former RPO 173) Equal Access, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 7 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
<p>RPO5 National Investment through Project Ireland 2040</p>	<p>The RPO should stipulate that the delivery of plans and projects as a result of investment priorities and the redevelopment and regeneration within the Cork MASP area shall be subject to robust feasibility studies and site / route selection to reduce impacts on the environment, in addition to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
<p>RPO7 Holistic Approach to Delivering Infrastructure</p>	<p>The RPO should stipulate that the delivery of infrastructure within the Cork MASP area shall be subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment in addition to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required,</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
RPO 8 Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas	<p>The RPO should stipulate that the identification of suitable growth areas and development sites to support this objective shall be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p>
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 5:	<p>A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the LS MASP. RPO 1 requires:</p>

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National Enablers	<p>addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.</p> <p>The mitigation measures developed as part of the AA for the SIFP must be implemented to avoid adverse effects on site integrity.</p>	<p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.</p>
<p>Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 7 (former Objective 6): Sustainable Transportation</p>	<p>A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. It is noted that Chapter 6, RPO 156 confirms that Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura</p>

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		<p>2000 Network in the Region.</p> <p>RPO 164 (former RPO 156): Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies states as follows: It is an objective to develop Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford by the NTA, TII, Local Authorities and relevant stakeholders integrating priorities for the metropolitan areas identified in the RSES Regional Transport Strategy and support investment in actions under these strategies subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes for the sustainable development of transport infrastructure and services in the metropolitan areas over a 20-year period. Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies shall undergo SEA and AA as per NPF objective NPO75.</p>
<p>Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 8 (former Objective 7): Strategic Road Infrastructure</p>	<p>Chapter 6 of the RSES provides the following protection objectives for road projects within the SRA. RPO 156 states that the provision of National Road Projects to be delivered during the period up to 2027 to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility are subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. Similar commitment is given for National Road Projects at pre-appraisal stages.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		<p>2000 Network in the Region.</p> <p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 167 (former RPO 159): National Road Projects, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 6 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required</p>
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 9 (former Objective 8): Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) Economic Network	A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.</p>
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 13 (former Objective 9): Strategic Employment	A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to</p>

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Locations	European sites. This has now been added following iterative discussion.	<p>‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.</p> <p>Further, Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 13 (former Objective 9) Strategic Employment Locations states a) It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p>
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 15 (former Objective 11): Shannon International Airport	<p>Include cross reference to RPO 145 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 13: Shannon International Airport.</p> <p>Ensure the protection of the structure and function of the Shannon Airport Lagoon.</p>	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as</p>

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		<p>appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.</p> <p>Further, Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 15 (former Objective 11) Shannon International Airport includes the following: b) It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, to supports the utilisation of the existing investment in Shannon International Airport and its surrounding land bank to act as a catalyst for economic growth in the region.</p> <p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 150 (former RPO 145) High Quality International Connectivity – Airports, it is implicit that all RPO’s under Chapter 6 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required</p>
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 16 (former Objective 12): Shannon Foynes Port Company	Include Cross reference to RPS 142 under this objective or include the following text: ‘Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC’.	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to ‘sustainable development’ that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as</p>

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		<p>appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.</p> <p>Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 16 (former Objective 12) Shannon Foynes Port includes the following: a) It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, including SEA and AA as appropriate, to support the continued expansion of Shannon Foynes Port and to recognise the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland by virtue of its deep waters.</p> <p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 147 (former RPO 142) Economic opportunities of ports, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 6 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required</p>
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 17 (former Objective13): Retail	Include cross reference to RPO 53 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 10: Retail.	<p>Regarding RPO 55 (former RPO 53) Retail, retail strategies provide a high level policy guidance for the location of retail development. Environmental considerations regarding the retail hierarchy will be addressed through the lower tiered development plan and local area plan processes and project consent stages. RPO 1 addresses the mitigation required to ensure the appropriate level of environmental assessment is undertaken at these stages.</p> <p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 55 (former RPO 53) Retail,</p>

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		it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 18 (former Objective 14): Education and Access to Talent	Include cross reference to RPO 177 and RPO 179 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 11: Education and Access to Talent.	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 185 (former RPO 177) New School Facilities and RPO 187 (former RPO 179) Education and Training, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 7 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 19 (former Objective 15): Tourism	Include cross reference to RPO 51 and 52 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 12: Tourism.	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 53 (former RPO 51) Tourism and RPO 54 (former RPO 52) Tourism and the Environment, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required.
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 12 A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI (former Objective 16): Digital Connectivity and Innovation	A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to a quality site and route selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites. This has been included in the RSES at RPO 1.	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced</p>

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		<p>ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Further, Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 12 A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI (former Objective 16 Digital Connectivity & Innovation) includes: a) It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and to seek access for all to digital infrastructure in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p>
<p>Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 20 (former Objective 17): Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy</p>	<p>Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 16: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the Cork MASP as outlined above, Additionally, Cork MASP Objective 1 Cork Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura</p>

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		<p>2000 Network in the Southern Region.</p> <p>Further, Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 20 (former Objective 18) Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation & Greenbelt Strategy includes:</p> <p>Identification of measures which improve and strengthen the metropolitan area's natural environment and habitats for flora and fauna.</p> <p>It is an objective to support and encourage sustainable recreation and tourism opportunities represented by the Shannon Estuary, the potential to create new walkways by linking existing areas of open space and woodland and the opportunity to develop Greenways for cycling and walking. 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.</p> <p>Regarding the cross reference to RPO 124 (former RPO 118) Green Infrastructure, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required</p>

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 20 (former Objective 18): Public Realm and Placemaking	A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to feasibility studies and a robust site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.</p>
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 18 (former Objective 14) Strong Education Assets and Availability of Talent	Include cross reference to RPO 177 and RPO 179 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 18: Strong Education Assets and Availability of Talent	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 185 (former RPO 177) New School Facilities and RPO 187 (former RPO 179) Education and Training, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 7 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 22	Include cross reference to RPO 173 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 19: Social	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 181 (former RPO 173) Equal Access, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 7 apply

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(former Objective 19) Social Inclusion	Inclusion.	equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 23 (former Objective 21): Healthy Cities and Health Infrastructure	The RPO should stipulate that the delivery of health service infrastructure within the Limerick Shannon MASP area shall be subject to a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further LS MASP Objective 1 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.</p>
Waterford MASP Objective PO 6: Investment in Sustainable Transport	Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 6: Investment in Sustainable Transport.	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 124 (former RPO 118) Green Infrastructure, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 5 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Waterford MASP Objective PO 7: Regional	Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 7: Regional	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 124 (former RPO 118) Green Infrastructure, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 5 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not

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Connectivity	Connectivity	required
Waterford MASP Objective PO 9 (former Objective 8): Vibrant City Centre	<p>A MASP Objective should be included that stipulates that the delivery of plans and projects arising from this Objective shall be subject to feasibility studies and a robust site selection process that addresses environmental concerns which shall include the potential for likely significant effects on European sites.</p> <p>Visitor Experience Development Plans will require AA.</p> <p>Visitor Experience Development Plans will specifically include a clear plan to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of European sites within the zone of influence of the plan including specific consideration of how supporting infrastructure like car parks and shops can influence the level of pressure on habitats and species the immediate vicinity.</p>	<p>Regarding general mitigation, RPO 1 applies to all objectives in the LS MASP. RPO 1 requires:</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be carried out to support decision making in relation to RSES objectives, including robust site/route selection processes to consider potential effects on the environment and Natura 2000 Network.</p> <p>At project level, all applications for development consents for projects emanating from RSES objectives that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment will need to be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclIA), Environmental Report (ER), Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) as relevant.</p> <p>Further, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 1 sets out that any support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the region refers to environmentally sustainable that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) and seek to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. RPO 1 clarifies that RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of the appropriate level of environmental assessments being</p>

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		<p>undertaken to avoid adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network and ensure the implementation of mitigation measures where required.</p> <p>Further, W MASP Objective 1 Waterford Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.</p> <p>In addition, Waterford MASP Policy Objective 9 (former Objective 8): Vibrant City Centre includes the requirement subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p>
Waterford MASP Objective PO 15 (former Objective 12): Development of	Include Cross reference to RPS 142 under this objective	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 147 (former RPO 142) Economic opportunities of ports, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 6 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
Waterford Port		is not required
Waterford MASP Objective 16 (former Objective 13): Waterford Airport	An AA should be undertaken on the airport Strategy proposed in RPO 144 in Chapter 6 to inform decision making on appropriate limits in relation to development of Waterford Airport to ensure no adverse effects on site integrity.	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 149 (former RPO 144) Regional Airport Strategy, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 6 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Waterford MASP Objective 17 (former Objective 14): Enterprise Supports	Include cross reference to RPO 177 and RPO 179 as part of Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 17: Enterprise Supports.	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 185 (former RPO 177) New School Facilities and RPO 187 (former RPO 179) Education and Training, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 7 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Waterford MASP Objective 18 (former Objective 15) Tourism	Include cross reference to RPO 52 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 15: Tourism.	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 53 (former RPO 51) Tourism and RPO 54 (former RPO 52) Tourism and the Environment, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Waterford MASP Objective 19 (former Objective 16): Retail	Include cross reference to RPO 53 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 16: Joint Retail Strategy.	Regarding RPO 55 (former RPO 53) Retail, retail strategies provide a high level policy guidance for the location of retail development. Environmental considerations regarding the retail hierarchy will be addressed through the lower tiered development plan and local area plan processes and project consent stages. RPO 1 addresses the mitigation required to ensure the appropriate level of environmental assessment is undertaken at these stages.

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
		Regarding the cross reference to RPO 55 (former RPO 53) Retail, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required
Waterford MASP Objective 20 (former Objective 17): Strategic Employment Locations	The objective clearly states that support is subject to subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. This will necessitate robust site selection including criteria to avoid adverse effects on any European site in line with commitments in RPO1 and Waterford MASP Objective 1.	<p>RPO 1 applies. Further, W MASP Objective 1 Waterford Metropolitan Area integrates the following mitigation:</p> <p>Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region</p>
Waterford MASP Objective 21 (former Objective 18): Metropolitan Wide Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy	Include cross reference to RPO 118 as part of Waterford MASP Objective 18: Environment	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 124 (former RPO 118) Green Infrastructure, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 4 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required

Chapter Ref.	Proposed Mitigation Measures/ Recommendations	How Has this Been Addressed in the Final Plan
Waterford MASP Objective 23 (former Objective 20): Lifelong Learning and Skills	Include cross reference to RPO 177 and RPO 179 as part of the Waterford MASP Objective 20: Lifelong Learning and Skills.	Regarding the cross reference to RPO 185 (former RPO 177) New School Facilities and RPO 187 (former RPO 179) Education and Training, it is implicit that all RPO's under Chapter 7 apply equally to the MASP. An explicit cross reference is not required

10 CONCLUSIONS

This Natura Impact Report has considered the potential of the SRA RSES to adversely affect the integrity of any European site. The assessment has included an iterative discussion with the RSES team; assessment of the emerging draft RSES with a view to including policies and text to mitigate potential for adverse effects on the integrity of any European site; and final assessment of the RSES which it is proposed will *be made* by the Regional Assembly.

In considering the potential for adverse effects, it has been noted that the Southern RSES is a strategic regional policy framework, to inform the preparation of land use plans such as city and county development plans and local area plans. These lower tier plans will include additional necessary detail on the form and expression of regional policy objectives. The RSES does not confer planning or designate or allocate specific land uses, nor does it preclude the consideration of alternatives. At the time the policies of these lower tier plans are being adopted, more detail will be known as to the proposed locations, for example, land zonings or infrastructural projects. These lower tier plans and their detailed objectives and policies will themselves be subject to appropriate assessment and will therefore be fully considered as part of that appropriate assessment at that time. As such, the RSES itself will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.

Notwithstanding this, a precautionary approach has been applied to much of the RSES in order to ensure that these lower tier plans do not themselves give rise to effects on the integrity of European sites, by explicitly including a number of safeguards, which will guide the lower tier plans in the protection of the Natura 2000 network. In the first instance, the plan includes specific overarching commitments to support the integration of biodiversity considerations in a positive, proactive and precautionary way and promote the protection of the environment and biodiversity conservation as key principles of the strategy. Furthermore, it provides clarification on the need for supporting environmental documentation to accompany development consents e.g. EIAR; NIS; Ecological Impact Assessment and the need to support key environmental and ecology policy such as the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and the EU Floods Directive. Specific RPOs have also been integrated in the RSES which seek to protect and conserve natural heritage and these have been detailed in Chapter 7 of this NIR.

In considering “in combination” or “cumulative” impacts, it is again emphasised that the RSES is a strategic regional plan and does not determine the precise location of any development project or designate or allocate specific land uses, nor does it preclude the consideration of alternatives. The public authority making the lower tier plans retains discretion as to the nature, scale and location of specific development projects and can thus avoid adverse effects on the integrity of any European site. The making of these lower tier plans is subject under the relevant provisions of national law to Stage 1 screening, and Stage 2 appropriate assessment as required. These statutory provisions are underscored by the specific objectives in the RSES (discussed above), which expressly state that they *are subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements* including AA under the Habitats Directive. The fact that proposals for land use designation and/or proposal for the location for individual projects will be formulated in more detail in the context of these lower tier plans ensures that a meaningful appropriate assessment can be carried out at that time.

Furthermore, the RSES offers support for a number of inter-related plans and programmes which have already undergone AA including development of the necessary mitigation to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of European sites. This mitigation is implicit in support for these other plans and strategies which are not administered by SRA.

Despite these protections, it is acknowledged that the strategy does include explicit support for objectives which could eventually lead to adverse effects on site integrity if unmitigated. This NIR has therefore included general and specific mitigation measures. Furthermore, it is reiterated that at the project consent stage, if it appears that any element of the RSES cannot be implemented without adverse impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated, then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of developments for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect.

Having regard to the reasons outlined above, it can be concluded that the RSES would not adversely affect the integrity of a European site (whether individually or in combination with other plans or projects) subject to application of all of the mitigation measures identified in this NIR.

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APPENDIX A

Summary of Statutory Consultation Responses

(SEA Scoping/ AA Screening)

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
<p>EPA</p> <p>General</p> <p><i>Also attached are to the Submission:-</i></p> <p><i>1. NPF Issues and Choices and SEA Scoping (31st Mar 2017) and 2. Draft NPF and associated SEA ER (10th Nov 2017)</i></p>	<p>General Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EPA welcomes the common approach to the SEA process being adopted for all 3 RSEs and welcome participation in workshop. ▪ Merit in considering adopting a similar standardised approach in preparing the Strategies. ▪ The RSES and the SEA should consider (and make a commitment to) the relevant aspects of the 7 Key Actions of <i>Ireland's Environment – An Assessment 2016</i> (SoER) which are linked to the 17 UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Suggest inclusion of these goals in the RSES. ▪ <i>Draft River Basin Management Plan</i> and <i>Cleaning our Air – A National Clean Air Strategy for Ireland</i> (currently being prepared) should be reflected in the environmental commitments in the RSES. ▪ Flood Risk Management Plans currently being finalised should feed in to the RSES. ▪ Aligning the implementation and governance aspects of the RSES with the approach to governance and implementation outlined in NPF. ▪ Considering support for the development of integrated and robust planning enforcement and cooperation mechanisms in association with the DHPLG, relevant Government Departments, and the proposed Office of the Planning Regulator, other Regional Assemblies and local authorities. ▪ The RSES has significant potential to contribute to support Ireland's ambition to become a carbon-neutral, climate-resilient and sustainably competitive society. ▪ A commitment to preparing an RSES Implementation Programme alongside the RSES should be considered. This could potentially set out key responsibilities (including lead /partner Departments/Authorities etc.), priorities and where appropriate, timescales, alongside each of the objectives/ commitments in the RSES. ▪ Refer to EPA SEA Guidance and information sources in carrying out SEA for consideration.
<p>EPA</p> <p>Appendix I - Comments on the Issues Paper</p>	<p>Appendix I - Comments on the RSES Issues Paper (General)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suggest having regard to key national environmental commitments. ▪ <i>With regards the Issues Paper, more detailed responses will be provided as supplementary information to this submission. This will be based on the Technical Working Group Workshops and the detailed Technical Reports provided.</i> <p>Appendix I - Comments on the RSES Issues Paper (Response to Questions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In relation to 'Our Rural Areas' list a number of plans and strategies for consideration. ▪ EPA annual reports on water quality, drinking water and wastewater detail the status of infrastructure and should be reviewed to determine the areas needing remediation / increased capacity so as to meet population growth and economic development. ▪ Irish Water's Tier I and Tier II Plans (Water Services Strategic Plan, Capital Investment Plan, Wastewater sludge management plan, Lead in Drinking Water Mitigation Plan and their National Water Resources Plan should be reviewed with regards to identifying water treatment infrastructure requirements and investment prioritisation are proposed. Also suggest referring to EPA's <i>Ireland's Environment - An Assessment 2016, our State of the Environment Report</i>. ▪ Should promote integration of climate related plans at county level (as listed). Merit in the Regional Authority convening a workshop to see how the various sectors within the region can implement and monitor implementation of the measures and policies required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. ▪ DCCA are considering the preparation of an on-line portal to serve as a database of information on climate policies and measures that can be used for Ireland's EU and

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
	<p>UNFCCC reporting purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In relation to the bio-economy sector, areas of competing land use should be identified early in the process particularly if those areas are marked for expansion or development of bio economy related developments/land uses. A commitment to the bio-energy plan should be given. ▪ In relation to marine and coastal areas a number of plans and strategies should be consulted including draft National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland etc. (as listed). ▪ In relation to regional measures which would ensure the monitoring and implementation of the objectives/policies of the NPF and the RSES there would be merit in considering a database of the various national policy objectives in the NPF and include the related policies/objectives for the region required to advance these national objectives. ▪ A commitment should be included in the RSES for reporting on the ongoing environmental performance of the RSES. This should be published alongside a report of RSES implementation. <p>Guidance for Integration of Environmental Considerations: separate document provided listing key significant environmental aspects to consider.</p>
<p>EPA Submission</p> <p>Appendix II – Comments on the Scoping Report</p>	<p>Appendix II – Comments on the Scoping Report</p> <p><i>5.3.1 – Population and Human Health</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is also merit from a population perspective to include a specific reference to the <i>National Planning Framework</i>. <p><i>5.3.2 – Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In relation to the Opportunities, bullet 2 “<i>More Coherent protection and enhancement of biodiversity as a whole on a regional and local level</i>”, could also consider including a reference to ‘monitoring’ and ‘management’ also. Could also amend this bullet to “<i>Support national level policies at a regional level to protect and enhance natural heritage assets</i>”. ▪ Opportunities Bullet 7 could also be amended to recognise the opportunity to establish a coordinated regional approach to habitat mapping, ecosystem services and river basin catchment management. <p><i>5.3.4 – Water</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In relation to Opportunities for the ‘Water’ topic, the wording of bullet 2 should be amended ‘addressing its impacts’ is vague in detail. ▪ Under ‘Challenges’, additional challenges could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensuring leisure activities do no adversely impact on the aquatic environment ○ dredging and dumping at sea activities should also be considered here <p><i>Drinking Water</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remedial Action List and the Priority Areas (EPA) set out deficiencies for drinking water and wastewater. These priority areas should be taken into consideration in the RSES and the SEA making process. <p><i>Waste Water</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consideration in the RSES and the associated environmental assessments of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An assessment carried out by Irish Water on wastewater indicates that many plants are not capable of taking additional capacity as they are not meeting the discharge conditions and this situation will not change in many of them in the near future (i.e. by 2021). If additional development occurs in these areas, it is likely to push the discharge over the licence limits and therefore potentially impact on

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
	<p>water quality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EPA identified 148 urban areas where improvements in the collection and treatment of waste water are necessary to resolve these six priority issues. The 148 areas are shown on the map at https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/SewageTreatment. ▪ The European Commission is taking Ireland to the Court of Justice of the European Union because of the failure to comply with the requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. It is essential that Ireland improves waste water treatment at non-compliant areas, to ensure that waste water is treated to the required standards. ▪ A lack of treatment capacity may constrain development in some urban areas, until such time as discharges from these areas meet the necessary environmental standards. ▪ Compliance with the requirements of Waste Water Discharge Authorisations is the key to reducing the environment impact of waste water on the receiving environment. <p><i>5.3.5 Air Quality</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amending Opportunity Bullet 4 for clarity “Encourage modal shift away from private vehicular transport to more sustainable options, especially in towns and cities”; ▪ Under ‘Challenges’, an additional challenge could relate to ‘emissions from industry’ within the region. <p><i>Road Transport</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Note road transport is highly fossil fuel dependant which is a key challenge to maintain good air quality. Identifies the need to promote a reduction in travel demands, increase alternatives to private car and improvements in motorised transport and need to promote incentives to move to electric vehicles. Recommend inclusion of commitment to reduce transport related emissions. <p><i>Noise</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available Noise Action Plans should be considered and reviewed as required, to reflect the Plan period and associated development proposals. ▪ Consideration should be given to protect, where relevant, any designated quiet areas in open country. Quiet Areas are defined as “an area in open country, substantially unaffected by anthropogenic noise.” ▪ Useful for the RSES to acknowledge and support the need for a National-level Noise Policy / Strategy. <p><i>5.3.6 Climatic Factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The relevant transport-related actions and measures in the <i>National Mitigation Plan</i> (DCCA, 2017) should be considered and addressed as appropriate in the RSES. ▪ Note obligation to meet 10% transport energy from renewable sources by 2020 and NPF target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions which should be addressed in RSES. ▪ The RSES should consider the impacts on local and regional exposure and vulnerability to weather and climate events, and projected changes to these due to climate change. ▪ Traffic flows, preferred commuter transport mode and associated impact on traffic volume/congestion is strongly influenced by weather conditions, and not just weather extremes, which should also be considered.

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The inclusion of commitment to preparation of a Regional Climate Adaptation Strategy should be considered for inclusion in the RSES. <p>5.3.7 Material Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first Opportunity bullet could include a reference to modern communications infrastructure. ▪ Refer to national policy on alternative fuels. ▪ <i>Bullet 1 - Plan for settlement to be aligned with required transport, water, energy infrastructure.</i> <p>5.3.9 Landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity could also include coordination of protection of sensitive and high landscape character areas in inter-county and inter regional context. ▪ Coordinated regional approach should be adopted to identifying and protection, regional LCA's opportunity. ▪ A commitment should be included in the RSES to the preparation Regional Landscape Character Assessment (RLCA). ▪ SEA Environmental Objectives should be set in the context of the environmental objectives set in the NPF to ensure consistency, while also expanding on the regional specific variation and issues/challenges that exist. <p><i>Table 7.1 – Draft SEA Environmental Objectives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Under the 'Water' topic, a sub-objective should be included for ensuring the Floods Directive and National CFRAMS programme is implemented, and supporting implementation of relevant actions and measures set out in the final FRMP's once adopted. ▪ Effecting Coastal Zone Management and associated implications for land use zoning should also be considered for inclusion. ▪ Noise considerations should be considered specifically. ▪ In relation to 'Climate', suggest to support and facilitate local authority climatic adaption strategies. ▪ Under 'Landscape', aspects such as protecting streetscapes, seascapes of recognised quality and enhancing provision of and access to green space in urban areas. ▪ <i>In relation to Material Assets (Waste):-</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunity to support RWMP recommendations to establish buffer areas between industrial/commercial areas and residential areas. ○ The RSES should also take into consideration the need to provide for adequate separation between sensitive receptors and industrial activities in order to minimise the potential for nuisance issues. <p><i>Section 7.3 Outline of Alternatives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Merit in considering a tiered approach to the consideration of alternatives in the SEA for the RSES, to align with the new national planning hierarchy. ▪ Suggest the convening of alternatives workshops would be useful with key stakeholders participating to inform the development, consideration and environmental appraisal of the RSES options and combinations of RSES options.
<p>DCHG – Comments on SEA Scoping Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The EPA's Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment Practitioner's Manual is of particular relevance for integration of biodiversity issues ▪ The scope of the SEA should include data gathering, analysis and assessment of the implications for each of the elements listed, paying particular attention to the likely and realistic effects of the plan.

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ List of data sources provided, including GIS data; list of important NPWs publications provided; List of relevant SEA Guidance documents provided. ▪ Where a plan requires an appropriate assessment, any changes or alterations of that plan (after the draft plan stage) should be 'assessed' rather than 'screened'. ▪ Strategic Environmental Objectives should be included for all nature conservation sites (not only European sites), protected species, and ecological corridors and stepping stones as outlined in this submission (Appendix 1) ▪ Although MASP is to operate at a strategic level it shall also take into consideration various environmental constraints and challenges in the wider metropolitan areas including but not only European sites and other nature conservation sites. All such land use planning issues have the potential to impact on biodiversity and designated sites and these issues need to be considered in the SEA. ▪ In addition to benefits of heritage and landscape for tourism, employment and economic growth, the strategy should also acknowledge the high quality of the environment associated with nature conservation sites, as well as their international scientific importance and educational values. ▪ Interrelationships between BFF and other topics should be assessed and identify significant effects. ▪ BFF section of SEA should be prepared by or in conjunction with suitably qualified ecologist and other specialists and should have regard for EPA's Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment best practice guidance. ▪ SEOs should refer to international and national environmental objectives. Refer to the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017- 2021 which seeks to 'mainstream biodiversity into decision making' and move towards 'no net loss to biodiversity'. ▪ Welcome that the biodiversity flora and fauna SEO also covers protected species. Such species, which can be protected under national and/or European legislation, can occur anywhere, including outside of designated sites. ▪ While it may be considered efficient to use monitoring programmes that are already in place and run by other authorities, it is important to establish that these are in fact designed in such a way that they will identify the effects anticipated from the particular strategy in question. As such, it is important to understand the objectives, methodologies, parameters, assumptions, etc. of any existing monitoring programme that is proposed to be used in such a way. ▪ It is advisable to set out clearly where responsibilities for monitoring programmes lie, and their frequency and reporting/publication arrangements, as well as the procedures that will be put in place to ensure that there is a response mechanism to any unforeseen or undesirable negative effects/results, and that remedial action will be taken, if necessary. ▪ Refers to the use of Irish SEA and AA Guidance documentation for use and various ecological data references for use as key sources as part of the process (pages 4 and 5). ▪ Appropriate assessment guidance is included in Appendix 2. Where the NIR/NIS identifies that plan-level mitigation is necessary this must amend and be reflected in the content and objectives of the final strategy wherever necessary. Specific and repeated cross referencing to mitigation measures in other sections or reports may be used but should be done clearly, consistently and unambiguously. Particular attention should be paid to environmental monitoring of previous or related plans where this is producing 'evidence-based' monitoring results. ▪ Public authorities are obliged, when exercising their functions, to take appropriate steps to avoid in European sites the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species, as well as disturbance of species for which a site has been designated insofar as this disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
	<p>Habitats Directive. Advised to incorporate such obligation into strategy. Suggest inclusion of the development of systems that will monitor and ensure the compliance of “downstream” projects with these obligations, as well as any internal mechanisms that may be needed to ensure compliance.</p> <p>Integration of Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, and associated obligations into the Strategy: General provisions described</p> <p>Key requirements and clarifications concerning Natura Impact Statements: General provisions described</p> <p>Appropriate Assessment Guidance: General provisions described and list of jurisprudence provided.</p> <p>Appendix 1: Key elements of biodiversity of relevance to SEA: A list of the key elements of biodiversity, flora and fauna of relevance to SEA is provided.</p> <p>Appendix 2: Overview of 2013 Article 17 and Article 12 summary data: Presents findings of report on status of Ireland’s Habitats and Species Report which refers to the status of Ireland’s birds, and reports on the implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directives. It also refers to the Department’s Prioritised Action Framework which requires consideration as part of the environmental assessments.</p>
<p>DCHG - Comments on the Issues Paper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legislation: The Strategy and SEA should take account of the Biodiversity Convention, the Ramsar Convention, the EC Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC), the EC Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147 EC), the Wildlife Acts of 1976 to 2012, and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 to 2015. The Regional Assembly should also refer to the relevant circular letters which have been circulated to Local Authorities. ▪ Designated Sites: The Strategy should include a natural heritage section and refer to all designated sites within or adjoining the Strategy area, which should be listed and mapped. ▪ Protected Species: The proposed Strategy should recognise that protected species also occur outside designated sites and should ensure the protection of such species. ▪ Biodiversity: The Strategy should be developed to integrate biodiversity considerations in a positive, proactive and precautionary way, and this should be reflected in the text and content of the plan, including its aims, objectives and policies, as well as in maps. ▪ Article 10 of the Habitats Directive: the Strategy should include provisions to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance to wild fauna and flora. ▪ Pollinators: It is recommended that the natural heritage section of the Strategy should also contain a policy on implementing the All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020. ▪ Implications of the Strategy for Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna: Plans and programmes may significantly affect nature conservation, biodiversity, flora and fauna in a number of ways, depending on the measures to be included within the Strategy and the methods of implementation. ▪ Cumulative Impacts: When drafting the Strategy, cumulative and in combination effects with existing plans and projects and with known upcoming plans and projects, should be assessed. <p>Eastern & Midland Region noted to have many areas of nature conservation importance, both designated and undesignated, ecological corridors and stepping stones, and biodiversity in general. The following issues should be considered when drafting the Strategy and carrying out the assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land Use Planning: No areas to be identified or targeted for future development or changes in land use without the availability of basic constraints map. ▪ Water Services: The provision of water services has the potential to impact on the

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
	<p>natural heritage. Such impacts include those on water quality and quantity as well as physical disturbance of habitats and species and habitat loss. Noted that some major projects are currently underway in the Region including plans to pipe water from the River Shannon, for a new waste water treatment plant (WWTP) in north County Dublin, and the upgrading of the Poolbeg WWTP. Consultation is ongoing with DCHG regarding these current proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infrastructure: Broadband/electricity/wind farms/solar farms require the laying of cables, underground or in some cases over ground and other ancillary infrastructure. Overhead cables can also pose a flight hazard to migrating birds and therefore need to be sensitively sited. Laying of cables has the potential to impact on habitats and species through habitat loss and disturbance. ▪ Roads and Rail: Modifications to existing road and rail routes, and the building of any new routes, have potential to impact negatively on biodiversity. Any potential impacts of on-going or proposed road or rail projects should be considered. Key projects include proposed road projects in the Region and an aspiration for the future twin tracking of the rail line both north and south from Dublin with the DART extension involving electrification of part of it. As the rail line runs adjacent to, and in some cases through, European sites, such projects will require appropriate assessment. In addition to loss of annexed habitat there is potential for bird collisions with overhead cables for the DART where it crosses estuaries such as at Malahide and Rogerstown. ▪ Ports and Airports: Any modifications or expansion of ports and airports may impact on biodiversity and designated sites, either directly or indirectly. Projects in the Region which the DCHG has been consulted about include a second runway proposal for Dublin Airport and the implementation of Dublin Port Masterplan ▪ Climate Change, Flooding and CFRAM: Flood barriers such as walls can impact on the structure and function of rivers, including river SACs, and can lead to changes in the patterns of erosion and deposition and the loss of flood plains and associated habitats. ▪ Coastal Protection: Coastal flood protection measures can lead to changes in the erosion and deposition and although considered a natural process and could have implications on sites some distance away should be considered in the Strategy. ▪ Air and Water Quality Including NOx Emissions: Air quality including emissions from vehicles (NOx) and farms (ammonia) can lead to atmospheric nitrogen deposition resulting in changes in flora and vegetation types. ▪ Tourism and Greenways/Cycleways, Amenity Parks: The Strategy should address the issue of creating new amenity parks and not rely on using existing natural biodiversity rich areas of countryside and designated sites for amenity purposes. The Strategy should ensure it is compliant with the National Greenway Strategy currently in preparation. Potential impacts of on-going or proposed greenways and similar developments should be considered including the potential for cumulative impacts at both a Regional and a National level including habitat loss and disturbance. ▪ There are many greenways and similar developments or development proposals in the Region, including the Barrow Blueway, the Royal and Grand Canal Greenways, the S 2 S and the Dodder Greenway from source to sea. These all have the potential to impact on European sites habitats and species including habits and species listed on the annexes of the Birds and Habitats Directives ▪ Green Infrastructure: Green Infrastructure should involve creating new green areas in existing built infrastructure and creating a green network. It should not be confused and be interpreted as putting built infrastructure into green areas. Although there is an inter-relationship between natural heritage and green infrastructure ▪ Department recommends that the Strategy should have separate natural heritage/biodiversity and green infrastructure chapters.

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Link provided to EU Commission’s document on Green Infrastructure (2013) ▪ It is recommended that the natural heritage section of the Strategy should also contain a policy on implementing the All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020 ▪ When drafting the Strategy, cumulative and in combination effects with existing plans and projects and with known upcoming plans and projects, should be assessed
Inland Fisheries Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RSES must address not only water quality but also include the protection of the physical environment, hydrological processes and biodiversity. Protection of the aquatic environment must imply a greater commitment than merely to prevent fish mortality or protect water quality. Consideration should be given to potential significant impacts on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water quality ▪ Aquatic and associated riparian habitats ▪ Biological Diversity ▪ Ecosystem structure and functioning ▪ Fish spawning and nursery areas ▪ Surface water hydrology ▪ Passage of migratory fish ▪ Areas of natural heritage importance including geological heritage sites ▪ Sport and commercial fishing and angling ▪ Amenity and recreational areas RSES should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be consistent with WFD and RBMP ▪ Preclude development where infrastructure is under-capacity. ▪ Support river corridor preservation. ▪ Promote integration of natural watercourses in development proposals and encourage local participation and consultation with IFI. ▪ Support National Strategy for Angling Development ▪ Have regard to IFI Guidelines. ▪ Protect aquatic environment: RSES....protection of the quality of the aquatic environment...water quality...include the protection of the physical environment, hydrological processes and biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintenance of habitat is a particularly important objective of fisheries authorities, protection of the food chain ▪ WFD - Protection of aquatic ecosystems requires that river systems be protected on a catchment basis and protection and maintenance of physical habitat and hydrological processes and regimes. ▪ Water Quality & Municipal WWTP Infrastructure: Sufficient treatment capacity must be available both within the receiving sewerage systems locally and downstream of waste water treatment plants over the full duration of the plan in order that the ecological integrity of the ultimate receiving waters is protected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity must be coupled with an effective sludge management strategy/policy. ▪ Build a comprehensive and robust assessment of both local infrastructural needs and IW/LA capacity to meet those needs into the plan the risk of associated significant environmental impacts which may result from local development. ▪ Water Quality and Integrated Constructed Wetlands: precautionary approach, from a policy perspective; required by WFD to protect/improve ecological status and water quality of all waters.

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Issues Raised
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aquatic Habitat Protection (incl. riparian habitat): essential to maintain watercourses in an environmentally and aesthetically sensitive manner; IFI provide guidance on site specific measures to protect riparian and aquatic habitats; Opposed to development on floodplain lands. ▪ Invasive Species: policies aimed at ensuring that developments do not spread invasive species; prohibit invasive species from inclusion in landscape design proposals... require use of native, local stock ▪ River Crossing Structures: policy for use of clear span structures where possible on fisheries waters. ▪ Stream Fragmentation: Refers to the Adaptive Management of Barriers in European Rivers 'AMBER Project' raising awareness of stream fragmentation and need for innovative solutions encouraging connectivity. ▪ Water Conservation: Reduce water use, enhance water supply reliability, restore ecosystems, and respond to climate change and changing demographics. ▪ Best practice, rainwater harvesting, regulation of agricultural abstraction and SUDS. ▪ Climate Change: Native fish vulnerable to climate change and requires mitigation incl. planting of trees. Flooding and high flows causing nutrient enrichment and fine sediment. ▪ Management Policies: Seek inclusion if river management policies in the form of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ River Corridor Management Areas protecting against development in urban areas. ▪ Special Preservation Orders provided for specific habitats in need of protection e.g. an Aquatic Protection Order. ▪ Special Amenity Areas, identified for their potential as Linear Parklands along waterways. <p>National Strategy for Angling Development: Seek support for this strategy.</p>

Note: SEA Scoping Consultation responses were also provided by a number of non-statutory SEA Consultees. While not included in this table, the responses have been reviewed and considered in the preparation of the draft Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, SEA Environmental Report and the Natura Impact Report.

APPENDIX B
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
Southern Region

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Ballyallia Lake SAC	000014
Ballycullinan Lake SAC	000016
Ballyogan Lough SAC	000019
Black Head-Poulsallagh Complex SAC	000020
Danes Hole, Poulnalecka SAC	000030
Dromore Woods And Loughs SAC	000032
Inagh River Estuary SAC	000036
Pouladatig Cave SAC	000037
Lough Gash Turlough SAC	000051
Moneen Mountain SAC	000054
Moyree River System SAC	000057
Poulnagordon Cave (Quin) SAC	000064
Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC	000077
Glengarriff Harbour And Woodland SAC	000090
Clonakilty Bay SAC	000091
Caha Mountains SAC	000093
Lough Hyne Nature Reserve And Environs SAC	000097
Roaringwater Bay And Islands SAC	000101
Sheep's Head SAC	000102
St. Gobnet's Wood SAC	000106
The Gearagh SAC	000108
Three Castle Head To Mizen Head SAC	000109
Curraghchase Woods SAC	000174
River Shannon Callows SAC	000216
Galway Bay Complex SAC	000268
Loughatorick South Bog SAC	000308
Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC	000332
Ballinskelligs Bay And Inny Estuary SAC	000335
Castlemaine Harbour SAC	000343
Old Domestic Building, Dromore Wood SAC	000353
Kilgarvan Ice House SAC	000364
Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks And Caragh River Catchment SAC	000365
Lough Yganavan And Lough Nambrackdarrig SAC	000370
Mount Brandon SAC	000375
Sheheree (Ardagh) Bog SAC	000382
Hugginstown Fen SAC	000404
The Loughans SAC	000407
Barrigone SAC	000432
Tory Hill SAC	000439
Sharavogue Bog SAC	000585
Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog SAC	000641
Galtee Mountains SAC	000646

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Kilcarren-Firville Bog SAC	000647
Helvick Head SAC	000665
Nier Valley Woodlands SAC	000668
Tramore Dunes And Backstrand SAC	000671
Ballyteige Burrow SAC	000696
Bannow Bay SAC	000697
Cahore Polders And Dunes SAC	000700
Lady's Island Lake SAC	000704
Saltee Islands SAC	000707
Screen Hills SAC	000708
Tacumshin Lake SAC	000709
Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC	000710
Hook Head SAC	000764
Blackstairs Mountains SAC	000770
Slaney River Valley SAC	000781
Cullahill Mountain SAC	000831
Spahill And Clomantagh Hill SAC	000849
Clare Glen SAC	000930
Kilduff, Devilsbit Mountain SAC	000934
Silvermine Mountains SAC	000939
Ballyteige (Clare) SAC	000994
Ballyvaughan Turlough SAC	000996
Glenomra Wood SAC	001013
Carrowmore Point To Spanish Point And Islands SAC	001021
Barley Cove To Ballyrisode Point SAC	001040
Cleanderry Wood SAC	001043
Great Island Channel SAC	001058
Kilkeran Lake And Castlefreke Dunes SAC	001061
Myross Wood SAC	001070
Keeper Hill SAC	001197
Courtmacsherry Estuary SAC	001230
Cloonee And Inchiquin Loughs, Uragh Wood SAC	001342
Mucksna Wood SAC	001371
Glen Bog SAC	001430
Glenstal Wood SAC	001432
Castletownshend SAC	001547
Liskeenan Fen SAC	001683
Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC	001741
Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC	001742
Philipston Marsh SAC	001847
Galmoy Fen SAC	001858
Derryclogher (Knockboy) Bog SAC	001873

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Glanmore Bog SAC	001879
Maulagowna Bog SAC	001881
Mullaghanish Bog SAC	001890
Glendree Bog SAC	001912
East Burren Complex SAC	001926
Comeragh Mountains SAC	001952
Old Domestic Building (Keevagh) SAC	002010
Ballyhoura Mountains SAC	002036
Carrigeenamronety Hill SAC	002037
Old Domestic Building, Curraglass Wood SAC	002041
Tralee Bay And Magharees Peninsula, West To Cloghane SAC	002070
Newhall and Edenvale Complex SAC	002091
Old Domestic Building, Askive Wood SAC	002098
Ballyseedy Wood SAC	002112
Ardmore Head SAC	002123
Bolingbrook Hill SAC	002124
Anglesey Road SAC	002125
Pollagoona Bog SAC	002126
Lower River Suir SAC	002137
Newgrove House SAC	002157
Kenmare River SAC	002158
River Barrow And River Nore SAC	002162
Lower River Shannon SAC	002165
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC	002170
Bandon River SAC	002171
Blasket Islands SAC	002172
Blackwater River (Kerry) SAC	002173
Slieve Mish Mountains SAC	002185
Drongawn Lough SAC	002187
Farranamanagh Lough SAC	002189
Scohaboy (Sopwell) Bog SAC	002206
Arragh More (Derrybreen) Bog SAC	002207
Lough Derg, North-east Shore SAC	002241
Old Farm Buildings, Ballymacrogan SAC	002245
Ballycullinan, Old Domestic Building SAC	002246
Toonagh Estate SAC	002247
Carrowmore Dunes SAC	002250
Thomastown Quarry SAC	002252
Moanour Mountain SAC	002257
Silvermines Mountains West SAC	002258
Magharee Islands SAC	002261
Valencia Harbour/Portmagee Channel SAC	002262

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Kerry Head Shoal SAC	002263
Kilkee Reefs SAC	002264
Carnsore Point SAC	002269
Askeaton Fen Complex SAC	002279
Dunbeacon Shingle SAC	002280
Reen Point Shingle SAC	002281
Slieve Bernagh Bog SAC	002312
Old Domestic Buildings, Rylane SAC	002314
Glanlough Woods SAC	002315
Ratty River Cave SAC	002316
Cregg House Stables, Crusheen SAC	002317
Knockanira House SAC	002318
Kilkishen House SAC	002319
Glendine Wood SAC	002324
Tullaheer Lough And Bog SAC	002343
Moanveanlagh Bog SAC	002351
Redwood Bog SAC	002353
Blackwater Bank SAC	002953

APPENDIX C

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

Southern Region

SPA Site Name	Site Code
Puffin Island SPA	004003
Cliffs of Moher SPA	004005
Basket Islands SPA	004008
Lady's Island Lake SPA	004009
The Raven SPA	004019
Ballyteigue Burrow SPA	004020
Old Head of Kinsale SPA	004021
Ballycotton Bay SPA	004022
Ballymacoda Bay SPA	004023
Tramore Back Strand SPA	004027
Blackwater Estuary SPA	004028
Castlemaine Harbour SPA	004029
Cork Harbour SPA	004030
Inner Galway Bay SPA	004031
Dungarvan Harbour SPA	004032
Bannow Bay SPA	004033
Killarney National Park SPA	004038
Ballyallia Lough SPA	004041
Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	004058
The Bull and The Cow Rocks SPA	004066
Wexford Harbour and Slobs SPA	004076
River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	004077
Clonakilty Bay SPA	004081
River Little Brosna Callows SPA	004086
Tacumshin Lake SPA	004092
Blackwater Callows SPA	004094
Kilcolman Bog SPA	004095
Middle Shannon Callows SPA	004096
Eirk Bog SPA	004108
The Gearagh SPA	004109
Illaunonearaun SPA	004114
Keeragh Islands SPA	004118
Loop Head SPA	004119
Sovereign Islands SPA	004124
Magharee Islands SPA	004125
Cahore Marshes SPA	004143
Dingle Peninsula SPA	004153
Iveragh Peninsula SPA	004154
Beara Peninsula SPA	004155
Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA	004156
Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA	004161
Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA	004162

SPA Site Name	Site Code
Slievefelim to Silvermines Mountains SPA	004165
Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA	004168
Deenish Island and Scariff Island SPA	004175
Mid-Clare Coast SPA	004182
Tralee Bay Complex SPA	004188
Kerry Head SPA	004189
Galley Head to Duneen Point SPA	004190
Seven Heads SPA	004191
Helvick Head to Ballyquin SPA	004192
Mid-Waterford Coast SPA	004193
Courtmacsherry Bay SPA	004219
Corofin Wetlands SPA	004220
River Nore SPA	004233

APPENDIX D

SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

RPS

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy – Southern Region

Information in Support of Screening for Appropriate Assessment

May 2018



rpsgroup.com/ireland



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1 INTRODUCTION

The Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) is currently preparing a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the region. The main purpose of the RSES is to support the implementation of the National Planning Framework (NPF), and the economic policies and objectives of the Government by providing a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the three regions: Southern; Eastern and Midland; and Northern and Western. The Southern Region RSES will be a strategic plan which identifies assets, opportunities and pressures for this region and will provide appropriate policy, objective and target responses. It will put policies and recommendations in place that will better manage regional planning and economic development throughout the region.

The purpose of this screening document is to provide information on the potential for the Southern RSES to give rise to likely significant effects on any European Site and to support a screening decision by the SRA on whether full Appropriate Assessment, including the preparation of a Natura Impact Report (NIR) will be required in accordance with EU and national legislation.

1.1 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as the “Habitats Directive” provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as the Natura 2000 Network. These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC) as codified by Directive 2009/147/EC (the Birds Directive), collectively referred to as European Sites.

Article 6 of the Directive obliges member states to undertake an ‘appropriate assessment’ (AA) for any plan or project, *individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European Site*. The outcome of such AA fundamentally affects the decisions that may lawfully be made by competent national authorities in relation to the approval of plans or projects.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European Sites (Annex 1.1).

Article 6(3) states:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

Article 6(4) states:

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [European] site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law principally through Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to land use planning; and also the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. No. 477/2011) legislation. The Screening for the Appropriate Assessment is being undertaken by RPS on behalf of Southern Regional Assembly.

1.2 PURPOSE OF SCREENING FOR AA

The purpose of the screening for AA is to assess, in view of the best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the sites, if that plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the site.

Screening is the process that addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3):

- Whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site, and
- Whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European Site in view of its Conservation Objectives.

It is the responsibility of the public authority to carry out AA screening and record their AA screening determination. The stages of AA screening are given in **Section 3.3** of this document.

1.3 OVERLAP WITH THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

An SEA is being carried out concurrently with the AA process. The purpose of the SEA is to evaluate at an early stage, the range of environmental consequences that may occur as a result of implementing the Southern RSES and to give interested parties an opportunity to comment upon the perceived or actual environmental impacts of the proposal. There is a degree of overlap between the requirements of both the SEA and AA and in accordance with best practice, an integrated process of sharing gathered data, such as that potentially affecting the integrity (threats and sensitivities) of European Sites has been carried out. These processes together have informed and shaped the early issues identification for the Southern RSES.

It is also noted that there are issues relevant to the Habitats Directive that are not strictly related to AA. These include Article 10 and 12 of the Directive. In these cases, the issues have been brought forward to the biodiversity, flora and fauna section of the SEA and have been addressed in that context as part of the wider environmental assessments informing the Southern RSES.

2 OVERVIEW OF THE RSES

2.1 BACKGROUND

Under the 2012 Government’s policy paper *“Putting People First”*, and the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the former two Regional Assemblies (RAs) and former eight Regional Authorities were reconfigured into three new RAs, namely the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA), the Southern Regional Assembly (SRA), and the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA). The main strategic planning functions of the RAs include the preparation, adoption and delivery of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs). These strategies must be consistent with the NPF and deliver its objectives at a regional level. **Figure 2.2** – Overview of Ireland’s Planning System outlines the regional assembly areas.

The NPF replaces the National Spatial Strategy, first published in November 2002, and forms Ireland’s long-term strategy for the next 20 years which sets the groundwork for the spatial and economic development of Ireland. The NPF lays the groundwork for a better quality of life for all and a basis for balanced and sustainable economic growth. It provides a focal point for spatial plans throughout the planning hierarchy, including the RSEs at the regional tier, and will assist in the achievement of more effective regional development. It also coordinates the strategic planning of urban and rural areas in a regional development context to secure overall proper planning and development as well as co-ordination of the RSEs. **Figure 2.2** – Overview of Ireland’s Planning System outlines Ireland’s planning hierarchy.

The current Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) had been a key aspect of the Government’s programme for spatial planning to date. New planning legislation under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) allows for the RSEs to replace the RPGs. The regional planning function will therefore be enhanced under the new RSEs through the inclusion of a significant economic strategy. The combined spatial and economic elements will establish a broad framework to allow for integrated local authority policy development and associated actions, outline the roles of government departments and other agencies, and to strengthen and clarify the role of local authorities in economic development and enterprise support/ promotion.

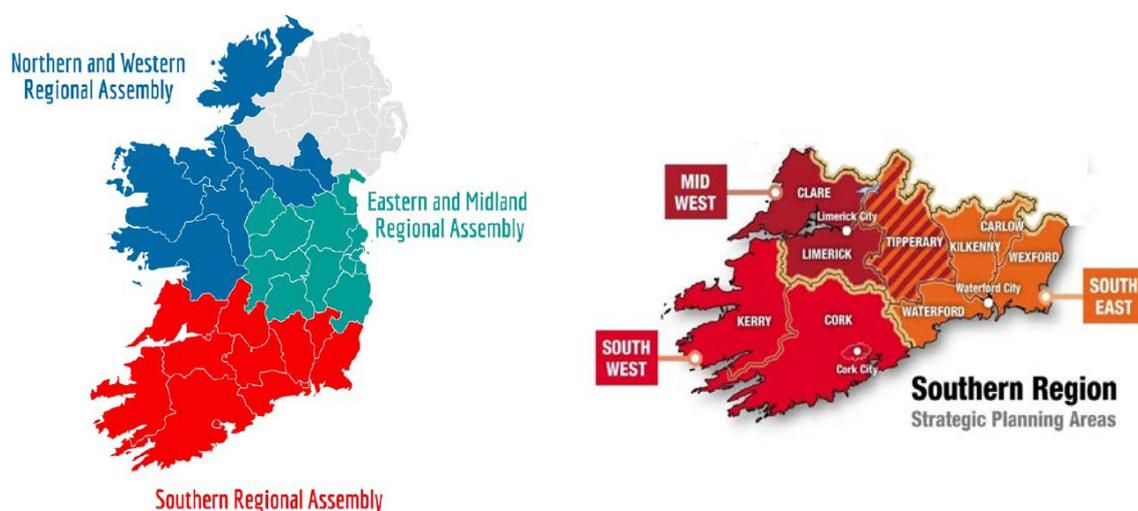


Figure 2-1: Regional Assemblies and the Southern Region

2.2 THE SOUTHERN REGION OVERVIEW

The Southern Region was established in January 2015 by the Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Assemblies) (Establishment) Order 2014 (SI 573 of 2014) which allowed for the existing 8 regional authorities and 2 regional assemblies to be replaced by 3 new regional assemblies. The region has an area of 29,653 km² covering 9 counties and 10 local authorities, with a total of 1,585,906 inhabitants in 2016. It is divided into the administrative Strategic Policy Areas of the South-East Region (Carlow, Tipperary, Waterford City and County, Wexford, Kilkenny), South-West Region (Cork City and County, Kerry) and Mid-West Region (Clare, Limerick City and County, Tipperary). The region contains the Burren National Park, Killarney National Park, 199 EU designated protected sites (144 SACs, 55 SPAs) and spans 22 catchments.

2.3 PURPOSE OF THE SOUTHERN RSES

One of the principle functions of the Southern RSES will be to practically support and advance the delivery of the national policy objectives contained in the NPF. The Southern RSES will bring forward the NPF in a manner which best reflects the challenges and opportunities of the region. It has been anticipated by the NPF that each of the three regional assemblies will begin to fill out the national policy objectives, in some cases giving them geographic or temporal context and in other cases elaborating on project concepts. The Southern RSES will support the delivery of the NPF removing the top-down perception and replacing it with a shared responsibility and understanding. The Issues Paper for the Southern RSES sets out its core functions, which includes:

- Placing strategic planning as its core function;
- Meeting the needs of the SRA's citizens e.g. meeting the need to access employment opportunities, services, travel options and well-being;
- Taking account of national policy i.e. the NPF;
- Support, reflect and link economic policies/ government objectives with spatial planning objectives;
- Consider the qualities, population size, service offering and location of towns, villages and cities in the region;
- Support balanced economic development building on the strengths of the region;
- Strengthen links between planning policy and economic trends; and
- Identifying important regional attributes to improve economic performance, the quality of the environment, and other assets/ amenities.

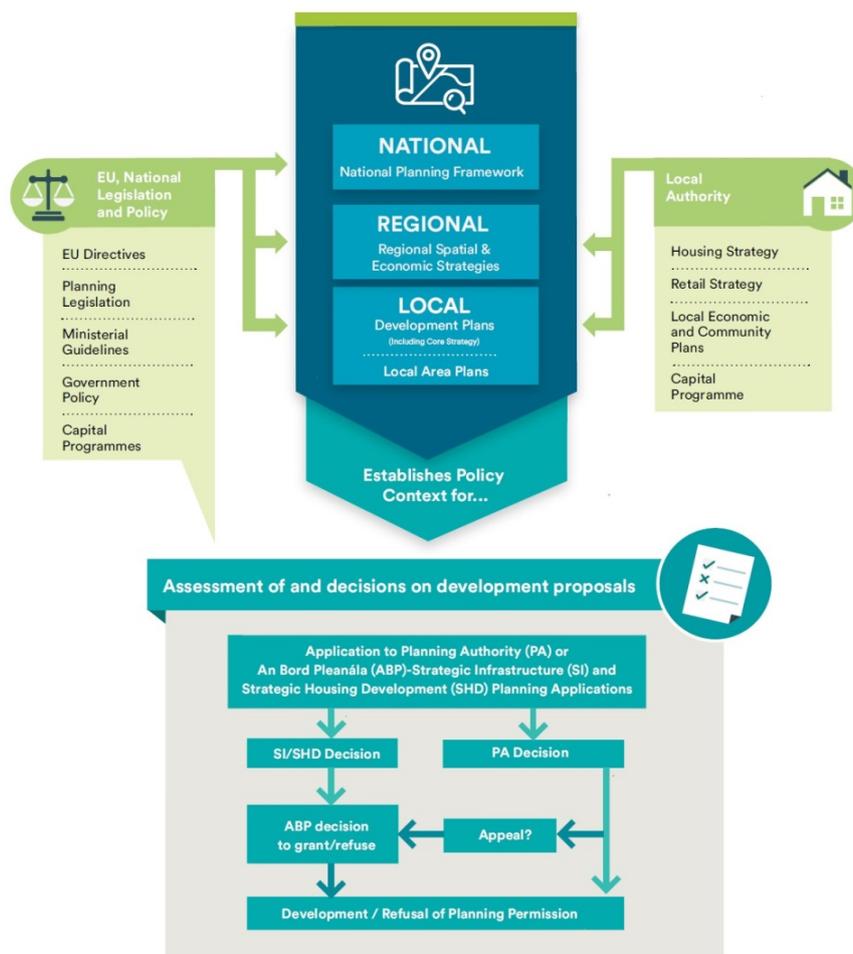


Figure 2-2: Overview of Ireland's Planning System ¹

The NPF also introduced a strategic focus on the five cities in Ireland and their metropolitan areas. Following direction from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) will be prepared for each of the five cities. In the case of the Southern RSES, a MASP will be developed for Cork, Limerick and Waterford. The MASPs will be provided with statutory underpinning to act as a 12 year strategic planning and investment framework for city metropolitan areas addressing high level and long term strategic development issues including:

- Physical development patterns and strategic growth areas.
- Strategic infrastructure, particularly in the transportation and water service area.
- Large scale regeneration and the location of housing and employment.
- Metropolitan scale amenities such as regional parks and walking and cycling networks.

It is intended that the MASPs for Cork, Limerick and Waterford will align with and inform national level sectoral investment plans to guide and coordinate investment within the metropolitan area, coordinating land use planning and strategic infrastructure.

¹ DHPLG 2018 Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework

3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

3.1 GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS ON APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The AA requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC follow a sequential approach as outlined in the following legislation and guidance documents/ Departmental Circulars, namely:

European and National Legislation

- Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (also known as the ‘Habitats Directive’);
- Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, codified version (also known as the ‘Birds Directive’);
- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended; and
- Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

Guidance

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Local Authorities* (revision 10/02/10) (DEHLG, 2009);
- *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 (2001);
- *Communication from the Commission on the Precautionary Principle* (European Commission, 2000b);
- *EC study on evaluating and improving permitting procedures related to Natura 2000 requirements under Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2013);
- *Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the ‘Habitats Directive’ 92/43/EEC. Clarification of the concepts of: Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence, Opinion of the Commission* (European Commission, 2007);
- *Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC²* (European Commission, 2000a); and
- *Marine Natura Impacts Statements in Irish Special Areas of Conservation. A working Document* (DAHG, 2012).

Departmental/NPWS Circulars

- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Circular NPWS 1/10 and PSSP 2/10.
- *Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans.* Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08.
- *Water Services Investment and Rural Water Programmes – Protection of Natural Heritage and National Monuments.* Circular L8/08.

² The Commission has notified its intent to revise this guidance and a draft revised document was published in April 2015. It would appear that this has not been finalised to date, with no revised guidance document available on the Commissions website.

- *Guidance on Compliance with Regulation 23 of the Habitats Directive*. Circular Letter NPWS 2/07.
- *Compliance Conditions in respect of Developments requiring (1) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); or (2) having potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites*. Circular Letter PD 2/07 and NPWS 1/07.

3.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CASE LAW

Over time legal interpretation has been sought on the practical application of the legislation concerning AA as some terminology has been found to be unclear. European and National case law has clarified a number of issues and some aspects of the published guidance documents have been superseded by case law. Case law has been considered in the preparation of the screening of the RSES.

3.3 STAGES OF APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The AA process progresses through four stages. If at any stage in the process it is determined that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of a European Site in view of the sites' Conservation Objectives, the process is effectively completed. The four stages are as follows:

- Stage 1 – Screening of the proposed plan or project for AA;
- Stage 2 – An AA of the proposed plan or project;
- Stage 3 – Assessment of alternative solutions; and
- Stage 4 – Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/ Derogation.

Stage 1: Screening for AA

The aim of screening is to assess firstly if the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of European Site(s); or in view of best scientific knowledge, if the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This is done by examining the proposed plan or project and the Conservation Objectives of any European Sites that might potentially be affected. If screening determines that there is a likelihood of significant effects or there is uncertainty regarding the significance of effects then it will be recommended that the plan is brought forward to the next stage of the AA process.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

The aim of Stage 2 of the AA process is to identify any adverse impacts that the plan or project might have on the integrity of relevant European Sites. As part of the assessment, a key consideration is 'in combination' effects with other plans or projects. Where adverse impacts are identified, mitigation measures can be proposed that would avoid, reduce or remedy any such negative impacts and the plan or project should then be amended accordingly, thereby avoiding the need to progress to Stage 3.

Stage 3: Alternative Solutions

If it is not possible during Stage 2 of the AA process to conclude that there will be no adverse effects on site integrity, Stage 3 of the process must be undertaken which is to objectively assess whether alternative solutions exist by which the objectives of the plan or project can be achieved. Explicitly, this means alternative solutions that do not have adverse impacts on the integrity of a European Site. It should also be noted that EU guidance on this stage of the process states that, ‘other assessment criteria, such as economic criteria, cannot be seen as overruling ecological criteria’ (EC, 2002). In other words, if alternative solutions exist that do not have adverse impacts on European Sites; they should be adopted regardless of economic considerations. This stage of the AA process should result in the identification of the least damaging options for the plan or project.

Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)

This stage of the AA process is undertaken when it has been determined that a plan or project will have adverse effects on the integrity of a European Site, but that no alternatives exist. At this stage of the AA process, it is the characteristics of the plan or project itself that will determine whether or not the competent authority can allow it to progress. This is the determination of ‘over-riding public interest’. It is important to note that in the case of European Sites that include in their qualifying features ‘priority’ habitats or species (Special Areas of Conservation), as defined in Annex I and II of the Habitats Directive, the demonstration of ‘over-riding public interest’ is not sufficient and it must be demonstrated that the plan or project is necessary for ‘human health or public safety considerations’. Where plans or projects meet these criteria, they can be allowed, provided adequate compensatory measures are proposed. Stage 4 of the process defines and describes these compensation measures.

3.4 INFORMATION SOURCES CONSULTED

The following sources of information have been consulted:

- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government online land use mapping – www.myplan.ie/en/index.html;
- GeoHive online mapping – <http://map.geohive.ie/mapviewer.html>;
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland online mapping and aerial photography – www.osi.ie;
- CORINE (Co-ordinated Information on the Environment) data series was established by the European Community (EC) <http://www.epa.ie/soilandbiodiversity/soils/land/corine/>;
- Forest Cover Datasets
<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests/forests-general-information/forest-statistics-and-mapping/forest-cover-datasets/>;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service online European Site information – www.npws.ie;
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency online European Site information – <https://www.doeni.gov.uk/>;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – Article 17 Status of EU protected habitats in Ireland reporting (NPWS 2013a & 2013b);
- Ireland’s Article 12 submission to the EU Commission on the Status and Trends of Bird Species (2008-2012);
- Environmental Protection Agency ENVision maps and water data – www.epa.ie;
- Geological Survey of Ireland geology, soils and hydrogeology – www.gsi.ie;

- *Format for a Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000* (DAHG, 2014) www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/PAF-IE-2014.pdf; and
- *Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: Irelands National Biodiversity Plan* (DAHG, 2011).³

³ Ireland's third National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017 – 2021 is currently undergoing consultation. The draft plan can be found at [https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/files/Draft%20NBAP%202017-2021\(1\).pdf](https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/files/Draft%20NBAP%202017-2021(1).pdf) (as at 23/01/2017).

4 SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

In line with best practice guidance the AA Screening involves the following:

1. Description of the plan;
2. Identification of relevant European Sites;
3. Assessment of likely significant effects;
4. Screening statement/determination with conclusions.

4.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

An overview of the Southern RSES, including background and context are provided in **Chapter 2** of this document.

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES

European Sites comprise (a) Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) that are designated under the Habitats Directive as requiring the conservation of important, rare or threatened habitats and species (other than birds) and (b) Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which are designated under the Birds Directive to conserve certain migratory or rare birds and their habitats. Collectively these sites form the Natura 2000 Network. In accordance with DEHLG Guidance (2009), the AA also takes into account transboundary impacts where it is identified that the implementation of the plan has the potential to impact on European Sites e.g. in Northern Ireland.

Current guidance on the zone of influence (Zoi) to be considered during the AA process states the following:

A distance of 15km is currently recommended in the case of plans, and derives from UK guidance (Scott Wilson et al., 2006). For projects, the distance could be much less than 15km, and in some cases less than 100m, but this must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in combination effects

The zone of influence (Zoi) of the Southern RSES will be determined based on the connectivity with the surrounding areas. Therefore, it can be said that in the first instance the Zoi is considered to include all European Sites within the Southern Region (**Figure 4.1, Appendix C1 and C2**). Proposals within the Southern RSES will involve collaboration and coordination with the other two regional assemblies in terms of spatial planning issues, environmental management and provision of infrastructure. As such, all European sites within the other two regions, and those in Northern Ireland have been included in **Appendix A, B and D**.

Figures for European Sites falling completely within or partially within each region are presented in **Table 4.1**. The figures in each region include all sites which intersect with the administrative boundary. Therefore sites which straddle two regions have been included in both regional counts. National figures are presented for completeness in **Table 4.2**.

Table 4.1: Number of European Sites by Region, and Northern Ireland

European Sites*	Eastern and Midland	Southern	Northern and Western	Northern Ireland**
SAC	86	144	217	59
SPA	39	55	80	18

* NPWS data revision as of April 2018.

** NIEA/JNCC data revision as of January 2018 (includes newly proposed/ candidate sites).

Table 4.2: European Sites Nationally

Republic of Ireland*	Northern Ireland**
433 SACs + 6 offshore SACs	59 SACs
165 SPAs	18 SPAs

*NPWS data revision as of August 2017. Checked 26th March 2018

**NIEA/ JNCC data revision as of March 2017 (includes newly proposed/candidate sites).

It is acknowledged that the number of European Sites designated, and their boundaries, are subject to change over time and must therefore be verified on an ongoing basis.

4.3 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY EFFECTS

The main objectives of the Southern RSES are to:

- Support the implementation of National Planning Framework (NPF) and the economic policies and objectives of the Government;
- Provide a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the regions; and
- Address Employment, Retail, Housing, Transport, Water services, Energy and communications, Waste management, Education, health, sports and community facilities, Environment and heritage, Arts and culture, Landscape, Sustainable development and climate change.⁴

The spatial dimension of the Southern RSES has the potential to give rise to direct and indirect effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna in European Sites in Ireland through habitat loss, destruction, fragmentation or degradation; disturbance to species; species mortality; alternations to water quality and hydrology; alteration to air quality, introduction and transfer of invasive species among other issues. However, it also offers the opportunity to integrate nature into decision-making and allow the benefits of biodiversity to be appreciated, and where appropriate harnessed. In the absence of detail with regards to finalised controls or mitigation measures at this early stage as well as the unknowns in relation to the potential effects on water, air and sensitive habitats, it is considered that there is a likelihood of significant effects occurring on one or more European Sites.

⁴ SRA (2017) Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy Initial Public & Stakeholder Consultation Issues Paper. Retrieved: http://www.southernassembly.ie/uploads/general-files/SRA_Issues_Paper.pdf

4.3.1 Conservation Objectives

Site-specific conservation objectives (SSCO) aim to define favourable conservation condition for a particular habitat or species at a Natura 2000 site. Maintaining habitats and species in a favourable conservation condition then contributes to the wider objective to maintain those most vulnerable habitats and species at favourable status throughout their range within the Natura 2000 network.

At an individual site level, SSCOs specify whether the objective is to maintain or to restore favourable conservation condition of the habitat or species, and they set out attributes and targets that define the objectives. It is the aim of the DCHG to produce SSCOs for all European sites in due course⁵. Qualifying interests (QI) and Special conservation Interests (SCIs) are annexed habitats and annexed species of community interest for which an SAC or SPA has been designated. The SSCOs for European Sites are set out to ensure that the QIs/ SCIs of that site are maintained or restored to a favourable conservation condition / conservation status.

A full listing of the COs and QIs/ SCIs that each European Site is designated for, as well as the attributes and targets to maintain or restore the QIs/ SCIs to a favourable conservation condition are available from the NPWS website www.npws.ie.

It is noted that the existing conservation condition of some habitats and species is unfavourable at present for various reasons, including because of exceedance in environmental quality parameters. This is discussed further in the next section.

4.3.2 In-Combination Effects

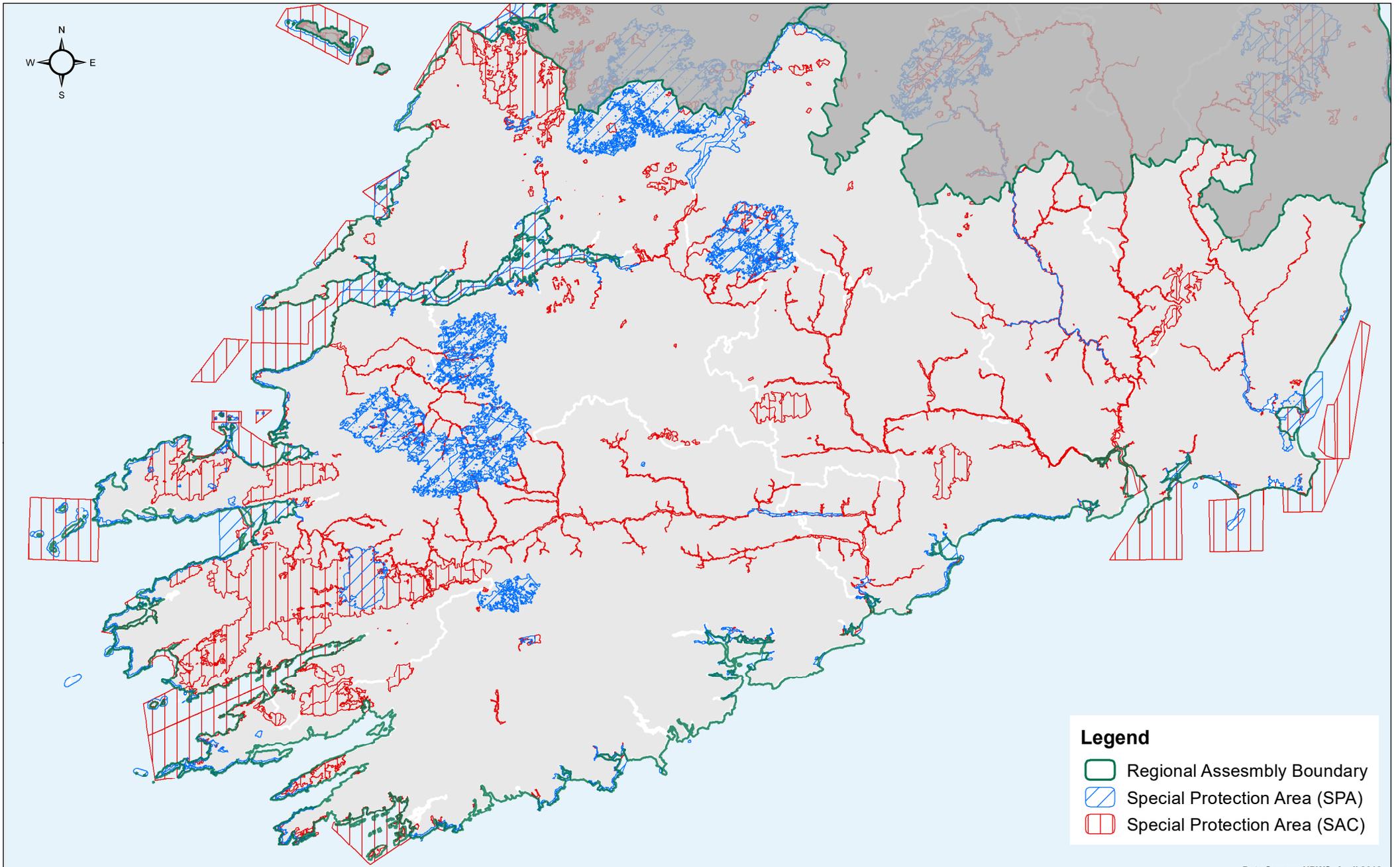
It is a requirement of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that the in-combination effects with other plans or projects are considered. Consideration has been given, at this stage of the Southern RSES, to other relevant plans on a similarly strategic level that have clear potential to have a cumulative impact upon European Sites.

Given the level of detail currently available for the Southern RSES, and that potential likely significant effects cannot currently be ruled out as a result of implementation of the plan, it is considered that the Southern RSES has the potential to result in in-combination effects with other plans. Some of the key plans considered to date are listed below.

Key Relevant Plans and Programmes	
National Planning Framework	National Development Plan
Eastern and Midlands RSES	Northern and Western RSES
National Climate Mitigation Plan	National Climate Change Adaptation Framework
Bioenergy Plan	Renewable Electricity Plan
Water Services Strategic Plan	National Water Resources Plan
Lead in Drinking Water Mitigation Plan	National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan

⁵ https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/

Key Relevant Plans and Programmes	
Seafood Operation Programme	Aquaculture Plan
The National Biodiversity Plan	Regional Waste Management Plans
Construction 2020	National Landscape Strategy for Ireland
NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs	Rural Development Programme
Forestry Programme	Foodwise 2025
National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP)	Strategy for Renewable Energy
Smarter Travel 'A New Transport Policy for Ireland'	Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan
National Cycle Policy Framework	National Ports Policy
National Aviation Policy	Greater Dublin Area (GDA) Transport Strategy
Social Housing Strategy	Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund
Enterprise 2025 Renewed	Emerging Marine Spatial Plan
Re-Building Ireland	Fáilte Ireland Plans
River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021	



Legend

- Regional Assesmbly Boundary
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Special Protection Area (SAC)

Data Source: NPWS, April 2018.

Figure 4.1 – European Sites in the Southern Region



5 CONCLUSION

The RSES is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site. Furthermore, having regard to the following:

- The strategic nature of the plan;
- The current stage of preparation;
- Potential for impact pathway; and
- Uncertainties relating to the implementation and zone of influence of the plan going forward,

It cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective scientific information, that the Southern RSES, individually or in combination with other plans and projects will have a significant effect on a European site. As such, it is recommended that an Appropriate Assessment is required and a Natura Impact Report should be prepared.

6 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A1

Special Areas of Conservation, Eastern and Midland Region

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally) SAC	000006
Baldoyle Bay SAC	000199
Howth Head SAC	000202
Lambay Island SAC	000204
Malahide Estuary SAC	000205
North Dublin Bay SAC	000206
Rogerstown Estuary SAC	000208
South Dublin Bay SAC	000210
River Shannon Callows SAC	000216
Ballynafagh Bog SAC	000391
Pollardstown Fen SAC	000396
Red Bog, Kildare SAC	000397
Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC	000412
Lough Ree SAC	000440
Fortwilliam Turlough SAC	000448
Carlingford Mountain SAC	000453
Dundalk Bay SAC	000455
All Saints Bog And Esker SAC	000566
Charleville Wood SAC	000571
Clara Bog SAC	000572
Ferbane Bog SAC	000575
Fin Lough (Offaly) SAC	000576
Mongan Bog SAC	000580
Moyclare Bog SAC	000581
Raheenmore Bog SAC	000582
Sharavogue Bog SAC	000585
Garriskil Bog SAC	000679
Lough Ennell SAC	000685
Lough Owel SAC	000688
Scragh Bog SAC	000692
Ballyman Glen SAC	000713
Bray Head SAC	000714
Carriggower Bog SAC	000716
Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve SAC	000717
Glen Of The Downs SAC	000719
Knocksink Wood SAC	000725
Buckronev-Brittis Dunes And Fen SAC	000729
Vale Of Clara (Rathdrum Wood) SAC	000733
Slaney River Valley SAC	000781
Cullahill Mountain SAC	000831

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Clonaslee Eskers And Derry Bog SAC	000859
Lisbigney Bog SAC	000869
Ridge Road, SW of Rapemills SAC	000919
The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC	000925
Glenasmole Valley SAC	001209
Ballynafagh Lake SAC	001387
Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC	001398
Clogher Head SAC	001459
Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC	001742
Holdenstown Bog SAC	001757
Magherabeg Dunes SAC	001766
Pilgrim's Road Esker SAC	001776
White Lough, Ben Loughs And Lough Doo SAC	001810
Lough Forbes Complex SAC	001818
Split Hills And Long Hill Esker SAC	001831
Boyne Coast And Estuary SAC	001957
Lough Bane And Lough Glass SAC	002120
Lough Lene SAC	002121
Wicklow Mountains SAC	002122
Mountmellick SAC	002141
Lisduff Fen SAC	002147
River Barrow And River Nore SAC	002162
Ireland's Eye SAC	002193
Derragh Bog SAC	002201
Mount Jessop Bog SAC	002202
Girley (Drewstown) Bog SAC	002203
Wooddown Bog SAC	002205
Island Fen SAC	002236
The Murrrough Wetlands SAC	002249
Ballyprior Grassland SAC	002256
Wicklow Reef SAC	002274
River Boyne And River Blackwater SAC	002299
Carlingford Shore SAC	002306
Ballymore Fen SAC	002313
Mouds Bog SAC	002331
Coolrain Bog SAC	002332
Knockacoller Bog SAC	002333
Carn Park Bog SAC	002336
Crosswood Bog SAC	002337
Moneybeg And Clareisland Bogs SAC	002340
Ardagullion Bog SAC	002341
Mount Hevey Bog SAC	002342

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Brown Bog SAC	002346
Clooneen Bog SAC	002348
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	003000
Codling Fault Zone SAC	003015

APPENDIX A2

Special Protection Areas, Eastern and Midland Region

SPA Site Name	Site Code
North Bull Island SPA	004006
Rockabill SPA	004014
Rogerstown Estuary SPA	004015
Baldoyle Bay SPA	004016
Mongan Bog SPA	004017
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	004024
Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA	004025
Dundalk Bay SPA	004026
Wicklow Mountains SPA	004040
Lough Derravaragh SPA	004043
Lough Ennell SPA	004044
Glen Lough SPA	004045
Lough Iron SPA	004046
Lough Owel SPA	004047
Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA	004061
Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA	004063
Lough Ree SPA	004064
Lough Sheelin SPA	004065
Lambay Island SPA	004069
Carlingford Lough SPA	004078
Boyne Estuary SPA	004080
River Little Brosna Callows SPA	004086
Stabannan-Braganstown SPA	004091
Middle Shannon Callows SPA	004096
River Suck Callows SPA	004097
Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA	004101
Garriskil Bog SPA	004102
All Saints Bog SPA	004103
Howth Head Coast SPA	004113
Ireland's Eye SPA	004117
Skerries Islands SPA	004122
Wicklow Head SPA	004127
Dovegrove Callows SPA	004137
River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA	004158
Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA	004160
Dalkey Islands SPA	004172
The Murrough SPA	004186
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	004232
River Nore SPA	004233

APPENDIX B1

Special Areas of Conservation, Northern and Western Region

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally) SAC	000006
Lough Oughter And Associated Loughs SAC	000007
Aran Island (Donegal) Cliffs SAC	000111
Ballintra SAC	000115
Ballyarr Wood SAC	000116
Croaghonagh Bog SAC	000129
Donegal Bay (Murvagh) SAC	000133
Durnesh Lough SAC	000138
Fawnboy Bog/Lough Nacung SAC	000140
Gannivegil Bog SAC	000142
Horn Head And Rinclevan SAC	000147
Inishtrahull SAC	000154
Lough Eske And Ardnamona Wood SAC	000163
Lough Nagreany Dunes SAC	000164
Lough Nillan Bog (Carrickatlieve) SAC	000165
Magheradrumman Bog SAC	000168
Meenaguse/Ardbane Bog SAC	000172
Meentygrannagh Bog SAC	000173
Rathlin O'Birne Island SAC	000181
Sessiagh Lough SAC	000185
Slieve League SAC	000189
Slieve Tooley/Tormore Island/Loughros Beg Bay SAC	000190
St. John's Point SAC	000191
Tranarossan And Melmore Lough SAC	000194
West Of Ardara/Maas Road SAC	000197
Inishmaan Island SAC	000212
Inishmore Island SAC	000213
River Shannon Callows SAC	000216
Coolcam Turlough SAC	000218
Barroughter Bog SAC	000231
Caherglassaun Turlough SAC	000238
Castletaylor Complex SAC	000242
Cloonmoylan Bog SAC	000248
Coole-Garryland Complex SAC	000252
Croaghill Turlough SAC	000255
Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC	000261
Galway Bay Complex SAC	000268
Inishbofin And Inishshark SAC	000278
Kilsallagh Bog SAC	000285
Kiltartan Cave (Coole) SAC	000286

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Levally Lough SAC	000295
Lisnageeragh Bog and Ballinastack Turlough SAC	000296
Lough Corrib SAC	000297
Lough Cutra SAC	000299
Lough Lurgeen Bog/Glenamaddy Turlough SAC	000301
Lough Rea SAC	000304
Loughatorick South Bog SAC	000308
Peterswell Turlough SAC	000318
Pollnaknockaun Wood Nature Reserve SAC	000319
Rahasane Turlough SAC	000322
Rosroe Bog SAC	000324
Shankill West Bog SAC	000326
Slyne Head Islands SAC	000328
Tully Mountain SAC	000330
Lough Melvin SAC	000428
Lough Ree SAC	000440
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC	000458
Ardkill Turlough SAC	000461
Balla Turlough SAC	000463
Bellacorick Iron Flush SAC	000466
Mullet/Blacksod Bay Complex SAC	000470
Brackloon Woods SAC	000471
Broadhaven Bay SAC	000472
Ballymaglancy Cave, Cong SAC	000474
Carrowkeel Turlough SAC	000475
Carrowmore Lake Complex SAC	000476
Cloughmoyne SAC	000479
Clyard Kettle-Holes SAC	000480
Cross Lough (Killadoon) SAC	000484
Corraun Plateau SAC	000485
Doocastle Turlough SAC	000492
Duvillaun Islands SAC	000495
Flughany Bog SAC	000497
Glenamoy Bog Complex SAC	000500
Greaghans Turlough SAC	000503
Kilglassan/Caheravoostia Turlough Complex SAC	000504
Inishkea Islands SAC	000507
Lackan Saltmarsh And Kilcummin Head SAC	000516
Lough Gall Bog SAC	000522
Shrule Turlough SAC	000525
Moore Hall (Lough Carra) SAC	000527
Oldhead Wood SAC	000532

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Owenduff/Nephin Complex SAC	000534
Skealaghan Turlough SAC	000541
Slieve Fyagh Bog SAC	000542
Cuilcagh - Anierin Uplands SAC	000584
Ballinturly Turlough SAC	000588
Bellanagare Bog SAC	000592
Callow Bog SAC	000595
Carrowbehy/Caher Bog SAC	000597
Cloonchambers Bog SAC	000600
Derrinea Bog SAC	000604
Lough Fingall Complex SAC	000606
Errit Lough SAC	000607
Lisduff Turlough SAC	000609
Lough Croan Turlough SAC	000610
Lough Funshinagh SAC	000611
Mullygollan Turlough SAC	000612
Cloonshanville Bog SAC	000614
Ballysadare Bay SAC	000622
Ben Bulben, Gleniff And Glenade Complex SAC	000623
Bunduff Lough And Machair/Trawalua/Mullaghmore SAC	000625
Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC	000627
Lough Hoe Bog SAC	000633
Lough Nabrickeagh Bog SAC	000634
Templehouse And Cloonacleigha Loughs SAC	000636
Turloughmore (Sligo) SAC	000637
Union Wood SAC	000638
Corratirrim SAC	000979
Ballyness Bay SAC	001090
Coolvoy Bog SAC	001107
Dunragh Loughs/Pettigo Plateau SAC	001125
Gweedore Bay And Islands SAC	001141
Kindrum Lough SAC	001151
Muckish Mountain SAC	001179
Sheephaven SAC	001190
Termon Strand SAC	001195
Aughrusbeg Machair And Lake SAC	001228
Carrownagappul Bog SAC	001242
Cregduff Lough SAC	001251
Dog's Bay SAC	001257
Gortnandarragh Limestone Pavement SAC	001271
Inisheer Island SAC	001275
Kiltiernan Turlough SAC	001285

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Omey Island Machair SAC	001309
Rusheenduff Lough SAC	001311
Ross Lake And Woods SAC	001312
Rosturra Wood SAC	001313
Termon Lough SAC	001321
Arroo Mountain SAC	001403
Clew Bay Complex SAC	001482
Doogort Machair/Lough Doo SAC	001497
Erris Head SAC	001501
Keel Machair/Menaun Cliffs SAC	001513
Lough Cahasy, Lough Baun And Roonah Lough SAC	001529
Mocorha Lough SAC	001536
Urlaur Lakes SAC	001571
Castlesampson Esker SAC	001625
Annaghmore Lough (Roscommon) SAC	001626
Four Roads Turlough SAC	001637
Bricklieve Mountains and Keishcorran SAC	001656
Knockalongy and Knockachree Cliffs SAC	001669
Lough Arrow SAC	001673
Streedagh Point Dunes SAC	001680
Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC	001774
Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC	001786
Lough Forbes Complex SAC	001818
Meenaguse Scragh SAC	001880
Unshin River SAC	001898
Cloonakillina Lough SAC	001899
Sonnagh Bog SAC	001913
Glenade Lough SAC	001919
Bellacorick Bog Complex SAC	001922
East Burren Complex SAC	001926
Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex SAC	001932
Croaghaun/Slievemore SAC	001955
Ballyhoorisky Point To Fanad Head SAC	001975
Lough Gill SAC	001976
Tamur Bog SAC	001992
Bellacragher Saltmarsh SAC	002005
Ox Mountains Bogs SAC	002006
Maumturk Mountains SAC	002008
North Inishowen Coast SAC	002012
The Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC	002031
Boleybrack Mountain SAC	002032
Connemara Bog Complex SAC	002034

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Cloghernagore Bog And Glenveagh National Park SAC	002047
Slyne Head Peninsula SAC	002074
Ballinafad SAC	002081
Corliskea/Trien/Cloonfelliv Bog SAC	002110
Kilkieran Bay And Islands SAC	002111
Lough Coy SAC	002117
Barnahallia Lough SAC	002118
Lough Nageeron SAC	002119
Murvey Machair SAC	002129
Tully Lough SAC	002130
Lough Nageage SAC	002135
Newport River SAC	002144
Mulroy Bay SAC	002159
Lough Golagh And Breesy Hill SAC	002164
Leannan River SAC	002176
Lough Dahybaun SAC	002177
Towerhill House SAC	002179
Gortacarnaun Wood SAC	002180
Drummin Wood SAC	002181
Derrinlough (Cloonkeenleananode) Bog SAC	002197
Ballygar (Aghrane) Bog SAC	002199
Aughrim (Aghrane) Bog SAC	002200
Glenloughaun Esker SAC	002213
Killeglan Grassland SAC	002214
Lough Derg, North-east Shore SAC	002241
Clare Island Cliffs SAC	002243
Ardrahan Grassland SAC	002244
Tory Island Coast SAC	002259
Kingstown Bay SAC	002265
Achill Head SAC	002268
Rutland Island And Sound SAC	002283
Lough Swilly SAC	002287
Carrowbaun, Newhall and Ballylee Turloughs SAC	002293
Cahermore Turlough SAC	002294
Ballinduff Turlough SAC	002295
Williamstown Turloughs SAC	002296
River Moy SAC	002298
River Boyne And River Blackwater SAC	002299
River Finn SAC	002301
Dunmuckrum Turloughs SAC	002303
Kildun Souterrain SAC	002320
Drumalough Bog SAC	002338

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Ballynamona Bog And Corkip Lough SAC	002339
Camderry Bog SAC	002347
Corbo Bog SAC	002349
Curraglehanagh Bog SAC	002350
Monivea Bog SAC	002352
Tullaghanrock Bog SAC	002354
Ardgraique Bog SAC	002356
West Connacht Coast SAC	002998
Hempton's Turbot Bank SAC	002999

Offshore European Sites

Site Name	Site Code
Belgica Mound Province SAC	002327
Hovland Mound Province SAC	002328
South-West Porcupine Bank SAC	002329
North-West Porcupine Bank SAC	002330
Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC	003001
South-East Rockall Bank SAC	003002

APPENDIX B2
Special Protection Areas

SPA Site Name	Site Code
Inishkea Islands SPA	004004
Drumcliff Bay SPA	004013
Inner Galway Bay SPA	004031
Trawbreaga Bay SPA	004034
Cummeen Strand SPA	004035
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA	004036
Blacksod Bay/Broadhaven SPA	004037
Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA	004039
Lough Corrib SPA	004042
Lough Gara SPA	004048
Lough Oughter SPA	004049
Lough Arrow SPA	004050
Lough Carra SPA	004051
Carrowmore Lake SPA	004052
Lough Cutra SPA	004056
Lough Derg (Donegal) SPA	004057
Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	004058
Lough Fern SPA	004060
Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough SPA	004061
Lough Mask SPA	004062
Lough Ree SPA	004064
Lough Sheelin SPA	004065
Inishmurray SPA	004068
Stags of Broad Haven SPA	004072
Tory Island SPA	004073
Illanmaster SPA	004074
Lough Swilly SPA	004075
Inishbofin, Inishdoeey and Inishbeg SPA	004083
Inishglora and Inishkeeragh SPA	004084
Lough Foyle SPA	004087
Rahasane Turlough SPA	004089
Sheskinmore Lough SPA	004090
Termoncarragh Lake and Annagh Machair SPA	004093
Middle Shannon Callows SPA	004096
River Suck Callows SPA	004097
Owenduff/Nephin Complex SPA	004098
Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA	004099
Inishtrahull SPA	004100
Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA	004101
Bellanagare Bog SPA	004105
Coole-Garryland SPA	004107
Lough Nillan Bog SPA	004110

SPA Site Name	Site Code
Duvillaun Islands SPA	004111
Inishduff SPA	004115
Inishkeel SPA	004116
Rathlin O'Birne Island SPA	004120
Roaninish SPA	004121
Ballysadare Bay SPA	004129
Illancrone and Inishkeeragh SPA	004132
Aughris Head SPA	004133
Lough Rea SPA	004134
Clare Island SPA	004136
Lough Croan Turlough SPA	004139
Four Roads Turlough SPA	004140
Cregganna Marsh SPA	004142
High Island, Inishshark and Davillaun SPA	004144
Durnesh Lough SPA	004145
Malin Head SPA	004146
Fanad Head SPA	004148
Falcarragh to Meenlaragh SPA	004149
West Donegal Coast SPA	004150
Donegal Bay SPA	004151
Inishmore SPA	004152
Slyne Head To Ardmore Point Islands SPA	004159
Slieve Beagh SPA	004167
Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA	004168
Cruagh Island SPA	004170
Bills Rocks SPA	004177
Connemara Bog Complex SPA	004181
Sligo/Leitrim Uplands SPA	004187
Horn Head to Fanad Head SPA	004194
Cross Lough (Killadoon) SPA	004212
Ilannanooon SPA	004221
Mullet Peninsula SPA	004227
Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA	004228
West Donegal Islands SPA	004230
Inishbofin, Omey Island and Turbot Island SPA	004231
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	004232
Ballintemple and Ballygilgan SPA	004234
Doogort Machair SPA	004235

APPENDIX C1

Special Areas of Conservation, Southern Region

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Ballyallia Lake SAC	000014
Ballycullinan Lake SAC	000016
Ballyogan Lough SAC	000019
Black Head-Poulsallagh Complex SAC	000020
Danes Hole, Poulnalecka SAC	000030
Dromore Woods And Loughs SAC	000032
Inagh River Estuary SAC	000036
Pouladatig Cave SAC	000037
Lough Gash Turlough SAC	000051
Moneen Mountain SAC	000054
Moyree River System SAC	000057
Poulnagordon Cave (Quin) SAC	000064
Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC	000077
Glengarriff Harbour And Woodland SAC	000090
Clonakilty Bay SAC	000091
Caha Mountains SAC	000093
Lough Hyne Nature Reserve And Environs SAC	000097
Roaringwater Bay And Islands SAC	000101
Sheep's Head SAC	000102
St. Gobnet's Wood SAC	000106
The Gearagh SAC	000108
Three Castle Head To Mizen Head SAC	000109
Curraghchase Woods SAC	000174
River Shannon Callows SAC	000216
Galway Bay Complex SAC	000268
Loughatorick South Bog SAC	000308
Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC	000332
Ballinskelligs Bay And Inny Estuary SAC	000335
Castlemaine Harbour SAC	000343
Old Domestic Building, Dromore Wood SAC	000353
Kilgarvan Ice House SAC	000364
Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks And Caragh River Catchment SAC	000365
Lough Yganavan And Lough Nambrackdarrig SAC	000370
Mount Brandon SAC	000375
Sheheree (Ardagh) Bog SAC	000382
Hugginstown Fen SAC	000404
The Loughans SAC	000407
Barrigone SAC	000432
Tory Hill SAC	000439
Sharavogue Bog SAC	000585
Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog SAC	000641

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Galtee Mountains SAC	000646
Kilcarren-Firville Bog SAC	000647
Helvick Head SAC	000665
Nier Valley Woodlands SAC	000668
Tramore Dunes And Backstrand SAC	000671
Ballyteige Burrow SAC	000696
Bannow Bay SAC	000697
Cahore Polders And Dunes SAC	000700
Lady's Island Lake SAC	000704
Saltee Islands SAC	000707
Screen Hills SAC	000708
Tacumshin Lake SAC	000709
Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC	000710
Hook Head SAC	000764
Blackstairs Mountains SAC	000770
Slaney River Valley SAC	000781
Cullahill Mountain SAC	000831
Spahill And Clomantagh Hill SAC	000849
Clare Glen SAC	000930
Kilduff, Devilsbit Mountain SAC	000934
Silvermine Mountains SAC	000939
Ballyteige (Clare) SAC	000994
Ballyvaughan Turlough SAC	000996
Glenomra Wood SAC	001013
Carrowmore Point To Spanish Point And Islands SAC	001021
Barley Cove To Ballyrisode Point SAC	001040
Cleanderry Wood SAC	001043
Great Island Channel SAC	001058
Kilkeran Lake And Castlefreke Dunes SAC	001061
Myross Wood SAC	001070
Keeper Hill SAC	001197
Courtmacsherry Estuary SAC	001230
Cloonee And Inchiquin Loughs, Uragh Wood SAC	001342
Mucksna Wood SAC	001371
Glen Bog SAC	001430
Glenstal Wood SAC	001432
Castletownshend SAC	001547
Liskeenan Fen SAC	001683
Kilmuckridge-Tinnaberna Sandhills SAC	001741
Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC	001742
Philipston Marsh SAC	001847
Galmoy Fen SAC	001858
Derryclogher (Knockboy) Bog SAC	001873

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Glanmore Bog SAC	001879
Maulagowna Bog SAC	001881
Mullaghanish Bog SAC	001890
Glendree Bog SAC	001912
East Burren Complex SAC	001926
Comeragh Mountains SAC	001952
Old Domestic Building (Keevagh) SAC	002010
Ballyhoura Mountains SAC	002036
Carrigeenamronety Hill SAC	002037
Old Domestic Building, Curraglass Wood SAC	002041
Tralee Bay And Magharees Peninsula, West To Cloghane SAC	002070
Newhall and Edenvale Complex SAC	002091
Old Domestic Building, Askive Wood SAC	002098
Ballyseedy Wood SAC	002112
Ardmore Head SAC	002123
Bolingbrook Hill SAC	002124
Anglesey Road SAC	002125
Pollagoona Bog SAC	002126
Lower River Suir SAC	002137
Newgrove House SAC	002157
Kenmare River SAC	002158
River Barrow And River Nore SAC	002162
Lower River Shannon SAC	002165
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC	002170
Bandon River SAC	002171
Blasket Islands SAC	002172
Blackwater River (Kerry) SAC	002173
Slieve Mish Mountains SAC	002185
Drongawn Lough SAC	002187
Farranamanagh Lough SAC	002189
Scohaboy (Sopwell) Bog SAC	002206
Arragh More (Derrybreen) Bog SAC	002207
Lough Derg, North-east Shore SAC	002241
Old Farm Buildings, Ballymacrogan SAC	002245
Ballycullinan, Old Domestic Building SAC	002246
Toonagh Estate SAC	002247
Carrowmore Dunes SAC	002250
Thomastown Quarry SAC	002252
Moanour Mountain SAC	002257
Silvermines Mountains West SAC	002258
Magharee Islands SAC	002261
Valencia Harbour/Portmagee Channel SAC	002262
Kerry Head Shoal SAC	002263

SAC Site Name	Site Code
Kilkee Reefs SAC	002264
Carnsore Point SAC	002269
Askeaton Fen Complex SAC	002279
Dunbeacon Shingle SAC	002280
Reen Point Shingle SAC	002281
Slieve Bernagh Bog SAC	002312
Old Domestic Buildings, Rylane SAC	002314
Glanlough Woods SAC	002315
Ratty River Cave SAC	002316
Cregg House Stables, Crusheen SAC	002317
Knockanira House SAC	002318
Kilkishen House SAC	002319
Glendine Wood SAC	002324
Tullaher Lough And Bog SAC	002343
Moanveanlagh Bog SAC	002351
Redwood Bog SAC	002353
Blackwater Bank SAC	002953

APPENDIX C2

Special Protection Areas, Southern Region

SPA Site Name	Site Code
Puffin Island SPA	004003
Cliffs of Moher SPA	004005
Blasket Islands SPA	004008
Lady's Island Lake SPA	004009
The Raven SPA	004019
Ballyteigue Burrow SPA	004020
Old Head of Kinsale SPA	004021
Ballycotton Bay SPA	004022
Ballymacoda Bay SPA	004023
Tramore Back Strand SPA	004027
Blackwater Estuary SPA	004028
Castlemaine Harbour SPA	004029
Cork Harbour SPA	004030
Inner Galway Bay SPA	004031
Dungarvan Harbour SPA	004032
Bannow Bay SPA	004033
Killarney National Park SPA	004038
Ballyallia Lough SPA	004041
Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	004058
The Bull and The Cow Rocks SPA	004066
Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA	004076
River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	004077
Clonakilty Bay SPA	004081
River Little Brosna Callows SPA	004086
Tacumshin Lake SPA	004092
Blackwater Callows SPA	004094
Kilcolman Bog SPA	004095
Middle Shannon Callows SPA	004096
Eirk Bog SPA	004108
The Gearagh SPA	004109
Illaunonearaun SPA	004114
Keeragh Islands SPA	004118
Loop Head SPA	004119
Sovereign Islands SPA	004124
Magharee Islands SPA	004125
Cahore Marshes SPA	004143
Dingle Peninsula SPA	004153
Iveragh Peninsula SPA	004154
Beara Peninsula SPA	004155
Sheep's Head to Toe Head SPA	004156
Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA	004161
Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA	004162
Slievefelim to Silvermines Mountains SPA	004165

SPA Site Name	Site Code
Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA	004168
Deenish Island and Scariff Island SPA	004175
Mid-Clare Coast SPA	004182
Tralee Bay Complex SPA	004188
Kerry Head SPA	004189
Galley Head to Duneen Point SPA	004190
Seven Heads SPA	004191
Helvick Head to Ballyquin SPA	004192
Mid-Waterford Coast SPA	004193
Courtmacsherry Bay SPA	004219
Corofin Wetlands SPA	004220
River Nore SPA	004233

APPENDIX D1

Special Areas of Conservation, Northern Ireland

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Site Code	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Site Code
Cuilcagh Mountain *	UK0016603	Bann Estuary	UK0030084
Pettigoe Plateau *	UK0016607	Binevenagh	UK0030089
Fairy Water Bogs	UK0016611	Cladagh (Swanlinbar) River	UK0030116
Magilligan	UK0016613	Moneygal Bog	UK0030211
Upper Lough Erne	UK0016614	Moninea Bog	UK0030212
Eastern Mournes	UK0016615	Owenkillew River	UK0030233
Monawilkin	UK0016619	Rostrevor Wood	UK0030268
Derryleckagh	UK0016620	Slieve Gullion	UK0030277
Magheraveely Marl Loughs *	UK0016621	West Fermanagh Scarplands	UK0030300
Slieve Beagh	UK0016622	River Foyle and Tributaries *	UK0030320
Largalinny	UK0030045	River Roe and Tributaries	UK0030360
Lough Melvin *	UK0030047	River Faughan and Tributaries	UK0030361
Fardrum and Roosky Turloughs	UK0030068	Skerries and Causeway	UK0030383
Ballynahone Bog	UK0016599	Rea's Wood and Farr's Bay	UK0030244
Garron Plateau	UK0016606	Turmennan	UK0030291
Teal Lough	UK0016608	Upper Ballinderry River	UK0030296
Black Bog	UK0016609	Wolf Island Bog	UK0030303
Garry Bog	UK0016610	Aughnadarragh Lough	UK0030318
Murlough	UK0016612	Ballykilbeg	UK0030319
Strangford Lough	UK0016618	Cranny Bogs	UK0030321
Rathlin Island	UK0030055	Curran Bog	UK0030322
Banagher Glen	UK0030083	Dead Island Bog	UK0030323
Breen Wood	UK0030097	Deroran Bog	UK0030324
Carn – Glenshane Pass	UK0030110	Tonnagh Beg Bog	UK0030325
Hollymount	UK0030169	Tully Bog	UK0030326
Lecale Fens	UK0030180	Red Bay	UK0030365
Main Valley Bogs	UK0030199	The Maidens	UK0030384
Montiaghs Moss	UK0030214	Pisces Reef Complex	UK0030379
North Antrim Coast	UK0030224	North Channel	UK0030399
Peatlands Park	UK0030236	-	-

APPENDIX D2

Special Protection Areas, Northern Ireland

Special Protection Area (SPA)	Site Code
Lough Foyle	UK9020031
Pettigoe Plateau	UK9020051
Upper Lough Erne	UK9020071
Slieve Beagh-Mullaghfad-Lisnaskea	UK9020302
Carlingford Lough	UK9020161
Belfast Lough	UK9020101
Larne Lough	UK9020042
Strangford Lough	UK9020111
Rathlin Island	UK9020011
Killough Bay	UK9020221
Outer Ards	UK9020271
Belfast Lough Open Water	UK9020290
Sheep Island	UK9020021
Antrim Hills	UK9020301
Copeland Islands	UK9020291
Lough Neagh and Lough Beg	UK9020091
East Coast (Marine)	UK9020320
Carlingford Lough (proposed marine extension)	UK9020161

APPENDIX E

EU Condition Assessment

The following tables are sourced from the NPWS 2019 report entitled *The Status of Protected EU Habitats and Species in Ireland. Volume 1: Summary Overview*. This report is available online at <https://www.npws.ie/publications/article-17-reports/article-17-reports-2019> (accessed September 2019).

Bird information is taken from *Birds of Conservation Concern Reports*; BOCCI2: Lynas *et. al.* (2007), BOCCI3: Colhoun and Cummins (2013). Reference has also been made to Irelands (Birds Directive) Article 12 submission to the EU Commission on the *Status and trends of birds species (2008-2012)*

Code	Common name	2007 Overall Status	2013 Overall Status and operator	2019 Overall Status and trend	2019 Range	2019 Area	2019 Structure & Functions	2019 Future Prospects
1110	Sandbanks	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1130	Estuaries	●	▲	▼	●	●	▼	●
1140	Tidal mudflats and sandflats	●	▲	▼	●	●	▼	●
1150	Lagoons*	●	●	▼	●	●	▼	●
1160	Large shallow inlets and bays	●	▲	▼	●	●	▼	●
1170	Reefs	●	▼	●	●	●	●	●
1180	Submarine structures made by leaking gases			●	●	●	●	●
1210	Drift lines	●	▼	▼	●	▼	●	●
1220	Vegetated shingle	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1230	Vegetated sea cliffs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1310	Salicornia mud	●	▼	●	●	●	●	●
1320	Spartinion	●						
1330	Atlantic salt meadows	●	●	▼	●	▼	●	●
1410	Mediterranean salt meadows	●	●	▼	●	▼	●	●
1420	Halophilous scrub	●	▼	▼	▼	▼	●	●
2110	Embryonic shifting dunes	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2120	Marram dunes (white dunes)	●	●	●	●	▼	●	●
2130	Fixed dunes (grey dunes)*	●	●	▼	●	●	▼	●
2140	Empetrum dunes*	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2150	Dune heath*	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2170	Dunes with creeping willow	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2190	Dune slacks	●	▼	▼	▼	▼	●	●
21A0	Machair*	●	●	●	●	▼	●	●
3110	Oligotrophic isoetid lake habitat	●	▼	●	●	●	●	●
3130	Mixed Najas flexilis lake habitat	●	●	▼	●	●	▼	●
3140	Hard water lakes	●	▼	▼	●	●	▼	●
3150	Rich pondweed lake habitat	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3160	Acid oligotrophic lakes	●	▼	●	●	●	×	●
3180	Turloughs*	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3260	Vegetation of flowing waters	●	▼	▼	●	●	▼	●
3270	Chenopodium rubri	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

* Indicates priority habitat under the Habitats Directive

STATUS: ● Favourable ● Unfavourable-Inadequate ● Unfavourable-Bad ● Unknown ● Vagrant
 TREND: ▲ Improving ● Stable ▼ Declining × Unknown

Code	Common name	2007 Overall Status	2013 Overall Status and operator	2019 Overall Status and trend	2019 Range	2019 Area	2019 Structure & Functions	2019 Future Prospects
4010	Wet heaths	●	▬	▼	▬	▼	▬	●
4030	Dry heaths	●	▬	▬	▬	▼	▬	●
4060	Alpine and subalpine heath	●	▲	▲	▬	▼	▲	●
5130	Juniper scrub	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
6130	Calaminarian grasslands	●	▬	▼	▼	▼	▼	●
6210	Orchid-rich calcareous grassland*	●	▬	▼	▬	▼	▬	●
6230	Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grassland*	●	▼	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
6410	<i>Molinia</i> meadows	●	▼	▼	▼	▼	▬	●
6430	Hydrophilous tall-herb swamp	●	▬	▼	▼	▼	▬	●
6510	Hay meadows	●	▬	▼	▼	▼	▼	●
7110	Raised bog (active)*	●	▼	▼	▬	▼	▼	●
7120	Degraded raised bogs	●	▼	▼	▬	▼	▼	●
7130	Blanket bog (active)*	●	▼	▼	▬	▼	▼	●
7140	Transition mires	●	×	▬	▬	▬	×	●
7150	Rhynchosporion depressions	●	▼	▼	▬	▼	▼	●
7210	<i>Cladium</i> fens*	●	×	▬	▬	▬	×	●
7220	Petrifying springs*	●	▬	▼	▬	▬	▼	●
7230	Alkaline fens	●	×	▼	▬	▼	×	●
8110	Siliceous scree	●	▲	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
8120	Eutric scree	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
8210	Calcareous rocky slopes	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
8220	Siliceous rocky slopes	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
8240	Limestone pavement*	●	▬	▬	▬	▼	▲	●
8310	Caves	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
8330	Sea caves	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
91A0	Old oak woodland	●	▲	▼	▬	▼	▬	●
91D0	Bog woodland*	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
91E0	Alluvial woodland*	●	▲	▼	▬	▼	▼	●
91J0	Yew woodland*	●	▲	▬	▬	▬	▬	●

STATUS: ● Favourable ● Unfavourable-Inadequate ● Unfavourable-Bad ● Unknown ● Vagrant
 TREND: ▲ Improving ▬ Stable ▼ Declining × Unknown

Code	Species name	Annex	2007 Overall Status	2013 Overall Status and operator	2019 Overall Status and trend	2019 Range	2019 Population	2019 Habitat for the species	2019 Future Prospects
6985	Killamey fern (<i>Vandenboschia speciosa</i>)	II, IV	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1528	Marsh saxifrage (<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i>)	II, IV	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1833	Slender naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>)	II, IV	●	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	●
6216	Slender green feather moss (<i>Hamatocaulis vermicosus</i>)	II	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1395	Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>)	II	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1376	Maëri (<i>Lithothamnium coralloides</i>)	V	●	▲	▼	▬	▬	▼	●
1377	Maëri (<i>Phymatholiton calcareum</i>)	V	●	▲	▼	▬	▬	▼	●
1400	White cushion moss (<i>Leucobryum glaucum</i>)	V	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1409	Sphagnum genus (<i>Sphagnum spp.</i>)	V	●	▬	▬				
1413	Lycopodium group (<i>Lycopodium spp.</i>)	V	●	▬	▬				
1378	Cladonia subgenus cladina (<i>Cladonia (Cladina) subsp.</i>)	V	●	▬	▬				
1013	Geyer's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>)	II	●	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	●
1014	Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>)	II	●	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	●
1016	Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>)	II	●	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	●
1024	Kerry slug (<i>Geomalacus maculosus</i>)	II, IV	●	●	▲	▲	▲	▬	●
1029	Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>)	II, V	●	▼	▼	▬	▼	▼	●
1990	Nore pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i>)	II, V	●	▼					
1092	White-clawed crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>)	II, V	●	▬	▼	▼	▼	▬	●
1085	Marsh fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>)	II	●	▼	▲	▲	▲	▬	●
1095	Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)	II	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1096	Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>)	II	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1099	River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)	II, V	●	●	●	×	×	▬	●
5046	Killamey shad (<i>Alosa killamensis</i>)	II, V	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1103	Twaité shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>)	II, V	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
5076	Pollan (<i>Coregonus pollan</i>)	V	●	×	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1106	Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)	II, V	●	▬	▬	▬	▼	▬	●
6284	Natterjack toad (<i>Epidalea calamita</i>)	IV	●	▲	▬	▬	×	▲	●
1213	Common frog (<i>Rana temporaria</i>)	V	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1223	Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	IV	●	●	●	×	×	●	●
1303	Lesser horseshoe bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>)	II, IV	●	●	▼	▼	▲	▼	●
1309	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)	IV	●	●	▲	▬	▲	▬	●
5009	Soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>)	IV	●	●	▲	▬	▲	▬	●
1317	Nathusius' pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>)	IV	●	●	●	×	▲	▬	●
1322	Natterer's bat (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●

STATUS: ● Favourable ● Unfavourable-Inadequate ● Unfavourable-Bad ● Unknown ● Vagrant
 TREND: ▲ Improving ▬ Stable ▼ Declining × Unknown

Code	Species name	Annex	2007 Overall Status	2013 Overall Status and operator	2019 Overall Status and trend	2019 Range	2019 Population	2019 Habitat for the species	2019 Future Prospects
1314	Daubenton's bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>)	IV	●	●	▲	▬	▲	▬	●
1330	Whiskered bat (<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1326	Brown long-eared bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	IV	●	●	▲	▬	▲	▬	●
1331	Leisler's bat (<i>Myctalus leisleri</i>)	IV	●	●	▲	▬	▲	▬	●
1334	Mountain hare (<i>Lepus timidus</i>)	V	●	●	▬	▬	▬	×	●
1355	Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	II, IV	●	●	▲	▬	▲	▬	●
1357	Pine marten (<i>Martes martes</i>)	V	●	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	●
1364	Grey seal (<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>)	II, V	●	●	▲	▬	▲	▬	●
1365	Harbour seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>)	II, V	●	●	▬	▬	▬	▬	●
1345	Humpback whale (<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
1349	Common bottlenose dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	II, IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
1350	Common dolphin (<i>Delphinus delphis</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
1351	Harbour porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>)	II, IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2027	Killer whale (<i>Orcinus orca</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2029	Long-finned pilot whale (<i>Globicephala melas</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2030	Risso's dolphin (<i>Grampus griseus</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2031	White-sided dolphin (<i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2032	White-beaked dolphin (<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2034	Striped dolphin (<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2035	Cuvier's beaked whale (<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2038	Sowerby's beaked whale (<i>Mesoplodon bidens</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2618	Minke whale (<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2621	Fin whale (<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
5020	Blue whale (<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2624	Sperm whale (<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
5033	Northern bottlenose whale (<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
2619	Sei whale (<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>)	IV	●	●	▬	▬	×	▬	●
1348	Northern right whale (<i>Eubalaena glacialis</i>)	IV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2028	False killer whale (<i>Pseudorca crassidens</i>)	IV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2037	True's beaked whale (<i>Mesoplodon mirus</i>)	IV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2622	Pygmy sperm whale (<i>Kogia breviceps</i>)	IV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
5029	Beluga/White whale (<i>Delphinapterus leucas</i>)	IV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
5034	Gervais' beaked whale (<i>Mesoplodon europaeus</i>)	IV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1102	Allis shad (<i>Alosa alosa</i>)	II, V	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1320	Brandt's bat (<i>Myotis brandtii</i>)	IV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

STATUS: ● Favourable ● Unfavourable-Inadequate ● Unfavourable-Bad ● Unknown ● Vagrant
 TREND: ▲ Improving ▬ Stable ▼ Declining × Unknown

Table E.2 Summary Status Description for QI Habitats**QI Habitat Summary Status Description (based on 2019 NPWS Article 17 report)****Code**

1110	Improvements over time due to declining pressures. Stable status in 2019, as no significant pressures identified. Overall favourable future prospect for this habitat.
1130	Overall status is deteriorating. Trend changes seen from improving in 2013 to declining in 2019 is a result of more accurate data. This decline is considered to have been ongoing since the beginning of the last assessment.
1140	Overall status is deteriorating. Changes from improving to deteriorating are due to a genuine decline in the quality of this habitat since 2013. Causes of this have been identified as; pollution from agricultural, forestry and wastewater sources, as well as impacts associated with marine aquaculture, particularly the Pacific oyster (<i>Magallana gigas</i>).
1150*	The Overall Status for Lagoons is assessed as Bad, unchanged since the 2013 assessment. High ranking pressures on this habitat are identified as; eutrophication, modification of hydrological flow, drainage, erosion and silting up, accumulation of seaweed, and sedimentation from peat related to turf cutting and/or forestry. The change from stable to declining is a result of a genuine decline since 2013.
1160	Previous trends of inadequate and improving are now assessed as bad, owing to more detailed information. Bad status as a result of pressures including; nutrient enrichment, dredging and invasive alien species.
1170	Inadequate yet stable status. Change in status from bad is mainly attributed to better knowledge gained from recent surveys, while genuine improvements have occurred by the implementation of an EU Regulation restricting the use of bottom trawls therefore reducing pressures to the seafloor.
1180	Not assessed in reports prior to 2019. Favourable with a stable trend based on the physical and geological nature of this habitat in addition to no identified significant pressures on their long-term viability.
1210	A deteriorating trend due to anthropogenic area losses. Inadequate status caused by pressures associated with activities such as recreation and coastal defences, which can interfere with sediment dynamics, and the fact that the current area is still below the favourable reference area.
1220	This assessment is unchanged since 2013. The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate, mainly due to pressures associated with coastal defences (which can interfere with sediment dynamics), recreation and shingle removal. The trend is stable.
1230	Overall Status remains Inadequate with a stable trend. Subject to various pressures including; trampling by walkers, invasive non-native species, gravel extraction, and sea-level and wave exposure changes due to climate change. The Habitats Directive has prevented significant losses, however close monitoring is required for this vulnerable habitat.
1310	The Overall Status is Favourable with a stable trend, an improvement since 2013. This change is due partly to a change in the threshold for favourable structure and functions, and partly because of a lack of evidence for the

Q1 HabitatSummary Status Description (based on 2019 NPWS Article 17 report)**Code**

	recent spread of the invasive non-native species, common cordgrass (<i>Spartina anglica</i>).
1320	No information.
1330	Inadequate status. Unchanged since 2013. Deterioration represents a genuine decline due to losses in area, while Inadequate status is due to pressures from agriculture, including ecologically unsuitable grazing regimes and land reclamation, and the invasive non-native species common cord-grass (<i>Spartina anglica</i>).
1410	Inadequate status. Unchanged since 2013. Deterioration represents a genuine decline due to losses in area, while Inadequate status is due to pressures associated with agriculture, including overgrazing, undergrazing and land reclamation.
1420	Continuing decline since 2013, assessed as Bad with a deteriorating trend. This trend is due to recent area losses, associated with algal mats formed as a consequence of water pollution, which resulted in a contraction of the range of the habitat.
2110	Unchanged since 2013, Inadequate and stable trend associated with pressures from recreation and coastal defences, which can interfere with sediment dynamics.
2120	Unchanged since 2013, Inadequate and stable trend mainly associated with pressures from recreation and coastal defences, which can interfere with local sediment dynamics.
2130	Overall Bad status. Deteriorating trend due to poor results for structure and functions, but this is largely attributed to use of a different methodology and decline is considered to have been on-going since before the last assessment. Pressures are associated with recreation and ecologically unsuitable grazing practices.
2140	Improving trend attributed to more accurate monitoring data rather than actual change, and the habitat is considered to have been in Favourable condition since before the last assessment. Overall status is therefore favourable. Pressures include; grassland abandonment, recreational activities, and bracken encroachment; however, none were considered to impact the long-term viability of the habitat.
2150	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate with a stable trend due to pressures associated with land abandonment, recreational activities, and bracken encroachment. This assessment is unchanged since 2013.
2170	Inadequate status unchanged from 2013 due to pressures associated with ecologically unsuitable grazing, invasive non-native species and agricultural intensification.
2190	Unchanged condition since last assessment. Inadequate and deteriorating agricultural fertilisers, sports and leisure activities, and drainage. Succession to scrub is also problematic for the status of this habitat.
21A0	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate, which differs from the 2013 Bad assessment. The overall trend is stable. A different method was used to determine the proportion of habitat in good condition and the status is

**QI HabitatSummary Status Description (based on 2019 NPWS Article 17 report)
Code**

	considered to have been Inadequate since before the last assessment.
3110	The Overall Status is assessed as Bad with a stable trend. The change in trend from deteriorating to stable is because of the use of a different method. The future of this habitat requires action to address peatland damage at a catchment scale, as well as to reduce nutrient and other pollution.
3130	No change since the 2013 assessment except a move from stable to a deteriorating trend. This was based on improved knowledge through dedicated survey during the reporting cycle while also being subject to significant pressures from drainage, agriculture, peat extraction, forestry and wastewaters.
3140	Significant pressures have given this habitat a Bad and deteriorating status. These include nutrient and organic pollution being agriculture and municipal and industrial wastewaters while movement of pollutants, especially phosphorus, through groundwater is a significant concern.
3150	Unchanging status since last assessment due to anthropogenic influences. Associated with catchments dominated by mineral soil and, hence, some of the most intensive agricultural lands. Eutrophication is primary issue. Inadequate but stable trend.
3160	In Inadequate condition, this habitat trend has changed from deteriorating to stable due to use of a different assessment method and the trend is considered to have been stable since before the last assessment.
3180	Because of on-going pressures related to drainage, groundwater pollution and ecologically unsuitable grazing, the Overall Status has been assessed as Inadequate and stable, unchanged since 2013. The pressures mentioned gravely impact turlough ecology due to its hydrological dynamics.
3260	The inadequate and deteriorating trend of this habitat is of significant concern and is continually highlighted by the EPA. Agriculture, municipal, industrial discharges and damage through hydrological and morphological change are the leading issues causing sedimentation and high nutrient conditions.
3270	This habitat is upkeeping its favourable status since 2013 with intensive grazing causing poaching being the only significant pressure recorded.
4010	Bad and deteriorating with a change in trend from stable in 2013 associated with continued area losses due to new forestry, paths, tracks and land clearance while Overgrazing, burning, wind farm development and erosion are ongoing issues. In addition to this, N deposition from agriculture that generate air pollution and climate change have been recognised as causing negative impacts and causing poor future prospects for this habitat.
4030	Bad and stable with no change since 2013. Multiple significant pressures are associated with dry heath habitats. Overgrazing by sheep and burning for agriculture are particular issues here causing habitat degradation and losses through erosion. Afforestation and win farms also contribute to their bad status.
4060	Ongoing pressures and threats have given this habitat a Bad status. These include climate change (temp. increase & precip. decrease), upland sheep grazing, hill walking, and agricultural activities causing both current and future threats. An improving trend here assumes that the reduced grazing brought about by the

QI HabitatSummary Status Description (based on 2019 NPWS Article 17 report)**Code**

	Commonage Framework Plans continues to have a positive effect on this habitat.
5130	The Overall Status is assessed as Favourable and the trend is stable. The apparent improvement in status since the 2013 report is due to use of a different assessment method rather than a genuine change, and the habitat is considered to have been Favourable since before the last assessment.
6130	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate with a declining trend. The change in trend since 2013 is due to improved knowledge, and decline is considered to have been on-going since before the last assessment.
6210	The Bad deteriorating status here represents a genuine decline since the 2013 report in which the trend was assessed as stable. On-going habitat losses are associated with this such as agricultural intensification causing loss of species-rich communities, or abandonment of farmland resulting in succession to scrub despite conservation-focused farming schemes aiming to improve such habitats.
6230	The Overall Status is assessed as Bad due to on-going pressures such as bracken encroachment and succession. The trend is stable, and may represent a genuine improvement since the 2013 report however there was limited monitoring undertaken.
6410	Bad and deteriorating trend, unchanged since 2013. On-going losses of habitat due to agricultural intensification (e.g. land drainage, fertiliser application), undergrazing and forestry. Significant historical losses of this habitat have also occurred since the EU Habitats Directive came into force contributing to this poor status.
6430	The Overall Status is assessed as Bad with a deteriorating trend. This change in trend since the 2013 report represents a genuine decline due to range contraction and a decline in structure and functions.
6510	This change in trend since the 2013 report (in which it was judged to be stable) is attributed to improved knowledge/more accurate data, and decline is considered to have been on-going since before the last assessment.
7110	Overall Status of the habitat is Bad and deteriorating, unchanged since the last assessment. The main pressures on active raised bog are peat extraction, drainage, afforestation and burning. Climate change is also considered a threat in the future
7120	Overall Status is assessed as Bad and deteriorating, unchanged since the last assessment. The main pressures on Degraded raised bog come from peat extraction, drainage, afforestation, burning and climate change.
7130	Overall Status is assessed as Bad and deteriorating, unchanged since the 2013 report. Main pressures include overgrazing, burning, afforestation, peat extraction, and agricultural activities causing nitrogen deposition. Erosion, drainage and wind farm construction are other issues of concern for blanket bog status.
7140	The Overall Status is assessed as Bad, as in the last two reporting periods. The trend is assessed as stable. The main pressures facing transition mires in Ireland are afforestation, water pollution, drainage and hydrological

Q1 HabitatSummary Status Description (based on 2019 NPWS Article 17 report)**Code**

	changes. Grazing/agricultural management is also prominent as an issue.
7150	The Overall Status is assessed as bad with a deteriorating trend. The change in status since 2013 is primarily due to use of a different method in the definition and interpretation of the habitat. The main pressures on the habitat are associated with impacts on the supporting bog habitats, especially overgrazing, burning, peat extraction, drainage and conversion to forestry.
7210	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate but stable. Improved knowledge/more data resulted in the status change since 2013 and the trend is considered to have been stable since before the last assessment.
7220	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate, which is unchanged since the last reporting period. The trend is assessed as deteriorating (reported as stable in 2013), which is due to improved knowledge, and decline is considered to have been ongoing since before the last assessment.
7230	The main pressures facing the habitat in Ireland are land abandonment (and associated succession), overgrazing, drainage and pollution. The Overall Status is assessed as Bad with a deteriorating trend due to losses of area and habitat quality, as well as the pressures and threats faced by the habitat.
8110	The Overall Status is Inadequate, as in the 2013 assessment, but the trend has changed. Structure and functions were assessed as improving in the previous reporting period due to destocking associated with the Commonage Framework Plans; however, as overgrazing, undergrazing and succession were recorded as medium-importance pressures in this reporting period, and Structure and functions were again assessed as Inadequate, the trend is considered to be stable rather than improving. This change is due to improved knowledge and the habitat is considered to have been stable since before the last assessment
8120	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate with a stable trend due to pressures associated with overgrazing, unchanged since the 2013 assessment.
8210	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate with a stable trend due to pressures associated with overgrazing and the non-native invasive species New Zealand willowherb (<i>Epilobium brunnescens</i>). This is unchanged since the previous assessment in 2013.
8220	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate with a stable trend due to pressures associated with the non-native invasive species New Zealand willowherb (<i>Epilobium brunnescens</i>). There have been no significant changes since 2013.
8240	The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate due to continuing area losses associated with conversion to agricultural land and housing construction, as well as scrub encroachment caused by undergrazing. The trend is stable as some of these impacts are being offset to some degree by conservation measures undertaken in the Burren and Aran Islands. This is unchanged since the 2013 assessment.
8310	Although some threats have been identified, some of which might have appreciable localised effects, none is considered likely to have a significant impact on this habitat in Ireland. Overall the future prospects for this habitat are considered to be good. Although the overall conservation assessment for the lesser horseshoe bat in Ireland is now Inadequate due to a small contraction in range, these concerns do not relate to areas with bats in caves, and the Overall Status of caves is Favourable and stable, as it has been over the last two

QI HabitatSummary Status Description (based on 2019 NPWS Article 17 report)
Code

	reporting periods. Many vulnerable bat caves are already protected from disturbance through grilling. Regular monitoring is underway and if further vulnerable cave sites are identified these will also be grilled.
8330	Sea caves appear to be extensive around the coast of Ireland, although their distribution along the south-east coast appears to be limited due to geological factors. The occurrence of sandstone/limestone is highly correlated with the formation of sea caves, accounting for nearly 85% of documented occurrences around Ireland. The Overall Status is assessed as Favourable as there are no pressures impacting on this habitat. This is the same assessment as in the last two reporting periods.
91A0	Historical habitat loss has occurred and still continues, although at a very low level. However, the greatest on-going pressures on these woods come from invasive non-native species such as <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> , cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>) and beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>) as well as overgrazing by deer. These impacts severely reduce tree regeneration, which is essential for the long-term viability of woodlands. Measures such as the Native Woodland Scheme are expected to have a positive long-term effect but are as yet insufficient to outweigh the pressures, as development of Annex-quality woodland takes decades. These pressures, in conjunction with the continued fragmentation of remaining stands, lead to an Overall Status of Bad with a deteriorating trend. The change in trend from improving in 2013 is due to the availability of more accurate data, particularly in relation to recent habitat loss, and decline is considered to have been on-going since before the last assessment.
91D0	A number of low-level pressures affect bog woodlands, including drainage, invasive species and burning, but none are considered significant enough at a national level to adversely affect the long-term viability of the habitat. The Overall Status is therefore Favourable with a stable trend, unchanged since the previous assessment.
91E0	A number of pressures affect this habitat in Ireland, the most serious being invasive species, particularly sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>), beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>), Indian balsam (<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>) and currant species (<i>Ribes nigrum</i> and <i>R. rubrum</i>). Some native species such as brambles (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) and common nettle can also become over-vigorous. Small area losses due to clearfelling have also occurred. As a result, the Overall Status is bad, and the trend is declining. This poorer trend since the previous assessment is mainly due to the availability of more accurate data, and the decline is considered to have been ongoing since before the last assessment.
91J0	Pressures are mainly linked to the presence of alien species such as sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>), beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>), cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>) and traveller's-joy (<i>Clematis vitalba</i>), with overgrazing by deer also posing a serious problem. The Overall Status of Yew woodland is therefore Bad. The change in trend from improving to stable since the previous assessment is due to improved knowledge and more accurate data, and the trend is considered to have been stable since before the last assessment.

Table E.3 Summary Status Description for QI Species

QI Species Summary Status Description (based on 2019 NPWS Article 17 report)	
Code	
6985	The pressures identified are generally local issues and none were considered to be impacting on the long-term viability of the species or its habitat. The problem of invasive non-native species, identified at a number of sites, is difficult to manage as they often provide essential cover to Killarney fern colonies. The Overall Status of the species continues to be Favourable, as it has been over the last two assessments.
1528	There is no evidence of any major pressures currently impacting this species nationally, and therefore the Overall Status is assessed as Favourable.
1833	The species is threatened by enrichment (eutrophication), acidification and peatland damage. The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate and the trend as deteriorating, because of population extinctions, population decreases and decreasing habitat quality in the current reporting period. The trend differs from the previous assessment because of the availability of improved data to inform the assessments.
6216	Although its population has almost certainly declined in historic times, due to loss of intact peatlands, recent surveys indicate that there continues to be sufficient good quality habitat to support the long-term survival of the species. There are also no significant pressures currently impacting the species. Therefore, the Overall Status is assessed as Favourable, as it has been for the last two assessments.
1395	Petalwort has an Atlantic-Mediterranean distribution and in Ireland is most common on the west coast. Some of the largest populations in the world are thought to occur in Ireland. The area and quality of the occupied habitat for the species is deemed to be sufficient for the species' long-term survival. There are also no negative pressures currently impacting seriously on the habitat at a national level. Therefore, the Overall Status is assessed as Favourable, the same result as the last two reporting periods.
1376/1377	The Overall Status of maërl is Bad and declining, due to deterioration in the quality of the maërl beds caused by the deposition of pseudofaeces and/or extensive algal cover on the beds, the presence of negative indicator species such as the opportunistic ascidian <i>Asciella aspersa</i> , and the presence of the invasive alien <i>Sargassum muticum</i> .
1400	Although some of the habitats in which the species occurs are impacted by pressures, there is enough habitat of sufficient quality to support the species and there is no evidence that pressures are operating to compromise the status of this species. Therefore, this species has been assessed as Favourable, as in the previous assessment, with a stable trend.
1409	Collection of <i>Sphagnum</i> spp. is unlikely to pose a conservation problem. However, although this genus occurs in many widespread habitats, the condition of these habitats is considered to be inadequate due to pressures such as peat extraction, drainage and eutrophication and as a result the taxon's future prospects are rated as Inadequate. The Overall Status for the group is thus Inadequate.
1413	The Overall Status of the <i>Lycopodium</i> sub-group is assessed as Unfavourable/Inadequate. This is based on unfavourable assessments for the Habitat for the species and Future prospects parameters for <i>Huperzia selago</i> and <i>Lycopodium clavatum</i> . <i>Lycopodium clavatum</i> also received an unfavourable assessment for Population. The overall trend in conservation status was assessed as stable.

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1378	The Overall Status of this taxon is Inadequate due to pressures on the habitats in which it occurs. This is unchanged since the previous reporting period.
1013	The Overall Status of <i>V. geyeri</i> is assessed as Bad and deteriorating. Grazing levels are considered critical at many sites, the species requiring areas of short vegetation within larger areas of wetland habitat, and given the small size of most sites, damage can happen very quickly. The species is considered very sensitive to changes in hydrology and this has been implicated in causing some of the losses from sites during the current and earlier reporting periods.
1014	The Overall Status of <i>V. angustior</i> is Inadequate and deteriorating. Grazing is critical for the maintenance of the habitat of <i>V. angustior</i> , especially on the extensive sand dune populations. These habitats are easily modified by inappropriate grazing, changes in stocking type and the impact of wild herbivores, especially rabbits. Sand dune systems have been impacted by leisure activities – caravan sites and golf courses, mainly – and expansion of these activities has exerted significant pressure on some large sites.
1016	The Overall Status of <i>V. moulinsiana</i> is assessed as Inadequate and deteriorating. The main pressures are associated with natural succession resulting in species composition change and drying out of the habitat. The sites are mainly unmanaged because of their natural wetness, so grazing and mowing are less significant on a national scale and equally should be easily rectified in the short and medium term.
1024	Studies have shown that the Kerry slug can be abundant on conifer trees. The species will also recolonise boulder habitat when the wood is clear-felled. The Overall Status is Favourable and improving, driven in part by the large populations in conifer plantations
1029	The Overall Status of <i>M. margaritifera</i> is Bad and deteriorating, unchanged since the 2013 assessment. The species is critically endangered in Ireland and across Europe, mainly because of habitat deterioration: a combination of hydrological and morphological changes, sedimentation and enrichment.
1092	The Overall Status of the species is Bad with a deteriorating trend. This represents a genuine decline since the last reporting period and is mainly due to bad Future prospects for the species due to the presence of the Crayfish Plague organism across six catchments.
1065	The Overall Status of the species is Inadequate but improving. There has been genuine spread into areas where there have not been previous records. Marsh Fritillary sites are often on marginal land in upland areas and the edges of wetlands and peatlands which are subject to pressures from agricultural conversion and afforestation.
1095	The Overall Status of this species is assessed as Bad with a stable trend, unchanged since the last 2013 assessment. Barriers to upstream migration (e.g. weirs) are considered the major impediment to good conservation status for sea lamprey as these limit access to spawning beds and juvenile habitat.
1096	Lamprey surveys in Ireland have necessarily focused on ammocoete abundances and to a lesser extent upon observations of adult spawning events. Distribution records can only be definitively assigned to one species or the other where adult records exist. For brook lamprey in Ireland there are extensive areas of suitable habitat and no significant pressures impacting this species. The Overall Status is therefore assessed as Favourable.

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1099	The inability to distinguish between river lamprey and brook lamprey larvae, and the challenges associated with sampling for adult river lamprey, means that an evaluation of their actual range and population size cannot be undertaken. The Overall Status for river lamprey is therefore assessed as Unknown. The previous reporting period used primarily juvenile <i>Lampetra</i> sp. distribution data for this species.
5046	The entire range of the Killarney shad is protected within Killarney National Park. The Overall Status is assessed as Favourable, as it has been in the last two assessments.
1103	The Overall Status of this species is assessed as Bad with a stable trend, unchanged from the previous assessment. A number of pressures were identified, mainly relating to pollution, alteration of flow patterns, and habitat disturbance. Introduced species were also recorded, with a large population of the Asian clam (<i>Corbicula fluminea</i>) recorded within kilometres of the twaite shad spawning ground on the River Barrow. Furthermore, barriers to migration, such as weirs, can impede or prevent twaite shad accessing spawning habitat, and can also increase the potential for hybridisation between converging populations of twaite and Allis shad simultaneously obstructed below barriers.
5076	Pressures identified for the species include pollution due to agricultural fertiliser application and urban waste water discharge. Invasive species, specifically zebra mussel (<i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>) and Asian clam (<i>Corbicula fluminea</i>), have also been identified as a significant pressure. Water level regulation may become a concern, as significant alterations or fluctuations in water surface level could have a severe impact on the success of pollan spawning or on the survival of the newly released fertilised eggs. Introduced fish species, namely perch and roach, are a substantial component of the fish community in these lakes and may compete with pollan for food. The Overall Status is assessed as Bad, as in the previous two assessments, but the trend is now known to be stable.
1106	There is considered to be sufficient habitat in Ireland to support a viable salmon population. Freshwater quality in Ireland continues to remain a concern but ongoing pressures linked with habitat quality are not considered to be compromising the viability of the species. The Overall Status is assessed as Inadequate, the same as the last assessment. Although a short-term negative trend is reported for this species, the trend has reversed in the last 5 years. Therefore, an overall stable trend is reported.
6284	Poor water quality is the most common pressure on the species, followed by lack of grassland management and predation of tadpoles and eggs by invertebrates. Also of concern are ponds becoming overgrown with emergent vegetation, making them unsuitable for breeding. Invasive species – New Zealand pigmyweed (<i>Crassula helmsii</i>) and sea-buckthorn (<i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>) – can also cause problems for the toad. Due to historical declines in range, the Overall Status of the natterjack toad is Bad, as in the previous two assessments. The change in overall trend (from increasing to stable) reflects the most recent survey data, which indicate that the uptake of constructed ponds has not continued at the rate seen in the previous report.
1213	The Common Frog appears largely unaffected in Ireland by pollution and disturbance. The most recent national survey estimated the population at over 150,000,000 adults, making it one of the most numerous vertebrates in the country. No significant threats to the frog population have been identified. Overall Status is considered to be Favourable.
1223	There are significant difficulties associated with reporting on this species. Despite some recent progress, the population ecology, range and habitat utilisation of this species in the North-East Atlantic are not well understood. Although there is evidence of significant declines of leatherbacks in the Pacific, there are some indications that the Atlantic populations may be faring better, with recent surveys suggesting that numbers of females may be increasing at some nesting beaches. Nonetheless, mortalities of nesting adults and juveniles is a

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	cause for concern in some areas and fishing causes further mortality during the animal's trans-Atlantic migrations. The Overall Status of this species is assessed as Unknown.
1303	The population overall is doing well; monitoring has demonstrated significant increases in numbers in the core areas. Over much of its distribution, both range and the area of suitable habitat have remained stable. In Limerick and North Kerry, however, worrying declines in habitat, and consequently in range, have been observed. These are considered likely to continue without significant intervention. For these reasons, Habitat, Range and their associated Future prospects, which were all considered to be Favourable in the last report, are now considered Inadequate, and the Overall Status of this species is assessed as Inadequate and declining
1309	There is no indication of any major pressures currently impacting populations and future prospects are considered good. The Overall Status is assessed as Favourable and the overall trend is demonstrating an on-going increase.
5009	There is no indication of any significant pressures impacting on the species, and numbers appear to be increasing. The Overall Status of the species is therefore assessed as Favourable and improving, the same conclusion as the previous assessment.
1317	The population of Nathusius' pipistrelle in Ireland is cautiously estimated to be 3,000-5,000 individuals. It remains unclear whether the species is successfully reproducing here and what level of population would be required to ensure long-term viability. No pressures appear to be acting on the species, and there are many buildings similar to those used by nursery colonies in Northern Ireland, so suitable habitat does not appear to be a limiting factor. However, given the uncertainty about range and population, the Overall Status is assessed as Unknown, unchanged since the last assessment
1322	Building renovation and loss of foraging habitat are potential threats for this species but are not considered to be significant. There is no monitoring scheme in place for this species, but the most recent Red Data List for Irish Mammals lists Natterer's bat as Least Concern and the Overall Status has been assessed as Favourable, as in the last two assessments.
1314	Although some pressures/threats have been noted, there is no indication of any major pressures currently impacting on the species and future prospects are considered good. The Overall Status is assessed as Favourable and the overall trend is demonstrating an on-going increase.
1330	Building renovation and loss of foraging habitat are potential threats for this species but are not considered to be significant. There is no monitoring scheme in place for this species, but the most recent Red Data List for Irish Mammals lists whiskered bat as Least Concern and the Overall Status is assessed as Favourable, unchanged over the last two reporting periods.
1326	There is no indication of any major pressures currently impacting the population. The Overall Status is assessed as Favourable and the overall trend is demonstrating an ongoing increase.
1331	Two threats/pressures have been identified and need to be investigated further: wind energy, and the impact on roosts associated with deliberate/accidental exclusion from houses. However, there is no evidence of decline in range or habitat and future prospects are considered good. The Overall Status is assessed as Favourable and the overall trend is demonstrating an on-going increase.

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1334	Agricultural intensification is leading to some reduction in habitat quality and a number of related threats have been identified, but the hare has a broad habitat niche, so the impacts of these changes on habitat extent and quality are unknown. The Overall Status of the hare is Favourable.
1355	The main threats to the otter include pollution, particularly organic pollution resulting in fish kills; and accidental deaths (road traffic and fishing gear). Although recent studies on territory overlaps and animal movements suggest that refinements to the population estimation formula are needed, the otter population (estimated at between 7,000 and 10,000 breeding females) is considered to be increasing and none of the threats or pressures identified are considered likely to impact significantly on the species. The Overall Status of otter is therefore considered to be Favourable, unchanged since the previous reporting period.
1357	There is ample habitat available across the country to allow the species to continue its spread and to allow the population to expand as well. While some threats have been identified, none of them are considered sufficiently serious to undermine the continued recovery of the species. Therefore, the Overall Status of the pine marten is assessed as Favourable, unchanged since the previous reporting period.
1364	Pressures on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities such as geophysical seismic exploration or local/regional prey removal by fisheries or by-catch in fisheries. While these pressures may act on a temporary and/ or regional scale and some are likely to continue to act as pressures in the future, none is considered sufficiently serious to adversely impact on grey seal populations in Irish waters. Given the current state of knowledge of the species' distribution, population, ecology and prevailing pressures, the Overall Status is Favourable with an increasing trend.
1365	Pressures on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities such as local/regional prey removal by fisheries or by-catch in fisheries, or geophysical seismic exploration; other possible impacts may occur from coastal tourism and localised human disturbance at haul-out sites. None of these pressures are considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of harbour seals in Irish waters. The Overall Status of the harbour seal in Ireland is considered to be Favourable, given the current knowledge of the species' population size, distribution, ecology and prevailing pressures on the species.
1345	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from shipping movements, geophysical seismic exploration or local/regional prey removal by fisheries. While the effect of these pressures may act on a temporary and/or regional scale, none is considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of humpback whale in Irish waters. The Overall Status of humpback whale in Ireland remains Unknown. This overall result is the same as in the previous two assessments due to limited ongoing information on the species' occurrence and population ecology in Irish waters
1349	Pressures on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration or from local/ regional prey removal by fisheries. While the effect of these pressures may act on a temporary and/or regional scale, none is considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of bottlenose dolphin in Irish waters. The Overall Status of bottlenose dolphin in Ireland remains Favourable. This overall result is the same as the previous two assessments.
1350	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities such as impacts from geophysical seismic exploration or from local/ regional prey removal by fisheries. While these pressures may act on a temporary and/or regional scale, none is considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of common dolphin in Irish waters. The Overall Status of common dolphin in Ireland

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	remains Favourable. This overall result is the same as the previous assessment.
1351	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration or from local/regional prey removal by fisheries. While these pressures may act on a temporary and/or regional scale, none is considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of harbour porpoise in Irish waters. The Overall Status of harbour porpoise in Ireland remains Favourable. This overall result is the same as the previous two assessments.
2027	Pressures on this species in Irish waters involve potential pollutant burdens from man-made Polychlorinated Biphenyl compounds plus other persistent organic pollutants, as well as impacts from commercial vessel-based activities such as geophysical seismic exploration and local/regional prey removal by fisheries. With the exception of pollution, which could be having a significant and wider impact in the North-East Atlantic, no pressures are considered to be adversely impacting on populations of killer whale in Irish waters. The Overall Status of killer whale in Ireland remains Unknown. This overall result is the same as the previous two assessments since there has been no significant improvement in knowledge of the conservation status of the species.
2029	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities that occur primarily on a local or regional scale and/or on a temporary or intermittent basis, such as impacts arising from shipping movements or geophysical seismic exploration. None of these pressures are considered to be adversely impacting on populations of long-finned pilot whale in Irish waters. The Overall Status of long-finned pilot whale in Ireland remains Favourable, given the current knowledge of the species' population size, distribution, ecology and the prevailing pressures on the species. This overall result is the same as in the previous two assessments
2030	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration and from local/regional prey removal by fisheries. Another potential pressure is the use of military sonars in the deeper ocean and adjacent continental margins which, while not employed by the Irish Naval Service, is known and documented to occur in the waters of Ireland's EEZ. None of these pressures are considered to adversely impact populations of the species in Irish waters. The Overall Status of Risso's dolphin in Ireland is assessed as Favourable, given the current knowledge of the species' population size, distribution, ecology and the prevailing pressures on the species. This overall result is different from the previous two assessments, in which the status was assessed as Unknown, and it represents a significant improvement in knowledge of the conservation status of the species.
2031	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration and from local/regional prey removal by fisheries. None of these are considered to be having an adverse impact on the population in Irish waters. The Overall Status of Atlantic white-sided dolphin in Ireland therefore remains Favourable, given the current knowledge of the species' population size, distribution, ecology and the prevailing pressures on the species. This overall result is the same as the previous two assessments
2032	The main pressures acting on this species in Irish waters involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration and from local/regional prey removal by fisheries. While the effect of these pressures may act on a temporary and/or regional scale, none is considered to be of sufficient magnitude to be causing an adverse impact on populations of white-beaked dolphin in Irish waters. The Overall Status of white-beaked dolphin in Ireland remains Favourable, given the current knowledge of its population size, distribution, ecology and the prevailing pressures on the species. This overall result is the same as the previous assessment.

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2034	The main pressures acting on this species in Irish waters involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration and from local/regional prey removal by fisheries. While the effect of these pressures may act on a temporary and/or regional scale, none is considered to be of sufficient magnitude to be causing an adverse impact on populations of striped dolphin in Irish waters. The Overall Status of striped dolphin in Ireland remains Favourable, given the current knowledge of the species' distribution, ecology and the prevailing pressures on the species. This result is the same as the previous assessment.
2035	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration and from local/regional prey removal by fisheries. Another potential pressure is the use of military sonars in the deeper ocean and adjacent continental margins which, while not employed by the Irish Naval Service, is known and documented to occur in the waters of Ireland's EEZ. None of these pressures are considered to be significantly impacting on populations of the species in Irish waters. The Overall Status of Cuvier's beaked whale in Ireland is assessed as Favourable. This is different from the previous two assessments (in which the status was assessed as Unknown), due to improved knowledge, higher quality data, and new methods used in the assessment of the conservation status of the species.
2038	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration and from local/regional prey removal by fisheries. None of these pressures are considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of Sowerby's beaked whale in Irish waters. The Overall Status of Sowerby's beaked whale in Ireland is assessed as Favourable. This is different from the previous two assessments (in which the status was assessed as Unknown), due to improved knowledge, higher quality data, and new methods used in the assessment of the conservation status of the species.
2618	Pressures on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from shipping movements, geophysical seismic exploration or from local/regional prey removal by fisheries. None of these pressures are considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of minke whale in Irish waters. The Overall Status of minke whale in Ireland remains Favourable, given current knowledge of the species' population size, distribution, ecology and prevailing pressures on the species. This overall result is the same as in the previous two assessments.
2621	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as shipping movements, geophysical seismic exploration or local/regional prey removal by fisheries. None of these are considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of fin whale in Irish waters. The Overall Status of fin whale in Ireland is assessed as Favourable, given the current knowledge of the species' distribution, ecology and prevailing pressures on the species. This overall result is the same as in the previous two assessments.
5020	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from shipping movements or geophysical seismic exploration. None of these are considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of blue whale in Irish waters. The Overall Status of the blue whale is considered to be Unknown due to limitations in information on its occurrence and population ecology in Ireland's extensive marine waters. This overall result is the same as in the previous two assessments.
2624	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from shipping movements or geophysical seismic exploration. None of these are considered to be of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of sperm whale in Irish waters.

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	The Overall Status of sperm whale is assessed as Favourable given the current knowledge of the species' population size, distribution, ecology and prevailing pressures on the species. This is different from the previous Unknown assessments, due to improved knowledge, higher quality data, and new methods used in the assessment of its conservation status.
5033	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration and from shipping movements. Another potential pressure is the use of military sonars in the deeper ocean and adjacent continental margins which, while not employed by the Irish Naval Service, is known and documented to occur in the waters of Ireland's EEZ. None of these pressures are considered to adversely impact populations of the species in Irish waters. The Overall Status of the northern bottlenose whale is Unknown, as it was for the last two assessments, due to limited ongoing information on the species' occurrence and population ecology in Irish waters.
2619	Pressures acting on this species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial shipping-based or vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from shipping movements or geophysical seismic exploration. None of these are of sufficient magnitude to adversely impact on populations of sei whale in Irish waters. The Overall Status of sei whale in Ireland remains Unknown. This result is the same as in the previous two assessments due to limited ongoing information on the species' occurrence and population ecology in Irish waters.
1348	Little is now known about the occurrence or ecology of this species in the North-East Atlantic, while remnant populations inhabiting North American waters remain extremely vulnerable to ongoing human impacts and potential extinction. No live records have been confirmed from Irish waters in recent decades. In the last 50 years sightings have occurred very occasionally off the European continental shelf and in the mid-Atlantic.
2028	Little is known about the occurrence or ecology of this species in the North-East Atlantic, but it is assumed to be a tropical, sub-tropical and warm temperate deep-water species that feeds on fish and squid and which very occasionally occurs in offshore Irish waters. In the last 50 years rare sightings have occurred off the European continental shelf and in the mid-Atlantic, while only a few sporadic live records have been confirmed from Irish waters in the last 15-20 years.
2037	True's beaked whale (<i>Mesoplodon mirus</i>) is one of six species of cetacean (i.e., whales, dolphins and porpoises) that have been very rarely recorded in Irish waters and are therefore termed vagrant species. Difficult to identify in the open ocean, like many beaked whale species its presence and identifying features can be elusive in the field. True's beaked whales are also tricky to separate from their close relatives the Gervais' beaked whales but both are identifiable by a distinct medium-sized beak and adult male True's beaked whales have two prominent teeth at the tip of the lower jaw.
2622	Little is known about the population distribution or ecology of this species in the North-East Atlantic, but it is considered to be a deep-water species that feeds on squid and octopus, and which may occasionally occur in offshore Irish waters. Since only one live record has emerged so far from oceanic waters very far from shore, most information on the species in Ireland has come from the isolated and rare stranding of individual animals.
5029	Little is known about the occurrence or ecology of this species in the North-East Atlantic. It is normally a polar or sub-polar species found in Arctic regions where it feeds on fish and crustaceans. Only three live records have been confirmed from Ireland, one from County Mayo, another from County Cork, and the third sighting, comprising three individuals, made far offshore during an aerial survey in December 2015.

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5034	Little is known about the occurrence or ecology of this species in the North-East Atlantic, but it is assumed to be a warm temperate or sub-tropical deep-water species that feeds on squid and possibly fish. Only one record is available from Ireland so far, that being from a stranding in County Sligo.
1102	The Allis shad (<i>Alosa alosa</i>) is a large member of the herring family. It spends much of its life in coastal waters and samples of marine-caught Allis shad have been collected off the south-east coast. This species enters freshwater to breed, with significant penetration of large rivers reported on the continent. There is some evidence of Allis shad entering Irish rivers, with one fish recorded some 40km from the sea on the Slaney. Nonetheless, only a small number of Allis shad have ever been recovered from Irish freshwaters and while there is good evidence of the presence of breeding populations of twaite shad in Irish rivers, the only evidence of breeding by Allis shad is the presence of Allis-twaite hybrids. No juvenile Allis shad have been found during survey work of Irish river systems. Overall it would appear that the Allis shad is an opportunistic spawner in Irish waters. Until evidence of an established breeding population is found, Allis shad is considered a vagrant.
1320	Brandt's bat (<i>Myotis brandtii</i>) is a cryptic species, requiring genetic determination to separate it from the whiskered bat (<i>M. mystacinus</i>). Following the initial confirmation of a specimen of Brandt's bat in Wicklow in 2006, further records were expected. However, extensive survey work at potential roosts and swarming sites since then has failed to locate any. The species is now considered a vagrant and was not assessed in the current report.

Table E.4 Summary Status of Bird Species of Conservation Concern

Bird Species	Code	Status BoCCI2 2007-2013*	Status BoCCI3 2014-2019*
Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>)	A001	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>)	A003	Green (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>)	A004	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>)	A005	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>)	A009	Green (breeding)	Green (breeding)
Manx Shearwater (<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>)	A013	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Storm Petrel (<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>)	A014	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Leach's Storm-petrel (<i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>)	A015	Amber (breeding)	Red (breeding)
Gannet (<i>Morus bassanus</i>)	A016	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>)	A017	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>)	A018	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Grey heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>)	A028	Green (breeding/wintering)	Green (breeding/wintering)
Bewick's Swan (<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>)	A037	Red (wintering)	Red (wintering)
Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>)	A038	Amber (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>)	A043	Amber (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>)	A045	Amber (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>)	A046	Amber (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)	A048	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>)	A050	Amber (wintering)	Red (wintering)
Gadwall (<i>Anas strepera</i>)	A051	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)	A052	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)	A053	Green (wintering)	Green (wintering)
Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)	A054	Red (wintering)	Red (wintering)
Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)	A056	Red (wintering)	Red (wintering)
Pochard (<i>Aythya farina</i>)	A059	Amber (wintering)	Red (wintering)

Bird Species	Code	Status BoCCI2 2007-2013*	Status BoCCI3 2014-2019*
Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>)	A061	Amber (wintering)	Red (wintering)
Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>)	A062	Amber (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Eider (<i>Somateria mollissima</i>)	A063	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>)	A065	Red (breeding)	Red (breeding)
Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>)	A067	Amber (wintering)	Red (wintering)
Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>)	A069	Green (breeding/wintering)	Green (breeding/wintering)
Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	A082	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>)	A098	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)	A103	Green (breeding)	Green (breeding)
Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>)	A122	Red (breeding)	Red (breeding)
Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>)	A125	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)	A130	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Amber (breeding/wintering)
Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>)	A137	Amber (wintering)	Green (wintering)
Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)	A140	Red (breeding/wintering)	Red (breeding/wintering)
Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>)	A141	Amber(wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>)	A142	Red (breeding/wintering)	Red (breeding/wintering)
Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>)	A143	Red (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>)	A144	Green (wintering)	Green (wintering)
Purple Sandpiper (<i>Calidris maritima</i>)	A148	Green (wintering)	Green (wintering)
Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)	A149	Amber (breeding/wintering)	Red (breeding/wintering)
Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>)	A156	Amber (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>)	A157	Amber (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)	A160	Red (breeding/wintering)	Red (breeding/wintering)
Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)	A162	Red (breeding/wintering)	Red (breeding/wintering)
Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>)	A164	Amber (wintering)	Green (wintering)
(Ruddy) Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>)	A169	Green (wintering)	Green (wintering)
Black Headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>)	A179	Red (breeding)	Red (breeding)
Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>)	A182	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)

Bird Species	Code	Status BoCCI2 2007-2013*	Status BoCCI3 2014-2019*
Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)	A183	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>)	A184	Red (breeding)	Red (breeding)
Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>)	A188	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	A191	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>)	A192	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	A193	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>)	A194	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>)	A199	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>)	A200	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>)	A204	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	A229	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>)	A346	Amber (breeding)	Amber (breeding)
Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>)	A395	Amber (wintering)	Amber (wintering)
Wetland & Waterbirds	A999	---	---

*Taken from *Birds of Conservation Concern Reports*; BOCCI2: Lynas *et. al.* (2007), BOCCI3: Colhoun and Cummins (2013).

Reference has also been made to Irelands (Birds Directive) Article 12 submission to the EU Commission on the *Status and trends of birds species (2008-2012)*²⁰

²⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/rep_birds/index_en.htm

APPENDIX F

Generic Threats and Pressures Considered Relevant to the RSES

Code	Description
A	Agriculture
A01	Cultivation
A02	Modification of cultivation practices
A02.01	Agricultural intensification
A02.02	Crop change
A02.03	Grassland removal for arable land
A04	Grazing
A04.01	Intensive grazing
A04.02	Non-intensive grazing
A04.03	Abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing
A05	Livestock farming and animal breeding (without grazing)
A05.01	Animal breeding
A05.03	Lack of animal breeding
A06	Annual and perennial non-timber crops
A06.03	Biofuel production
A06.04	Abandonment of crop production
B	Silviculture, forestry
B01	Forest planting on open ground
B01.01	Forest planting on open ground (native trees)
B01.02	Artificial planting on open ground (non-native trees)
B02	Forest and Plantation management & use
B02.01	Forest replanting
B02.01.01	Forest replanting (native trees)
B02.01.02	Forest replanting (non-native trees)
B02.02	Forestry clearance
B02.03	Removal of forest undergrowth
B02.04	Removal of dead and dying trees
B02.05	Non- intensive timber production (leaving dead wood/ old trees untouched)
B02.06	Thinning of tree layer
B03	Forest exploitation without replanting or natural regrowth
C	Mining, extraction of materials and energy production
C01	Mining and quarrying
C01.01	Sand and gravel extraction
C01.01.01	Sand and gravel quarries
C01.01.02	Removal of beach materials
C01.02	Loam and clay pits
C01.03	Peat extraction
C01.03.01	Hand cutting of peat
C01.03.02	Mechanical removal of peat
C01.04	Mines

Code	Description
C01.04.01	Open cast mining
C01.04.02	Underground mining
C01.05	Salt works
C01.05.01	Abandonment of saltpans (salinas)
C01.05.02	Conversion of saltpans
C01.06	Geotechnical survey
C01.07	Mining and extraction activities not referred to above
C02	Exploration and extraction of oil or gas
C02.01	Exploration drilling
C02.02	Production drilling
C02.03	Jack-up drilling rig
C02.04	Semi-submersible rig
C02.05	Drill ship
C03	Renewable abiotic energy use
C03.01	Geothermal power production
C03.02	Solar energy production
C03.03	Wind energy production
C03.04	Tidal energy production
D	Transportation and service corridors
D01	Roads, paths and railroads
D01.01	Paths, tracks, cycling tracks
D01.02	Roads, motorways
D02	Utility and service lines
D02.01	Electricity and phone lines
D02.01.01	Suspended electricity and phone lines
D02.01.02	Underground/submerged electricity and phone lines
D02.02	Pipe lines
D02.03	Communication masts and antennas
D02.09	Other forms of energy transport
D03	Shipping lanes, ports, marine constructions
D03.01	Port areas
D03.01.04	Industrial ports
D03.02	Shipping lanes
D03.02.01	Cargo lanes
D03.02.02	Passenger ferry lanes (high speed)
D03.03	Marine constructions
D04	Airports, flightpaths
E	Urbanisation, residential and commercial development
E01	Urbanised areas, human habitation
E01.01	Continuous urbanisation
E01.03	Dispersed habitation
E02	Industrial or commercial areas
E02.01	Factory

Code	Description
E02.02	Industrial stockage
E02.03	Other industrial / commercial area
E03	Discharges
E03.01	Disposal of household / recreational facility waste
E03.02	Disposal of industrial waste
E03.03	Disposal of inert materials
E03.04	Other discharges
E03.04.01	Coastal sand suppletion/ beach nourishment
E04	Structures, buildings in the landscape
E04.01	Agricultural structures, buildings in the landscape
E04.02	Military constructions and buildings in the landscape
E05	Storage of materials
E06	Other urbanisation, industrial and similar activities
E06.01	Demolishment of buildings & human structures
G	Human intrusions and disturbances
G01.01	Nautical sports
G01.01.01	Motorised nautical sports
G01.03	Motorised vehicles
G02	Sport and leisure structures
G02.03	Stadium
G02.04	Circuit, track
G02.06	Attraction park
G05.03	Penetration/ disturbance below surface of the seabed
H	Pollution
H04	Air pollution, air-borne pollutants
H04.02	Nitrogen-input
H04.03	Other air pollution
H06	Excess energy
H07	Other forms of pollution
I	Invasive, other problematic species and genes
I01	Invasive non-native species
I02	Problematic native species
J	Natural System modifications
J01	Fire and fire suppression
J02	Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions
J02.01	Landfill, land reclamation and drying out, general
J03	Other ecosystem modifications
J03.01	Reduction or loss of specific habitat features
L	Geological events, natural catastrophes
L01	Volcanic activity
L09	Fire (natural)
M	Climate change
M01	Changes in abiotic conditions

Code	Description
M01.01	Temperature changes (e.g. rise of temperature & extremes)
M01.02	Droughts and less precipitations
M01.03	Flooding and rising precipitations
M01.04	pH-changes
M01.05	Water flow changes (limnic, tidal and oceanic)
M01.06	Wave exposure changes
M01.07	Sea-level changes
M02	Changes in biotic conditions
M02.01	Habitat shifting and alteration
M02.02	Desynchronisation of processes
M02.03	Decline or extinction of species
M02.04	Migration of species (natural newcomers)
XO	Threats and pressures from outside the Member State

APPENDIX G

Assessment of Material Amendments and other Modifications

AMENDMENTS REPORTING

Environmental Assessment - SEA/AA/FRA

MDR1402Rp0018

Amendments Reporting

F02

January 2020

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1 INTRODUCTION

The draft Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy went on public display in December 2018. Following the end of the consultation period in March 2019, the Southern Regional Authority (SRA) reviewed all of the submissions received and proposed a series of Amendments to the draft plan. This included amendments which were categorised by the SRA as Material or Non-Material Amendments.

As part of the process of developing the SRA RSES, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) are being undertaken. To date, these environmental assessment processes have been applied to the draft RSES. To inform the Material Amendment stage of the RSES, and in accordance with Section 24.8(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), consideration has been given to the need for SEA, AA and FRA with regard to each of the proposed Material Amendments to determine their environmental consequences.

The resulting *proposed Material Amendments to the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2030 Report* was put on public display between 12th September – 11th October 2019 along with the accompanying environmental documentation entitled *Environmental Reports*.

The submissions received were reviewed and responded to in the Director's Report and a series of recommendations in relation to the proposed Material Amendments were made i.e. to accept or reject them. The environmental documentation has been subsequently updated to review the status of the final amendments agreed.

1.1 Assessment Process

Chapter 2 identifies the environmental consequences of the proposed material amendments and subsequent minor amendments made to the draft RSES. It should be noted that this document includes screening and assessment of significant impacts in the context of SEA, AA and FRA.

2 ASSESSMENT

2.1 Assessment of Amendments

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
Chapter 1: Introduction					
RPO 1: Environmental Assessment	a. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft RSES should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including ECIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate b. The RSES seeks to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. c. RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required.	a. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum) environmental assessment including ECIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate b. The RSES seeks to protect the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. c. RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required. d. Development Plans shall include an objective for the protection of European sites (cSACs, SACs and SPAs) and Natural Heritage Areas (designated and notified proposed NHAs).	The changes are welcome. No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	(a) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the RSES should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that has no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, the protection of water quality, flood risks and biodiversity as a minimum), environmental assessment including ECIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate. (b) The RSES seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region. (c) RSES support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is on the basis of appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA and AA processes being undertaken in order to ensure the avoidance of adverse effects on European Sites and ensure implementation of mitigation measures where required. (d) Development Plans shall include an objective for the protection of European sites and Natural Heritage Areas (designated and notified proposed NHAs).	As per assessment for proposed material amendment. No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Chapter 3: People and Places					
RPO 2 (new at MA stage - former RPO A): Planning for Diverse Areas		The RSES recognises the strategic role played by all areas, urban and rural, in achieving the targets and objectives of the NPF and RSES. Support for sustainable growth of all communities, urban and rural, are supported by the RSES. A strategy is pursued that builds on cities and metropolitan areas as engines of growth and seeks in parallel to re-position the region's strong network of towns, villages and diverse rural areas in an economically resilient, imaginative and smart manner to create a sustainable competitive advantage for the region.	This new RPO underlines the roll for all areas, urban and rural in delivering on NPF and RSES commitments and objectives. A number of RPOs are already included in the draft RSES under 'Towns and Villages' (RPO 24a-3) and 'Rural areas' (RPO 25). This new objective sits within this suite of objectives recognising the need for sustainable growth. The RPO will result in overall long-term positive impacts for PHH.	The RSES recognises the strategic role played by all areas, both urban and rural, in achieving the set regional and national targets and objectives. The RSES supports sustainable enterprise growth, services, physical and social infrastructure investment and the sustainable growth of all communities in the Region. The overall strategy builds on cities and their associated metropolitan areas as engines of growth and seeks, in parallel, to re-position the Region's strong network of towns, villages and diverse rural areas in an economically resilient, imaginative and smart way to foster sustainable competitive advantage.	As per assessment for proposed material amendment. No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 6 (new at MA stage former RPO B): Collaboration between Metropolitan Areas		It is an objective to establish a collaborative approach between Metropolitan Areas of Cork, Limerick/Shannon, and Waterford (together with Galway); that they lead in partnership with each other to harness their combined potential as viable alternatives to Dublin. The Southern Region's Metropolitan Areas should be prioritised for focused and long-term investment as the region's most significant economic engines to ensure regional parity (together with Galway) and to act as an effective counter-balance to the unbalanced growth of Dublin. Central to the success of this collaborative approach is the early delivery of the M24.	This objective of the new RPO is for the collaborative approach between the Metropolitan areas in the SRA and Galway to harness the potential of the region. While a collaborative approach can be seen as broadly positive for PHH and MA in terms of maximising opportunities to share services and provide coordinated solutions, it also raises the issue of cumulative and in-combination effects. A concentrated effort to deliver an economic engine has the potential to result in significant negative effects for all environmental receptors and in particular PHH, W, BFF, LS, AQ and CF across the geographic area. Additional supporting and linking infrastructure may be required to deliver this objective and this may cover a range of sectors such as waste, industry, energy, transport, all with potential for short, medium and long term negative impacts if delivered in a piecemeal manner and equally the potential for cumulative and in-combination effects if not located sensitively. It is noted that RPO 6-8 support a holistic approach to compact growth and sustainable development. The reference to early delivery of the M24 is unhelpful as it ignores the proper planning and development of projects through the planning system. Early delivery or prioritisation is only possible where planning is in place and should not pre-suppose the outcome. Mitigation: Apply RPO 1 environmental policy objective. It is recommended to remove 'early delivery' of M24 from the RPO. Collaboration should be considered in a dedicated strategy which can incorporate and integrate environmental considerations into the decision making on what, how and where infrastructure and development should occur.	It is an objective to establish a collaborative intra-regional partnership approach between the region's metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick Shannon, and Waterford and a similar inter-regional approach with the Galway Metropolitan Area in the Northern and Western Region, that they are prioritised in line with the NPF's strategic objectives and population targets, for focused and long-term investment as economic engines to ensure regional parity. The three metropolitan areas will lead together in partnership to harness their combined potential as viable alternatives to the unbalanced growth of Dublin.	As per assessment for proposed material amendment. No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 10 (former RPO 8): Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas	a. The prioritisation of housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling. b. The identification of strategic initiatives in Local Authority Core Strategies for the MASP areas, which will achieve the compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites at a minimum and achieve the growth targets identified in each MASP. Such strategic initiatives shall comply with MASP Goals to evolve innovative approaches for all MASPs. Initiatives may include: -Support the creation and role of Active Land Management Units with a remit to focus on the Metropolitan Areas and compact growth targets. -Partnership with the Land Development Agency to progress housing and employment delivery in city and town centres, focusing on co-ordinating and developing large, strategically located publicly owned land banks, reducing vacancy and increasing regeneration of key sites. -Support the role of the Local Authority as a development agency to kick start regeneration processes. -Strategic land reserve initiatives -Deliver design briefs for strategic sites. -Seek design competitions for key strategic sites that deliver greater density, mixed uses where appropriate, sustainable design, smart technology, green infrastructure and public gain through good design. -Active land management within areas designated as site specific regeneration areas under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and other locations in need of renewal, including the use of site briefs and masterplans for a design led approach to renewal. -The identification of Transformational Areas which combine, on an area wide basis, opportunities for regeneration of private owned underutilised sites, public owned underutilised sites, private and public buildings and upgrade of parks, streetscapes and public realm areas. -Creation of continually updated data bases identifying brownfield, infill sites, regeneration areas and infrastructure packages to enable progress towards achieving compact growth targets. Through active land management initiatives, identify strategic locations for residential growth responding to the growth targets and achievement of compact growth and employment growth.	a. The prioritisation of housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling. b. The identification of strategic initiatives in Local Authority Core Strategies for the MASP areas, which will achieve the compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites at a minimum and achieve the growth targets identified in each MASP. Such strategic initiatives shall comply with MASP Goals to evolve innovative approaches for all MASPs. Initiatives may include: -Support the creation and role of Active Land Management Units with a remit to focus on the Metropolitan Areas and compact growth targets. -Partnership with the Land Development Agency to progress housing and employment delivery in city and town centres, focusing on co-ordinating and developing large, strategically located publicly owned land banks, reducing vacancy and increasing regeneration of key sites. -Support the role of the Local Authority as a development agency to kick start regeneration processes. -Initiatives that facilitate the regeneration of derelict buildings and vacant sites for the provision of high-quality affordable housing. -Strategic land reserve initiatives -Deliver design briefs for strategic sites. -Seek design competitions for key strategic sites that deliver greater density, mixed uses where appropriate, sustainable design, smart technology, green infrastructure and public gain through good design. -Active land management within areas designated as site specific regeneration areas under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and other locations in need of renewal, including the use of site briefs and masterplans for a design led approach to renewal. -The identification of Transformational Areas public realm and site regeneration initiatives which combine, on an area wide basis, opportunities for regeneration of private owned underutilised sites, public owned underutilised sites, private and public buildings and upgrade of parks, streetscapes and public realm areas. -Creation of continually updated data bases identifying brownfield, infill sites, regeneration areas and infrastructure packages to enable progress towards achieving compact growth targets. Through active land management initiatives, identify strategic locations for residential growth responding to the growth targets and achievement of compact growth and employment growth.	The amendments to this objective will give rise to positive impacts in terms of PHH and MA due to the focus on regeneration within the Metropolitan areas. Through regeneration, uncontrolled run-off or contamination issues are generally improved upon resulting in positive impacts to LS and W. However, there are potential negative impacts for BFF, LS and W where regeneration or infill development results in emissions to water or the generation of contaminated material from brownfield sites. There are also positive implications for BFF, LS and W where infill development is preferable over the development of greenfield at the edges of the city(s). Development, once sustainable, should result in positive impacts to AQ and CF however increased emissions due to growth in the city centre may also have negative impacts in this regard. From a landscape and visual perspective regeneration generally results in improved visual impacts. However, regeneration needs to be cognisant of the need for sensitive development of protected building and the type and scale of development, which could impact on the skyline/cityscape character. Potential to impact on BFF, particularly bats which may roost in older buildings should also be considered.	To achieve compact growth, the RSES seeks to: (a) Prioritise housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling. (b) Identify strategic initiatives in Local Authority Core Strategies for the MASP areas, which will achieve the compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites at a minimum and achieve the growth targets identified in each MASP. Such strategic initiatives shall comply with MASP Goals to evolve innovative approaches for all MASPs. Initiatives may include: -Support the creation and role of Active Land Management Units with a remit to focus on the metropolitan areas and compact growth targets; -Tier 1 (Serviced Zoned Land) and Tier 2 (Serviceable Zoned Land) to be identified as part of the review of the City and County Development Plans in the region -Partnerships with the Land Development Agency to progress housing and employment delivery in city and town centres, focusing on co-ordinating and developing large, strategically located, publicly-owned land banks, reducing vacancy and increasing regeneration of key sites; -Support the role of the local authority as a development agency to kick start regeneration processes; -Initiatives that facilitate the regeneration of derelict buildings and vacant sites for the provision of high-quality, environmentally friendly Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZE) affordable housing. -Strategic land reserve initiatives; -Deliver design briefs for strategic sites; -Seek design competitions for key strategic sites that deliver greater density, mixed uses where appropriate, sustainable design, smart technology, green infrastructure and public gain through good design; -Active land management within designated site specific regeneration areas under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, and other locations in need of renewal, including the use of site briefs and masterplans for a design led approach to renewal; -The identification of public realm and site regeneration initiatives which combine, on an area wide basis, opportunities for regeneration of private owned underutilised sites, public owned underutilised sites, private and public buildings and upgrade of parks, streetscapes and public realm areas; -Creation of continually updated data-bases identifying brownfield, infill sites, regeneration areas and infrastructure packages to enable progress towards achieving compact growth targets. Through active land management initiatives, identify strategic locations for residential growth responding to the growth targets and achievement of compact growth and employment growth.	As per assessment for proposed material amendment. No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
RPO 11 (former RPO 9) Key Towns	<p>a. It is an objective to seek investment in infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, climate change adaptation and future proofing infrastructure including Flood Risk management measures, recreational, arts and cultural that will deliver sustainable growth in Key Towns subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p> <p>b. It is an objective that all Key Towns will be subject to a Local Transport Plan, as per transport objectives provided in Chapter 6.</p> <p>c. It is an objective to support and promote vibrant, culturally-rich and revitalised Key Towns with enhanced social inclusion, sustainable neighbourhoods and a high level of environmental quality to ensure an excellent quality of life for all.</p> <p>d. It is an objective to support and promote Placemaking in all Key Towns to include public realm regeneration and urban renewal initiatives.</p> <p>e. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EcIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>f. Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>g. Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water and the local authority to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>h. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p>	<p>a. Local Authorities should target growth of 30% for each Key Town subject to capacity analysis including historic growth levels.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to seek investment in holistic infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, environmental, climate change adaptation and future proofing infrastructure including Flood Risk management measures and flood defence schemes, recreational, arts and cultural that will deliver sustainable growth in Key Towns subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p> <p>c. It is an objective that all Key Towns will be subject to a Local Transport Plan, as per transport objectives provided in Chapter 6— a local transport plan will be prepared for all the key towns, on the basis provided for in RPO 152 Local Transport Plans in Chapter 6</p> <p>d. It is an objective to support and promote vibrant, culturally-rich and revitalised Key Towns with enhanced social inclusion, sustainable neighbourhoods and a high level of environmental quality to ensure an excellent quality of life for all.</p> <p>e. It is an objective to support and promote Placemaking in all Key Towns to include public realm regeneration, and urban renewal initiatives and Public Private Partnership approaches for town centre regeneration.</p> <p>f. It is an objective to seek the sustainable development of tourism facilities that enhance diverse tourism roles for Key Towns and seek investment in services to cater for increased population numbers arising from tourism.</p> <p>g. It is an objective to support learning, education and training initiatives, economic regeneration initiatives and enterprise facilities to address unemployment blackspots.</p> <p>h. It is an objective to support initiatives which seek to strengthen and develop niche retail and mixed-use services in town centres.</p> <p>i. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EcIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate.</p> <p>j. Local Authorities shall consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs as appropriate to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns</p> <p>k. Increasing population growth in all Key Towns should be planned on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, and the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.</p> <p>l. In order meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network, due consideration should be given to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources e.g. hydromorphological pressures.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO further strengthen this RPO in seeking to revitalise key towns, which is positive for PHH and MA.</p> <p>The sustainable development of tourism facilities in key towns is positive for PHH and MA as it seeks to bring employment opportunities and enhance recreational and amenity facilities in key towns. However, associated infrastructural development can have significant potential for negative impacts on BFF, W, LS, AQ, CF and Lands through greenfield and brownfield development, habitat loss and disturbance and emissions to air, soil and water.</p> <p>Planning of any new development should be subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments (SEA, EIA, AA, EcIA). Furthermore, increased footfall to access key built and natural heritage features can also damage assets in the long-term and as such the visitor pressure in key tourism areas needs to be closely monitored and aligned with clear visitor strategies for high interest sites.</p> <p>Similarly, support for learning and is positive for PHH as it invests in people and bringing employment opportunities.</p> <p>Support for niche retail and mixed use services in town centres is also positive for MA, but any associated development would require consideration of Cultural Heritage and the Landscape particularly where buildings are retrofitted.</p>	<p>a) Local Authorities are supported in targeting growth of more than 30% for each Key Town subject to capacity analysis and sustainable criteria under Section 3.3 A Tailored Approach, RPO 2 Local Authority Core Strategies and the sustainable requirements under the following sub sections of RPO 9 Key Towns. The appropriate level of growth is to be determined by the Core Strategy of Development Plans.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to seek investment in holistic infrastructure inclusive of utilities, transportation, social and community, digital infrastructure and smart technologies environmental (including facilitation of climate change mitigation and of biodiversity promotion), climate change adaptation and future proofing infrastructure including flood risk management measures and flood defence schemes, recreational, arts and cultural that will deliver sustainable growth in Key Towns subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments;</p> <p>c) It is an objective that a Local Transport Plan will be prepared for all the Key Towns, on the basis provided for in RPO Local Transport Plans in Chapter 6;</p> <p>d) To support and promote vibrant, culturally-rich and revitalised Key Towns with enhanced social inclusion, engaged and active voluntary, non-profit and social enterprise sectors, sustainable neighbourhoods and a high level of environmental quality to ensure an excellent quality of life for all;</p> <p>e) To support and promote placemaking in all Key Towns to include public realm regeneration and urban renewal initiatives and public private partnership approaches for town centre regeneration;</p> <p>f) To seek the sustainable development of tourism facilities that enhance diverse tourism roles for Key Towns and seek investment in services to cater for increased population numbers arising from tourism;</p> <p>g) To support learning, education and training initiatives, economic regeneration initiatives and enterprise facilities to address unemployment blackspots.</p> <p>h) To support initiatives which seek to strengthen and develop niche retail and mixed-use services in town centres;</p> <p>i) That any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Key Towns should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EcIA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate;</p> <p>j) That local authorities consider the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs, as appropriate, to inform the appropriate growth rates for Key Towns;</p> <p>k) To plan increasing population growth in all Key Towns on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network;</p> <p>l) To give due consideration to the suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (e.g. hydromorphological pressures) to meet the increased demands on the water supply and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network. The National Water Resources Plan (NWRP) will outline how we move towards a sustainable, secure and reliable public drinking water supply over the next 25 years, whilst safeguarding our environment.</p>	<p>As per assessment for proposed material amendment.</p> <p>No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 12 (former RPO 18): Kilkenny	<p>a. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.</p> <p>b. To support development of freight rail services and facilities at the ports;</p> <p>c. To strengthen the Education, Research and Innovation Capacity Kilkenny with ongoing development of St. Kieran's College and development of the Multi-Campus TUSE</p> <p>d. To support urban generation through investment in the Abbey Quarter & other initiatives to improve the Public Realm and regenerate underused land in the City and to support implementation of mitigation from Abbey Quarter Masterplan SEA and AA processes.</p> <p>e. To seek investment in sustainable transport measures through a Local Transport Plan including development of Town Bus Services in support of the Compact '10-minute city' concept.</p> <p>f. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Kilkenny City subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>	<p>a) To strengthen the role of Kilkenny City as a self-sustaining regional economic driver with significant zone of influence and Key Town on the Dublin – Carlow-Kilkenny Waterford M9 Road/Rail Axis, links to the Eastern Corridor. The RSES seeks to leverage its strategic location and accessibility to the Port of Waterford & Rosslare Europort, Waterford Airport and to build upon its inherent strengths including the Finance, Technology and Creative Sectors, skills, innovation and enterprise, tourism, and retail services.</p> <p>b) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.</p> <p>c) To support development of freight rail services and facilities including rail freight links to at the ports;</p> <p>d) To strengthen the Education, Research and Innovation Capacity Kilkenny with ongoing development of St. Kieran's College and development of the Multi-Campus TUSE</p> <p>e) To support urban generation through investment in the Abbey Quarter & other initiatives to improve the Public Realm and regenerate underused land in the City and to support implementation of mitigation from Abbey Quarter Masterplan SEA and AA processes.</p> <p>f) To seek investment in sustainable transport measures through a Local Transport Plan including development of Town Bus Services in support of the Compact '10-minute city' concept.</p> <p>g) It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Kilkenny City subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO strengthen the role of Kilkenny city as a self sustaining regional economic driver, which is positive for PHH and MA. There is however potential for direct and indirect negative impacts on the CH value of the city given the heritage features present. Objectives which seek to draw traffic and development into the city must be supported by advanced feasibility studies into the carrying capacity of the road network and services to ensure growth is within sustainable limits. Development to improve rail infrastructure including rail freight links is also positive for PHH and MA along with CF and AQ. However, all such development should be subject to the outcome of the planning process and the necessary environmental assessments. See also previous assessment for Kilkenny for sensitivities.</p>	<p>a) To strengthen the role of Kilkenny City as a self-sustaining regional economic driver with significant zone of influence and Key Town on Dublin – Carlow-Kilkenny Waterford M9 Road/Rail Axis, links to the Eastern Corridor. The RSES seeks to leverage its strategic location and accessibility to the Port of Waterford & Rosslare Europort, Waterford Airport and to build upon its inherent strengths including the finance, technology and creative sectors, skills, innovation and enterprise, tourism, and retail services.</p> <p>b) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.</p> <p>c) To support development of freight rail services and facilities including rail freight links to the ports;</p> <p>d) To strengthen the Education, Research and Innovation Capacity Kilkenny with ongoing development of St. Kieran's College and development of the Multi-Campus TUSE</p> <p>e) To support urban generation through investment in the Abbey Quarter & other initiatives to improve the Public Realm and regenerate underused land in the City and to support implementation of mitigation from Abbey Quarter Masterplan SEA and AA processes.</p> <p>f) To seek investment in sustainable transport measures through a Local Transport Plan including development of Town Bus Services in support of the Compact '10-minute city' concept.</p> <p>g) To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Kilkenny City including the delivery of the northern extension of the ring road from the N77 Castlecomer Road to the R693 Freshford Rd as part of the western by-pass for the city from the Castlecomer Road to the Waterford Road identified as an objective and assessed under the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan, subject to required feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>(h): Support for the City as a 'Hero site' within the Faltre Ireland's branding of Ireland's Ancient East. The 'Medieval Mile' package which brings together Public Realm improvements linking Kilkenny Castle to St Canice's Cathedral and other significant attractions in between, such as the Medieval Mile Museum, the new Butler Gallery, the Smithwick's Experience and Rothe House.</p> <p>(i): Support for the Quality of life offer in Kilkenny City which is renowned as evidenced in its population growth which has exceeds the national average over the period 2006 – 2016.</p>	<p>The addition of wording to g) refers to the N77 Castlecomer Road to the R693 Freshford Rd, which was assessed as part of the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan. Any related SEA and AA mitigation should be incorporated during feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>The inclusion of h) and i) are positive for PHH and MA, however, there is potential for direct and indirect negative and positive impacts on the CH value of the city given the heritage features present. However, all such development should be subject to the outcome of the planning process and the necessary environmental assessments. See also previous assessment for Kilkenny for sensitivities.</p> <p>No further additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alterations to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 13 (former RPO 14) Ennis	<p>a. It is an objective to supports Ennis as a key regional economic driver for the Mid-West and as a key location for investment and choice in the region, to support the enhanced development of Ennis based on its strategic location relative to Limerick City, Galway City and Shannon International Airport, as well as its role as a centre of employment and economic activity within the region. The RSES recognises that this is a positive economic proposition that should be supported and enhanced through initiatives such as the Atlantic Economic Corridor.</p> <p>b. The RSES supports the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Ennis subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p> <p>c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.</p>	<p>a. It is an objective to supports Ennis as a self-sustaining regional economic driver and as a key location for investment and choice in the region, to support the enhanced development of Ennis based on its strategic location relative to Limerick City, Galway City and Shannon International Airport, as well as its role as a centre of employment and economic activity within the region. The RSES recognises that this is a positive economic proposition that should be supported and enhanced through initiatives such as the Atlantic Economic Corridor.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to support the implementation of Ennis 2040 which will set the long-term economic strategy for the County Town with an agreed focus on an economic future and spatial pattern to 2040 and beyond. The RSES recognises the higher education growth potential in Ennis and the vision to become a centre for Lifelong Learning.</p> <p>c. The RSES supports the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Ennis subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p> <p>d. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.</p>	<p>The amendments seek to support Ennis as a self sustaining regional economic driver, the implementation of Ennis 2040 and investment in improved rail infrastructure and services. This will have positive impacts for PHH and MA. As with any development there is potential for direct and indirect to impact on the wider environment (see sensitivities identified in Environmental Report) and as such should be subject to the relevant feasibility and environmental assessments.</p> <p>It is not clear if the Ennis 2040 plan referenced has been subject to any environmental assessment or it status in terms of the CDP and other statutory plans for that area. As detail is added to the objectives in the RSES, it is essential that environmental assessment is cascaded down through the plan hierarchy. As such, it is recommended that the Ennis 2040 be reviewed in the context of the need for SEA/AA if the material included has not already been subject to assessment in the CDP.</p> <p>Mitigation It is recommended that the Ennis 2040 be reviewed in the context of the need for SEA/AA if the material included has not already been subject to assessment in the CDP.</p>	<p>a. To support Ennis as a self-sustaining, regional economic driver and as a key location for investment choice in the region, to support its enhanced development based on its strategic location relative to Limerick and Galway Cities and Shannon International Airport, as well as its role as a centre of employment and economic activity within the Region. The RSES recognises that this should be supported and enhanced through initiatives such as the Atlantic Economic Corridor;</p> <p>b. To support the implementation of Ennis 2040 to set the long-term economic strategy for the county town with an agreed focus on an economic future and spatial pattern to 2040 and beyond. The RSES recognises the higher education growth potential of Ennis and its vision to become a centre for lifelong learning;</p> <p>c. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Ennis, subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments;</p> <p>d. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
RPO 14 (former RPO 19): Carlow	<p>a. To strengthen Education, Research and Innovation Capacity through development of the Multi-Campus TUSE</p> <p>b. To improve the Public Realm and attractiveness of the Town Centre through development of key urban regeneration locations in the town centre with improved accessibility to the Railway Station and Fair Green</p> <p>c. To seek investment in sustainable transport including provision of a Town Bus Service;</p> <p>d. To support delivery of the Southern Relief Road N80 – R448 and other transport measures through a Local Transport Plan;</p> <p>e. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Carlow subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p> <p>f. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times</p> <p>g. To support development of underused lands along the River Barrow. Any future development of underused lands along the River Barrow will include an assessment of any impacts that may arise on sensitive Natura 2000 habitat.</p>	<p>(a) To strengthen and support the role of Carlow Town as a self-sustaining regional and inter-regional economic driver supporting investment in the strategic employment development potential of the town, while promoting and facilitating economic integration between urban centres in the county including Tullow and Muine Bheag, other urban centres within the Southern Region and the Eastern and Midlands Region including the Dublin Metropolitan Area. Subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments the following are supported:</p> <p>(i) To strengthen the regional and inter-regional role of the Education, Research and Innovation Capacity through development of the Multi-Campus TUSE in the provision of internationally recognised higher education and research opportunities which can facilitate transformational change and act as a key driver and enabler for sustainable future employment growth within Carlow and the Southern Region.</p> <p>(ii) To support the town centre led economic regeneration of Carlow, leveraging its strategic location and accessibility on inter regional road and rail networks building upon its inherent strengths of education, connectivity, skills, innovation, enterprise, tourism, culture/arts and retail services.</p> <p>(iii) To improve the Public Realm and attractiveness of the Town Centre through development and connectivity of key urban regeneration locations in the town centre with improved accessibility from the historic town centre to the Railway Station and Fair Green</p> <p>(iv) To seek investment in water and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate the sustainable development of the town as a regional growth centre.</p> <p>(v) To support delivery of the Southern Relief Road N80 – R448 and completion of the Carlow Southern Relief road to link the N80 within County Laois including the provision of an appropriate crossing of the River Barrow & other transport measures with adjoining local/regional authorities and stakeholders.</p> <p>(vi) To seek investment in sustainable transport solutions, improved walking and cycling connectivity routes throughout the town including provision of a Town Bus Service through a Local Transport Plan;</p> <p>(vii) It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Carlow</p> <p>(viii) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services along the Waterford to Dublin line to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times</p> <p>(ix) To seek investment and support in the delivery of culture, arts, and tourism infrastructure together with other physical and community infrastructural requirements identified for Carlow town and the wider county area.</p> <p>(x) To support development of underused lands along the River Barrow as a strategic natural asset for the town.</p> <p>(xi) Any future development of underused lands along the River Barrow or proposals for an additional bridge will include an assessment of any impacts that may arise on sensitive Natura 2000 habitats. should be subject to further studies to inform the exact nature and intensity that could be accommodated without giving rise to adverse effects and consider any in combination effects arising from proposals for a bridge.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO further strengthen the role of Carlow as a significant regional economic driver, which is positive for PHH and MA. The inclusion of (v) to seek investment in water and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate sustainable development is welcome.</p> <p>Support for delivery of transport options and investment in sustainable transport solutions including walking and cycling is positive for PHH and MA. However, all linear type development should be subject to route feasibility studies and appropriate environmental assessments.</p> <p>The support for underused lands along the river Barrow as a strategic natural asset and the provision of an appropriate crossing of the River Barrow has the potential for in-combination effects on BFF and W. The River Barrow is a designated SAC and SPA, and the SEA Environmental Report and NIR assessments flag that the River Barrow has a WFD status of Moderate and at risk of not meeting WFD objectives. The Barrow is also designated Nutrient Sensitive River from Portlurling to Graigueanagh, and therefore has little to no assimilative capacity to absorb current wastewater or other development pressures. Any development of underused lands should be subject to Appropriate Assessment including in-combination effects. The SFRA also flags that any underused sites adjacent to the River Barrow have been zoned for green space and this should be maintained to retain existing floodplain areas. The addition of mitigation of underused lands adjacent to the river Barrow is welcome.</p> <p>The support for cultural, arts and tourism infrastructure is positive for PHH and MA. The policy also specified such infrastructure would be subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments which is welcome.</p> <p>The RPO also supports the preparation of a cross county Local Area Plan for Carlow town to ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken to the future growth and development of the townland to ensure that it has the capacity to grow sustainably and secure investment</p>	<p>(a) To strengthen and support the role of Carlow Town as a self-sustaining regional and inter-regional economic driver supporting investment in the strategic employment development potential of the town, while promoting and facilitating economic integration between urban centres in the county including Tullow and Muine Bheag (Bagnelstown), other urban centres within the Southern Region and the Eastern and Midlands Region including the Dublin Metropolitan Area. Subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments the following are supported:</p> <p>(i) To strengthen the regional and inter-regional role of the Education, Research and Innovation Capacity through development of the Multi-Campus TUSE in the provision of internationally recognised higher education and research opportunities which can facilitate transformational change and act as a key driver and enabler for sustainable future employment growth within Carlow and the Southern Region.</p> <p>(ii) To support the town centre led economic regeneration of Carlow, leveraging its strategic location and accessibility on inter-regional road and rail networks building upon its inherent strengths of education, connectivity, skills, innovation, enterprise, tourism, culture/arts and retail services.</p> <p>(iii) To improve the public realm and attractiveness of the Town Centre through development and connectivity of key urban regeneration locations in the town centre with improved accessibility from the historic town centre to the Railway Station and Fair Green</p> <p>(iv) To seek investment in water and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate the sustainable development of the town as a regional growth centre.</p> <p>(v) To support delivery of the Southern Relief Road N80 – R448 and completion of the Carlow Southern Relief road to link the N80 within County Laois including the provision of an appropriate crossing of the River Barrow & other transport measures with adjoining local/regional authorities and stakeholders.</p> <p>(vi) To seek investment in sustainable transport solutions, improved walking and cycling connectivity routes throughout the town including provision of a town bus service through a Local Transport Plan;</p> <p>(vii) To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Carlow subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p> <p>(viii) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services along the Waterford to Dublin line to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times</p> <p>(ix) To seek investment and support in the delivery of culture, arts, and tourism infrastructure together with other physical and community infrastructural requirements identified for Carlow town and the wider county area.</p> <p>(x) To support development of underused lands along the River Barrow as a strategic natural asset for the town. Any future development of underused lands along the River Barrow or proposals for an additional bridge should be subject to further studies to inform the exact nature and intensity that could be accommodated without giving rise to adverse effects on sensitive Natura 2000 habitats and consider any in combination effects arising from proposals for a bridge.</p>	<p>The changes noted in part a.x) are welcome</p> <p>No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.</p>

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
		<p>Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019</p> <p>(j) To support the preparation of a cross-boundary Joint Urban Area Plan (JUAP) for Carlow Town by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council having regard to its location within the combined functional area of both local authorities.</p> <p>(k) The Joint UAP shall provide a coordinated planning framework to identify and deliver strategic sites and regeneration areas for the future physical, economic and social development of Carlow to ensure it achieves targeted compact growth of a minimum of 30% and ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken to the future growth and development of the town to ensure that it has the capacity to grow sustainably and secure investment as a Key Town. The Joint UAP shall identify a boundary for the plan area and strategic housing and employment development areas and infrastructure investment requirements to promote greater co-ordination and sequential delivery of serviced lands for development. Regard shall be had to the respective housing, retail and other Local Authority strategies that may be in place. The selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment. This could be achieved through a coordinated management plan in collaboration between EMRA, Laois County Council, IFI and NPWS that could address the key issues of visitor pressure, supporting infrastructure pressure and management of the spread of invasive species.</p> <p>(l) The Assembly will foster collaboration in the allocation of funds to support and enable cross boundary collaboration in the Greater Carlow and Graiguecullen Urban Area in the delivery of strategic infrastructure.</p>	<p>SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES</p> <p>as a key town. Ensuring the town has capacity to grow sustainably is positive from a broader environmental perspective. Lands for development should be subject to a site selection process and be subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments including any SEA and AA processes. The inclusion of this specific mitigation is welcome.</p> <p>Mitigation Any mitigation measures arising from assessments of joint urban area plans related to this RPO should be implemented.</p>	<p>Final RSES 31-1-2020</p> <p>(b) To support the preparation of a cross-boundary Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP) for Carlow Town by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council having regard to its location within the combined functional area of both local authorities.</p> <p>(i) The Joint UAP provide a coordinated planning framework to identify and deliver strategic sites and regeneration areas for the future physical, economic and social development of Carlow to ensure it achieves targeted compact growth of a minimum of 30% and ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken to the future growth and development of the town to ensure that it has the capacity to grow sustainably and secure investment as a Key Town. The Joint UAP shall identify a boundary for the plan area and strategic housing and employment development areas and infrastructure investment requirements to promote greater co-ordination and sequential delivery of serviced lands for development. Regard shall be had to the respective housing, retail and other strategies that may be in place. The selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment. This could be achieved through a coordinated management plan in collaboration between EMRA, Laois County Council, IFI and NPWS that could address the key issues of visitor pressure, supporting infrastructure pressure and management of the spread of invasive species.</p> <p>(ii) The Assembly will foster collaboration in the allocation of funds to support and enable cross boundary collaboration in the Greater Carlow and Graiguecullen Urban Area in the delivery of strategic infrastructure.</p> <p>(iii) There shall be consistency of approach on land use terminology across strategies prepared by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council for the cross-boundary Joint Local Area Plan.</p> <p>(iv) The distribution of population between the two local authorities should be decided by both local authorities in the joint local area plan.</p>	<p>SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES</p>
<p>RPO 15 (former RPO 10): Tralee</p>	<p>a. To sustainably strengthen the role of Tralee as a regional economic driver, key settlement in the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle and on the Atlantic Economic Corridor and build upon inherent strengths as an administrative capital, centre of skills and education, innovation, enterprise growth, culture and tourism accessible to regional airport, port, rail and strategic road network assets.</p> <p>b. To seek investment to sustainably support strengthening these attributes and infrastructure subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments, including key inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) on the strategic road network to the Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas and Atlantic Economic Corridor.</p> <p>c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.</p> <p>d. Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive Lee Estuary.</p>	<p>(a) To sustainably strengthen the role of Tralee as a self-sustaining regional economic driver, key settlement in the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle and on the Atlantic Economic Corridor and build upon inherent strengths as an administrative capital, centre of skills and education, innovation, enterprise growth, culture and tourism accessible to regional airport, port, rail and strategic road network assets.</p> <p>(b) To seek investment to sustainably support strengthening these attributes and infrastructure subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments, including key inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) on the strategic road network to the Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas, and the Atlantic Economic Corridor and between Tralee-Killarney and Killorglin (Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle).</p> <p>(c) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity.</p> <p>(d) Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive Lee Estuary.</p> <p>(e) To support higher education and further education and training investment and investment in the development of IT Tralee's campus and R & D facilities.</p> <p>(f) To support the regeneration of opportunity sites Island of Geese, Fels Point, underused, vacant or derelict town centre lands for residential and enterprise development to facilitate population and employment growth.</p> <p>(g) To support the development and delivery of infrastructure for the delivery of additional employment through modern office, enterprise and manufacturing space.</p> <p>(h) To support Tralee as an urban coastal tourism destination while protecting the natural resources on which it relies.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO further strengthen this RPO in seeking to sustainably strengthen the role of Tralee, which is positive for PHH and MA.</p> <p>The support for regeneration of opportunity sites for residential and enterprise development should be subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments. It is noted that a Tralee Town Centre West and The Island of Geese Masterplan has been prepared. It is noted that an ecological baseline assessment of the Island of Geese site was prepared as part of the Masterplan. Therefore, any mitigation arising from this assessment should be implemented as part of the development of this site. It is also noted that the Island of Geese site and the Fels site are located within areas that have a risk of flooding and as such a Flood Risk Assessment should be undertaken on any future developments at these sites.</p> <p>The support for an urban coastal tourism destination is positive for PHH and MA as it seeks to bring employment opportunities and enhance recreational and amenity facilities. However, associated infrastructural development can have significant potential for negative impacts on BFF, W, LS, AQ, CF and Lands through greenfield and brownfield development, habitat loss and disturbance and emissions to air, soil and water. Furthermore, increased footfall to access key built and natural heritage features can also damage assets in the long-term and as such the visitor pressure in key tourism areas needs to be closely monitored and aligned with clear visitor strategies for high interest sites.</p> <p>Support for infrastructure to support the Kerry Hub - Knowledge Triangle should also have regard to the sensitivities surrounding Killorglin, Tralee and Killarney, all of which are located in close proximity to European Sites. While such support is positive for PHH and MA, it is important that services such as transport have capacity to cater for any increased in traffic arising from the development of the Hub.</p> <p>Planning of any new development should be subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments (SEA, EIA, AA, EcIA).</p> <p>Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and subject to detailed environmental assessment.</p> <p>Apply RPO 9 and 52.</p> <p>Any mitigation measures arising from assessments of masterplans related to this RPO should be implemented.</p>	<p>(a) To sustainably strengthen the role of Tralee as a self-sustaining regional economic driver, key settlement in the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle and on the Atlantic Economic Corridor and build upon inherent strengths as an administrative capital, centre of skills and education, innovation, enterprise growth, culture and tourism accessible to regional airport, port, rail and strategic road network assets;</p> <p>(b) To seek investment to sustainably support strengthening these attributes and infrastructure subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments, including key inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) on the strategic road network to the Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas, the Atlantic Economic Corridor and the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle;</p> <p>(c) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity;</p> <p>(d) Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive Lee Estuary;</p> <p>(e) To support higher and further education and training investment, and investment in the development of IT Tralee's campus and R&D facilities;</p> <p>(f) To support the regeneration of opportunity sites, such as the Island of Geese, Fels Point, and underused, vacant or derelict town centre lands for residential and enterprise development to facilitate population and employment growth;</p> <p>(g) To support the development and delivery of infrastructure for the delivery of additional employment through modern office, enterprise and manufacturing space;</p> <p>(h) To support Tralee as an urban coastal tourism destination while protecting the natural resources on which it relies.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>RPO 16 (former RPO 20): Wexford</p>	<p>a. To develop supporting industrial, commercial infrastructure and residential development in Wexford Town for the Port function at Rosslare Europort;</p> <p>b. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times;</p> <p>c. To support development of freight rail services and facilities at Rosslare Europort;</p> <p>d. Support development of the Multi-Campus TUSE is a key driver for the economic and social development</p> <p>e. In the town with a focus on educational attainment and lifelong learning</p> <p>f. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Wexford subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p> <p>g. To improve the Public Realm and attractiveness of the Town Centre through urban regeneration of key locations</p> <p>h. Transport measures through a Local Transport Plan including retention and expansion of the Town Bus Network and rural transport services into the town.</p>	<p>a) To strengthen the role of Wexford as a self-sustaining regional economic driver and Key Town on the Eastern Corridor. The RSES seeks to leverage its strategic location and accessibility to Rosslare Europort and to build upon its inherent strengths including digital connectivity, skills, innovation and enterprise, tourism, culture and retail services.</p> <p>b) To develop supporting industrial, commercial infrastructure and residential development in Wexford Town for the Port function at Rosslare Europort;</p> <p>c) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services including increased line speeds to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times;</p> <p>d) To support development of additional capacity at Rosslare Europort and provision of freight rail services and facilities to support sustainable increases in port operations;</p> <p>e) Support development of the Wexford Campus as part of the Multi-Campus TUSE is a key driver for the economic and social development in the town with a focus on educational attainment and lifelong learning</p> <p>f) It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Wexford subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p> <p>g) To improve the Public Realm and attractiveness of the Town Centre through urban regeneration of key locations</p> <p>h) Transport measures through a Local Transport Plan including retention and expansion of the Town Bus Network, improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure and rural transport services into the town.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO further strengthen the role of Wexford as a self-sustaining regional economic driver, which is positive for PHH and MA. Development to improve rail infrastructure including rail freight links is also positive for PHH and MA along with CF and AQ. However, all such development should be subject to the outcome of the planning process and the necessary environmental assessments.</p> <p>d.) supports additional capacity at Rosslare Europort. As outlined in RPO 142 any expansion of activities at ports will require a feasibility study to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites.</p> <p>Improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure is also welcome as part of the Local Transport Plan, however such infrastructure should be subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>	<p>a) To strengthen the role of Wexford as a strategic location, a self-sustaining regional economic driver and Key Town on the Eastern Corridor. The RSES seeks to leverage its strategic location and accessibility to Rosslare Europort and to build upon its inherent strengths including digital connectivity, skills, innovation and enterprise, tourism, culture and retail services.</p> <p>b) To develop supporting industrial, commercial infrastructure and residential development in Wexford Town for the Port function at Rosslare Europort.</p> <p>c) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services including increased line speeds to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times;</p> <p>d) To support development of additional capacity at Rosslare Europort and provision of freight rail services and facilities to support sustainable increases in port operations;</p> <p>e) Support development of the Wexford Campus as part of the Multi-Campus TUSE is a key driver for the economic and social development in the town with a focus on educational attainment and lifelong learning</p> <p>f) To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Wexford subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p> <p>g) To improve the public realm and attractiveness of the Town Centre through urban regeneration of key locations</p> <p>h) Transport measures through a Local Transport Plan including retention and expansion of the town bus network, improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure and rural transport services into the town.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>RPO 17 (former RPO 21) Clonmel</p>	<p>a. To seek improvements and upgrading of the N24 Waterford Limerick strategic route;</p> <p>b. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times</p> <p>c. To support planned place-making initiatives identified – redevelopment of Kichham Barracks and Clonmel Flights of Discovery</p> <p>d. To support the continued development of Clonmel as a Tourist Centre in Irelands Ancient East and Munster Vales</p> <p>e. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Clonmel subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>	<p>a. It is an objective to support Clonmel as a self-sustaining regional economic driver and as a key location for investment and choice in the region, to support the enhanced development of Clonmel based on its strategic location relative to Limerick Shannon, Cork and Waterford MASP areas, as well as its role as a centre of employment and economic activity within the region.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to develop Clonmel's economic synergies and potential within the Limerick Waterford east west axis through improvements and upgrading of the N24 Waterford Limerick strategic route and improvements in public transportation;</p> <p>c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times</p> <p>d. To support planned place-making initiatives identified – redevelopment of Kichham Barracks and Clonmel Flights of Discovery</p> <p>e. To support the continued development of Clonmel as a Tourist Centre in Irelands Ancient East and Munster Vales</p> <p>f. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Clonmel subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO further strengthen the role of Clonmel as a significant regional economic driver, which is positive for PHH and MA. Development to improve transport infrastructure is also positive for PHH and MA along with CF and AQ. However, all such development should be subject to the outcome of the planning process and the necessary environmental assessments.</p>	<p>a. To support Clonmel as a self-sustaining regional economic driver and as a key location for investment and choice in the region, to support the enhanced development of Clonmel based on its strategic location relative to Limerick-Shannon, Cork and Waterford MASP areas, as well as its role as a centre of employment and economic activity within the region.</p> <p>b. To develop Clonmel's economic synergies and potential within the Limerick Waterford east west axis through improvements and upgrading of the N24 Waterford Limerick strategic route and improvements in public transportation.</p> <p>c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times</p> <p>d. To support planned place-making initiatives identified – redevelopment of Kichham Barracks and Clonmel Flights of Discovery</p> <p>e. To support the continued development of Clonmel as a Tourist Centre in Irelands Ancient East and Munster Vales</p> <p>f. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Clonmel subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments</p> <p>g. It is an objective to continue to realise the potential economic benefits of higher education activity in Clonmel and to support existing higher education providers—noting also the potential collaboration with the future TUSE—in further enhancing the impact of higher education on the town and wider region.</p>	<p>The changes are positive for PHH. No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.</p>

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
RPO 18 (former RPO 11): Killarney	a. To sustainably strengthen the role of Killarney as a centre of excellence in tourism, recreation and amenity sectors, promote its role as a leader in these sectors in particular training and education and strengthen its overall multisectoral dynamic as a key settlement in the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle accessible to regional airport, port, rail and road assets. b. To seek investment to sustainably support its compact growth and regeneration, attributes and infrastructure, including key inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) on the strategic road network between Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas and Atlantic Economic Corridor subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.	(a): To sustainably strengthen the role of Killarney as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context, a centre of excellence in tourism, recreation and amenity sectors, promote its role as a leader in these sectors in particular training and education and strengthen its overall multisectoral dynamic as a key settlement in the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle accessible to regional airport, port, rail and road assets. (b): To seek investment to sustainably support its compact growth and regeneration, attributes and infrastructure, including key inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) on the strategic road network between Cork and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Areas, and the Atlantic Economic Corridor and between Tralee-Killarney and Killorglin (Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle) subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. (c) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity. (d): To support infrastructure investment and the regeneration of opportunity sites including the Sara Lee, Aras Phadraig and St Finians. (e): To seek investment in infrastructure that provides both for the resident population and extensive influx of visitors. (f): To support investment in infrastructure and the development of lands to the North of the existing by-pass in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development objectives including the appropriate master-plans. (g): Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the downstream freshwater ecosystem in the National Park (River Deenagh, Lough Leane).	The amendments to this RPO further strengthen this RPO in seeking to sustainably strengthen the role of Killarney, which is positive for PHH and MA. The support for regeneration of opportunity sites and investment in lands to the north of the existing by-pass should be subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments. Also, any mitigation arising from masterplans of such sites should be implemented as part of the development of this site. As noted in the RFR the Sara Lee, Aras Phadraig and St Finians site are not located within areas that have a risk of flooding. However, all three sites are located in close proximity to European Sites. Planning of any new development should be subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments (SEA, EIA, AA, ECIA). (g) is welcome as it supports the phased growth of the town to ensure sufficient wastewater capacity. Support for infrastructure to support the Kerry Hub - Knowledge Triangle should also have regard to the sensitivities surrounding Killorglin, Tralee and Killarney, all of which are located in close proximity to European Sites. While such support is positive for PHH and MA, it is important that services such as transport have capacity to cater for any increased in traffic arising from the development of the Hub. Mitigation Selection of sites for regeneration and expansion should be supported by a quality site selection process and environmental assessment that addresses environmental concerns such as landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity (in particular bats) as a minimum. Any mitigation measures arising from assessments of masterplans related to this RPO should be implemented.	(a): To sustainably strengthen the role of Killarney as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context, a centre of excellence in tourism, recreation and amenity sectors, to promote its role as a leader in these sectors, in particular training and education, and strengthen its overall multi-sectoral dynamic as a key settlement in the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle accessible to regional airport, port, rail and road assets; (b): To seek investment to sustainably support its compact growth and regeneration, attributes and infrastructure, including key inter-regional connectivity (transport networks and digital) on the strategic road network between Cork and Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Areas, the Atlantic Economic Corridor and the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle, subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments; (c) To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity; (d): To support infrastructure investment and the regeneration of opportunity sites including the Sara Lee, Aras Phadraig and St Finians; (e): To seek investment in infrastructure that provides for both the resident population and extensive influx of visitors; (f): To support investment in infrastructure and the development of lands to the north of the existing by-pass in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development objectives including the appropriate master plans in consultation with statutory stakeholders; (g): Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the downstream freshwater ecosystem in the National Park (River Deenagh, Lough Leane).	No change.
RPO 20 (former RPO 15): Nenagh	a. It is an objective to support and promote the role of Nenagh as a driver of county and regional prosperity by harnessing synergies to the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area and its proximity to the Atlantic Corridor; its strong urban and economic structure and other competitive advantages. b. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Nenagh subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.	a. It is an objective to support and promote the role of Nenagh as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context and driver of county and regional prosperity by harnessing synergies to the Limerick -Shannon Metropolitan Area, Galway MASP, and its proximity to the Atlantic Corridor; its strong urban and economic structure and other competitive advantages. b. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Nenagh subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. It is an objective to identify a location for a new centre of excellence for sustainable energy. c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.	The inclusion of the objective to identify a location for a new centre of excellent for sustainable energy is indirectly positive for PHH, MA and CF. However, it should be subject to site selection and environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. Impacts associated with improved rail infrastructure have already been assessed in the draft RSES and apply to the amendments made to this RPO.	a. To support and promote the role of Nenagh as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context and driver of county and regional prosperity by harnessing synergies to the Limerick -Shannon MASP, Galway MASP, its proximity to the Atlantic Corridor, its strong urban and economic structure and other competitive advantages. b. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Nenagh subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. It is an objective to identify a location for a new centre of excellence for sustainable energy. c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times.	No change.
RPO 21 (former RPO 16): Thurles	a. It is an objective to support and promote the role of Thurles as a driver of county and regional prosperity by harnessing the employment and economic potential of the town together with Lisheen National Bio Economy Hub and the emergence of a new economic model focused on two principal pillars: low carbon growth and resource efficiency. b. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Thurles subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. c. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times. d. Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth does not contribute to degradation of the water environment and in particular the River Suir.	a. It is an objective to support and promote the role of Thurles as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context and driver of county and regional prosperity by harnessing the employment and economic potential of the town together with Lisheen, Thurles National Bio Economy Hub and the emergence of a new economic model focused on two principal pillars: low carbon growth and resource efficiency, while leveraging its strategic location and accessibility on inter regional road and rail networks. b. It is an objective to support and promote the role of Thurles as a centre for international and national standard sporting facilities. This shall build on the opportunities and landholdings available to the third level institutions and sporting bodies within the town. c. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Thurles subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. d. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times. e. Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth does not contribute to degradation of the water environment and in particular the River Suir	The inclusion of the objective to support and promote Thurles as a centre for sporting facilities is positive for PHH and MA in providing employment opportunities and promoting sport. However, it is noted that Thurles is in close proximity to the Lower River Suir SAC which includes QIs of Otter, FPM, River, Brook and Sea lamprey and habitats including old sessil oak woodland and alluvial forest. Development of infrastructure generally can give rise to negative impacts on the receiving environment through construction and operation e.g. loss of suspended solids, pollution incidents, loss and disturbance to habitats and species and general deterioration in supporting parameters of air and water quality. Indirect negative impacts may also arise where additional densities are attracted as this may require additional housing, services etc. which may add cumulatively to pressures on the receiving environment. Any such proposals must therefore be subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. Similarly, any development to improve rail infrastructure should be subject to the outcome of the planning process and the necessary environmental assessments. The reference to environmental designations and the nutrient sensitivity of the River Suir is welcomed.	a. To support and promote the role of Thurles as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context and driver of county and regional prosperity by harnessing the employment and economic potential of the town together with Lisheen, Thurles National Bio Economy Hub and the emergence of a new economic model focused on two principal pillars: low carbon growth and resource efficiency, while leveraging its strategic location and accessibility on inter-regional road and rail networks. b. To support and promote the role of Thurles as a centre for international and national standard sporting facilities. This builds on the opportunities and landholdings available to the third level institutions and sporting bodies within the town. c. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Thurles including support for the delivery of projects submitted under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. d. To strengthen 'steady state' investment in existing rail infrastructure and seek investment for improved infrastructure and services to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level in order to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity including improved frequency and journey times. e. Future growth of the town should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and Irish Water to ensure that sufficient wastewater capacity is accounted for and that further growth avoids negative impacts on the nutrient sensitive River Suir.	No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.
RPO 22 (former RPO 17): Newcastle West	a. It is an objective to support and promote the role of Newcastle West as a Key Town. In particular, it is an objective to promote the opportunity for inter-regional collaborations across county boundaries with Abbeyfeale, Listowel and Rathkeale and locations identified in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary which offer collective strengths and potential for project partnerships to drive sustainable economic growth in the West Limerick/North Kerry area. b. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessment.	a. It is an objective to support and promote the role of Newcastle West as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context. In particular, it is an objective to promote the opportunity for inter-regional collaborations across county boundaries with Abbeyfeale, Listowel and Rathkeale and locations identified in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary which offer collective strengths and potential for project partnerships to drive sustainable economic growth in the West Limerick/North Kerry area. b. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. c. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. d. It is an objective to support and promote the tourism potential of Newcastle West's historical heritage to facilitate the expansion of the existing tourism offer and to develop connectivity to and synergies with Newcastle West and the Great Southern Greenway. e. It is an objective to support the identification of opportunities for investment in incubation and innovation infrastructure for ICT and related companies and capitalise on Newcastle West's ability to accommodate remote working, enterprise start-ups and up scaling companies.	The amendments to this RPO further strengthen this RPO in seeking to sustainably strengthen the role of Newcastle West, which is positive for PHH and MA. The support for job creation and economic growth is positive for PHH and MA. Similarly, the support for tourism is positive for PHH and MA as it seeks to bring employment opportunities and enhance recreational and amenity facilities. However, associated infrastructural development can have significant potential for negative impacts on BFF, W, LS, AQ, CF and Lands through greenfield and brownfield development, habitat loss and disturbance and emissions to air, soil and water. Furthermore, increased footfall to access key built and natural heritage features can also damage assets in the long-term and as such the visitor pressure in key tourism areas needs to be closely monitored and aligned with clear visitor strategies for high interest sites. Although not within or adjacent to any European sites, Newcastle West is surrounded to the north and west by the Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA and this sensitivity must be considered in the context of any development, especially tourism related activities. Planning of any new development should be subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments (SEA, EIA, AA, ECIA).	a. To support and promote the role of Newcastle West as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context. In particular, it is an objective to promote the opportunity for inter-regional collaborations across county boundaries with Abbeyfeale, Listowel and Rathkeale and locations identified in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary, which offer collective strengths and potential for project partnerships to drive sustainable economic growth in the West Limerick/North Kerry area. b. To support the initiatives of the Atlantic Economic Corridor to realise the full potential of the Newcastle West enterprise assets to support job creation, improve competitiveness, attract investment and create future economic growth. c. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. d. To support and promote the tourism potential of Newcastle West's historical heritage to facilitate the expansion of the existing tourism offer and to develop connectivity to and synergies with Newcastle West and the Great Southern Greenway. e. To support the identification of opportunities for investment in incubation and innovation infrastructure for ICT and related companies and capitalise on Newcastle West's ability to accommodate remote working, enterprise start-ups and up scaling companies.	No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.
RPO 23 (former RPO 23): Dungarvan	a. To seek improvements and upgrading of the N25 Waterford to Cork route; b. Support for enhanced provision of bus services to enable improved inter-regional connectivity to attract more passengers to public transport and away from use of private motor cars c. To support the development of Dungarvan as the Gaeltacht Service Town for Gaeltacht na nDéise d. To support the continued development of cycling and walking infrastructure as part of Go Dungarvan Smarter Travel Programme. e. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Dungarvan subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.	a. To strengthen the role of Dungarvan as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context and in its sub-regional role as a Gaeltacht Service Town, leveraging its strategic location along the Waterford Cork N25 Route and to build upon its inherent strengths including digital connectivity, skills, innovation and enterprise, tourism, culture and retail services. b. To seek improvements and upgrading of the N25 Waterford to Cork route, the N72 Dungarvan to Mallow and the R672 linking the Key Towns of Clonmel an Dungarvan; c. Support for enhanced provision of bus services to enable improved inter-regional connectivity to attract more passengers to public transport and away from use of private motor cars. c. To support the development of Dungarvan as the Gaeltacht Service Town for Gaeltacht na nDéise d. To support the continued development of cycling and walking infrastructure as part of Go Dungarvan Smarter Travel Programme. e. It is an objective to support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Dungarvan subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.	The amendments to this RPO seek improvements in the road network infrastructure, which is positive for PHH and MA. It is noted that the R672 and the N72 cross the European sites of the Blackwater River SAC, Blackwater Callows SPA and the Lower River Suir SAC and as such there is potential for adverse effects if improvements or upgrades are not not sensitive to this. There is potential for negative impacts to W, BFF, CH, Lands also and as such should be subject to route selection studies, the necessary environmental assessments and the outcome of the planning process.	a. To strengthen the role of Dungarvan as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context and in its sub-regional role as a Gaeltacht Service Town, leveraging its strategic location along the Waterford Cork N25 Route and to build upon its inherent strengths including historical, cultural and architectural heritage, digital connectivity, skills, innovation and enterprise, tourism (in particular the Waterford Greenway and its potential sustainable expansion), culture and retail services. In respect of its importance to the environment, to tourism, to fishing, and to aquaculture (niche industries supporting rural employment), this RSES supports the environmentally sustainable development and treatment of Dungarvan Harbour and coastline. b. To seek improvements and upgrading of the N25 Waterford to Cork route, the N72 Dungarvan to Mallow and the R672 linking the Key Towns of Clonmel an Dungarvan; c. To support the development of Dungarvan as the Gaeltacht Service Town for Gaeltacht na nDéise d. To support for enhanced provision of bus services to enable improved intra-regional and inter-regional connectivity to attract more passengers to public transport and away from use of private motor cars e. To support the continued development of cycling and walking infrastructure as part of Go Dungarvan Smarter Travel Programme and to support the accessibility of the public realm for vulnerable road/path users and persons with disabilities. f. To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Dungarvan (including amenities and facilities for the community and voluntary sector) subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments. g. Support the development of Dungarvan as a sub-regional centre for education and training, including lifelong learning, by building on existing links with international third-level education providers and WIT. h. Support investment in flood defence measures.	The changes are positive for PHH and MA, however as outlined in previous assessments of this RPO, the environmental sensitivities of the surrounding area including the European sites need to be taken into consideration in the planning of all infrastructure. Protective policies RPO 1, RPO 193 will apply.

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RPO 26 (former RPO 24) Towns and Villages	<p>a. The RSES strongly supports strengthening the viability of our towns and rural settlements as a key objective of the RSES including the protection of essential rural services such as Post Offices, shops, medical facilities and fuel outlets.</p> <p>b. Development Plans should tailor the appropriate planning response by reference to the scale, nature and location of the settlement. Local Authorities should consider the identification of settlements which can play an enhanced role at sub regional level to drive the development of their area.</p> <p>c. Support the development of guidelines for cluster housing development within the existing footprint of our rural settlements.</p> <p>d. Support co-ordination between Local Authorities, Irish Water and other stakeholders to deliver investment in the sustainable development of water and waste-water and other infrastructure for towns and villages, prioritising retro-fitting and improvement in the quality of existing services.</p> <p>e. Seek investment in the sustainable development of a "New Homes in Small Towns and Villages" initiative in the Southern Region and the delivery of actions by Local Authorities, Irish Water, communities and other stakeholders in the provision of services and serviced sites to create build your own home opportunities within the existing footprint of rural settlements.</p>	<p>a. The RSES strongly supports strengthening the viability of our towns and rural settlements as a key objective of the RSES including the protection of essential mixed-use rural services such as Post Offices, shops and medical facilities and fuel outlets.</p> <p>b. Seek investment and initiatives that deliver smart technologies, revitalisation of mixed-use town and village centre streets, pilot initiatives for regional good practice in renewal and re-use of buildings.</p> <p>c. Seek investment and the sustainable delivery of holistic infrastructures in towns and villages to support the service role of settlements along the region's tourism corridors.</p> <p>d. Development Plans should tailor the appropriate planning response by reference to the scale, nature and location of the settlement. Local Authorities should consider the identification of settlements which can play an enhanced role at sub regional level to drive the development of their area.</p> <p>e. Support the development of guidelines for cluster housing development within the existing footprint of our rural settlements.</p> <p>f. Support co-ordination between Local Authorities, Irish Water and other stakeholders to deliver investment in the sustainable development of water and waste-water and other infrastructure for towns and villages, prioritising retro-fitting and improvement in the quality of existing services.</p> <p>g. Seek investment in the sustainable development of a "New Homes in Small Towns and Villages" initiative in the Southern Region and the delivery of actions by Local Authorities, Irish Water, communities and other stakeholders in the provision of services and serviced sites to create build your own home opportunities within the existing footprint of rural settlements. Local authorities shall identify and prioritise a programme for the provision and implementation of serviced sites within towns and villages as an objective of Development Plans.</p>	<p>The additions to this RPO are positive for PHH and MA as they seek to support development of services, smart technologies and to revitalise town and village centres.</p>	<p>It is an objective:</p> <p>b) To strongly support strengthening the viability of our towns and rural settlements, as a key objective of the RSES, including the protection of essential rural services such as post offices, shops, and medical facilities.</p> <p>c) To seek investment and initiatives that deliver smart technologies, revitalisation of mixed-use town and village centre streets, and pilot initiatives for regional good practice in renewal and re-use of buildings.</p> <p>d) To seek investment, the timely delivery and the sustainable delivery of holistic infrastructures in towns and villages to support their service role along the region's tourism corridors consistent with the settlement hierarchies as set out in relevant development plans.</p> <p>e) To ensure that development plans tailor the appropriate planning response by reference to the scale, nature and location of the settlement. Local authorities will identify settlements which can play an enhanced role at sub-regional level to drive the development of their area.</p> <p>f) To support the development of guidelines for cluster housing development within the existing footprint of our rural settlements.</p> <p>g) To support co-ordination between local authorities, Irish Water and other stakeholders to deliver investment in the sustainable development of water and wastewater and other infrastructure for towns and villages, prioritising retrofitting and improvement in the quality of existing services.</p> <p>h) To seek investment in the sustainable development of a "New Homes in Small Towns and Villages" initiative in the Region and the delivery of actions by local authorities, Irish Water, communities and other stakeholders in the provision of services and serviced sites to create "build your own home" opportunities within the existing footprint of rural settlements. Local authorities identify and prioritise the provision and implementation of serviced sites within towns and villages as an objective of development plans. These programmes shall ensure a sustainable and appropriate spread of development between towns and villages within their areas</p>	<p>No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 27 (former RPO 25) Rural	<p>Support rural economies and rural communities through implementing a sustainable rural housing policy in the region which provides a distinction between areas under urban influence and rural areas elsewhere through the implementation of National Policy Objective 19 in Local Authority County Development Plan Core Strategies.</p> <p>Local authorities shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include policies for the protection of the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements as key priority within Development Plans; • Having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements; Core Strategies shall identify areas under urban influence and set the appropriate sustainable rural housing policy response which facilitates the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic, social or local exceptional need to live in a rural area and sitting, environmental and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans. • Having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements, in rural areas elsewhere, facilitate the sustainable provision of single housing in the countryside based on sitting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans. • Provide for flexibility in zoning and density requirements to ensure that rural villages provide attractive easily developed options for housing 	<p>Support rural economies and rural communities through implementing a sustainable rural housing policy in the region which provides a distinction between areas under urban influence and rural areas elsewhere through the implementation of National Policy Objective 19 in Local Authority County Development Plan Core Strategies.</p> <p>Local authorities shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include policies for the protection of the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements as key priority within Development Plans; • Having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements; Core Strategies shall identify areas under urban influence and set the appropriate sustainable rural housing policy response which facilitates the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic, social or local exceptional need to live in a rural area and sitting, environmental and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans. • Having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements, in rural areas elsewhere, facilitate the sustainable provision of single housing in the countryside based on sitting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans. • Provide for flexibility in zoning and density requirements to ensure that rural villages provide attractive easily developed options for housing 	<p>The amendment includes for 'or local' to the exceptional need to live in a rural area. Due to the potential effects arising from one off housing and to comply with national land use planning and water quality policy, it is recommended that this additional wording be removed.</p> <p>It is understood that the DHPLG will issue national guidelines on the criteria to be considered and how they should be applied when deciding upon the provision of single housing. Local Authorities will be required to comply with such guidelines when considering applications for single housing. If the DHPLG commence the process of developing national guidance on how the criterion of 'economic or social need' should be applied when deciding upon the provision of single housing, the SRA and other Regional Assemblies should engage in this process.</p> <p>Mitigation: Remove the wording 'or local'.</p>	<p>To support rural economies and rural communities through implementing a sustainable rural housing policy in the Region which provides a distinction between areas under urban influence and other rural areas through the implementation of National Policy Objective 19 regarding Local Authority County Development Plan Core Strategies.</p> <p>Local authorities shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include policies for the protection of the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements as key priority within Development plans • Have regard for the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements; Core Strategies shall identify areas under urban influence and set the appropriate sustainable rural housing policy response which facilitates the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic, social or local exceptional need to live in a rural area and sitting, environmental and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans • Have regard for the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements, in rural areas elsewhere, facilitate the sustainable provision of single housing in the countryside based on sitting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans • Provide for flexibility in zoning and density requirements to ensure that rural villages provide attractive easily developed options for housing 	<p>As outlined in the previous assessments, there is potential for effects from one-off housing.</p> <p>It is understood that the DHPLG will issue national guidelines on the criteria to be considered and how they should be applied when deciding upon the provision of single housing. Local Authorities will be required to comply with such guidelines when considering applications for single housing. If the DHPLG commence the process of developing national guidance on how the criterion of 'economic or social need' should be applied when deciding upon the provision of single housing, the SRA and other Regional Assemblies should engage in this process.</p>
RPO 29 (former RPO 27) Rural Settlement Networks	<p>Support the concept of rural settlement networks and support the sustainable development of infrastructures to assist collaborative projects and sharing of assets and strengths to drive sustainable population and enterprise growth in sub-regional areas.</p>	<p>(a): Support the concept of rural settlement networks and support the sustainable development of infrastructures to assist collaborative projects and sharing of assets and strengths to drive sustainable population and enterprise growth in sub-regional areas.</p> <p>(b): RSES recognises the shared critical mass of population, strategic assets and economic potential of inter-urban networks working in collaborative partnerships as regionally significant drivers of growth and supports investment in infrastructure and initiatives to sustainably deliver improved multi-modal transport connectivity and high-speed, high-quality digital connectivity between them.</p>	<p>The amendment to this RPO supports improving multi modal transport and digital connectivity, which is positive for PHH and MA. As already identified in the assessment, any development of such infrastructure has the potential to impact on the broader environment and therefore should be subject to route selection studies and the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.</p>	<p>(a) To support the concept of rural settlement networks and support the sustainable development of infrastructures to assist collaborative projects and sharing of assets and strengths to drive sustainable population and enterprise growth in sub-regional areas.</p> <p>(b): To recognise the shared critical mass of population, strategic assets and economic potential of inter-urban networks working in collaborative partnerships as regionally significant drivers of growth and supports investment in infrastructure and initiatives to sustainably deliver improved multi-modal transport connectivity and high-speed, high-quality digital connectivity between them.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
RPO 30 (new at MA Stage former RPO C) Inter-Urban Networks as Regional Drivers of Collaborable and Growth	<p>The RSES recognises and supports the role of existing and potential inter-urban networks as regionally significant drivers of collaboration and growth. The RSES supports infrastructure investment and initiatives including enhanced public transport connectivity and optimising the potential for rail freight, to be developed further through Development Plans of the following existing and further networks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metropolitan Area collaboration • Atlantic Economic Corridor • Eastern Corridor (Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor extending to Rosslare Europort including Gorey-Enniscorthy-Wexford& network linkage to New Ross/Waterford). • Waterford-Kilkenny-Carlow-Dublin M9/Rail Network/Axis • Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle • North Kerry-West Limerick-Shannon Estuary-Clare • Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) • North Cork Agri Food Network • West Cork Marine Network • Cork Ring Network • Limerick- Waterford Transport and Economic network/axis 	<p>The RSES recognises and supports the role of existing and potential inter-urban networks as regionally significant drivers of collaboration and growth. The addition of "enhanced public transport connectivity and optimising the potential for rail freight" is welcome and positive for CF and AQ.</p> <p>The national road network is economically and socially important at regional and national level to ensure intra- and inter-connectivity with long-term positive impacts for MA and PHH. However, the construction and operational impacts arising from any linear infrastructure development proposals must be subject to robust feasibility, route selection, appropriate environmental assessment (EIA, AA EclA and FRA), and the planning process at the project level.</p>	<p>This objective supports existing and future inter urban networks as regionally significant drivers for collaboration and growth. The addition of "enhanced public transport connectivity and optimising the potential for rail freight" is welcome and positive for CF and AQ.</p> <p>The national road network is economically and socially important at regional and national level to ensure intra- and inter-connectivity with long-term positive impacts for MA and PHH. However, the construction and operational impacts arising from any linear infrastructure development proposals must be subject to robust feasibility, route selection, appropriate environmental assessment (EIA, AA EclA and FRA), and the planning process at the project level.</p>	<p>To recognise and support the role of existing and potential inter-urban networks as regional significant drivers of collaboration and growth. The RSES supports the further sustainable development of infrastructure investment and initiatives, through development plans of the following existing and further networks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford Metropolitan Area collaboration • Atlantic Economic Corridor • Eastern Corridor (Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor extending to Rosslare Europort including Gorey-Enniscorthy-Wexford & strong connectivity to New Ross, Waterford/Belview Port)). <p>Examples of other regional and sub -regional drivers for collaboration and growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limerick- Waterford Transport and Economic network/axis (strengthened multi-modal connectivity between the Limerick-Shannon and Waterford Metropolitan Areas with sustainable upgrades to the N24 corridor to connect the Atlantic Economic Corridor with the Eastern Corridor and connect port and airport assets) • Waterford-Kilkenny-Carlow-Dublin M9/Rail network/axis • Cork to Limerick Transport and Economic Network/axis • Cork to Waterford Transport and Economic Network/axis (sustainable upgrades to the N25 corridor) • Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle • North Kerry-West Limerick-Shannon Estuary-Clare • Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) • North Cork Agri Food Network • West Cork Marine Network • Cork Ring Network 	<p>The changes to this RPO refer to networks referenced in RPOs 158 and RPO 159, which are assessed separately.</p> <p>No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 31 (former RPO 28): Sustainable Place Framework	<p>Local Authorities, through Development Plan and Local Area Plan objectives, shall make provision for and implement a Placemaking Framework to ensure the development of quality places through integrated planning and consistently excellent design</p>	<p>Local Authorities, through Development Plan and Local Area Plan objectives, shall make provision for and implement a Placemaking Framework to ensure the development of quality places through integrated planning and consistently excellent design. The role of education, learning and health in providing inclusive, dynamic and adaptable urban environments are required to be included in Sustainable Place Frameworks.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>Local authorities, through development plan and local area plan objectives, shall provide for and implement a Sustainable Place Framework to ensure the development of quality places through integrated planning and consistently excellent design. The role of education, learning and health in providing inclusive, dynamic and adaptable urban environments must be included in sustainable place frameworks. The importance of consultation with local communities is supported and recognised.</p>	<p>No change.</p>

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RPO 34 (former RPO 31) Regeneration, Brownfield and Infill Development	In pursuit of National Policy Objective 3a, 3b and 3c, the Core Strategy of Local Authority Development Plans shall be accompanied by specific objectives setting out the achievement of urban infill/brownfield development. Development Plans shall be accompanied by specific objectives setting out the achievement of urban infill/brownfield development. Requirements for brownfield regeneration shall consider: • The establishment of a data base with site briefs specifically for brownfield sites zoned for development which will be continually renewed and updated as opportunities arise through active land management processes, so that brownfield re-use can be managed and coordinated across multiple stakeholders; • Target measures to reduce the extent of vacancy within our region's existing building stock and seek investment in refurbishment initiatives to bring underused property assets into use in the residential market; • Target measures and support initiatives that promote retrofitting and improving the quality of the existing building stock, especially energy efficiency, green infrastructure, digital infrastructure, smart technologies to future proof our existing buildings and neighbourhoods. • Local Authorities should Liaise with the Regional Waste Management Office when considering applications for development of brownfield sites that require the offsite disposal of contaminated waste • Proposals for brownfield regeneration in strategic locations including docklands, should be accompanied by a site risk assessment and a clear waste plan for any wastes arising, including consideration of hazardous or contaminated material.	In pursuit of National Policy Objective 3a, 3b and 3c, the Core Strategy of Local Authority Development Plans shall be accompanied by specific objectives setting out the achievement of urban infill/brownfield development. Requirements for brownfield regeneration shall consider: • Seeking initiatives that enable site assembly for regeneration and initiatives that promote regeneration of brownfield lands over greenfield lands across all tiers of urban settlements including smaller towns and rural villages. • Local Authorities through their respective County Development Plans and Local Area Plans will set out policies and objectives to support the reuse/refurbishment of existing disused and derelict rural dwellings for residential purposes and also encourage new uses for disused/derelict farm buildings including residential where appropriate, subject to normal planning considerations. • The establishment of a data base with site briefs specifically for brownfield sites zoned for development which will be continually renewed and updated as opportunities arise through active land management processes, so that brownfield re-use can be managed and coordinated across multiple stakeholders; • Target measures to reduce the extent of vacancy within our region's existing building stock and seek investment in refurbishment initiatives to bring underused property assets into use in the residential market; • Target measures and support initiatives that promote retrofitting and improving the quality of the existing building stock, especially energy efficiency, green infrastructure, digital infrastructure, smart technologies to future proof our existing buildings and neighbourhoods. • Local Authorities should Liaise with the Regional Waste Management Office when considering applications for development of brownfield sites that require the offsite disposal of contaminated waste • In brownfield developments, the preparation of a Construction & Development Waste Management Plan (C&D WMP) should be prepared in the early stages of project development to facilitate suitable arrangements for the proper and authorised management of wastes. • In accordance with the "Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects", published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) and any updated guidelines, Development Plans shall seek that a C&D WMP shall accompany a planning application for projects which exceed specified threshold limits for both public and private sectors with the key objectives to (i) minimise the amount of waste generated as part of the project, (ii) maximise the amount of material for re-use on site, (iii) maximise the amount of material which is sent off site for reuse, recycling or reprocessing and (iv) assess by product options and (v) minimise the amount of material sent to landfill/export. Waste management plans should also consider potential impacts arising from spreading of invasive species. • Proposals for brownfield regeneration in strategic locations including docklands, should be accompanied by a site risk assessment and a clear waste plan for any wastes arising, including consideration of hazardous or contaminated material.	The amendments to this RPO to include preparation of C&D WMP is welcome and positive for MA, BFF and W. The promotion of initiatives for the regeneration of brownfield sites over greenfield sites is also positive from an environmental perspective for the reasons already outlined in the assessment. The introduction of policies for the reuse of derelict rural dwellings is positive from a PHH and MA perspective, but such projects have the potential to impact on cultural heritage and biodiversity e.g. by impacting on bats.	In pursuit of the NPF's NPO 3a, 3b & 3c, the Development plan Core Strategy' should be accompanied by specific objectives setting out the achievement of urban infill/brownfield development. Requirements for brownfield site remediation shall consider: • Seeking initiatives that enable site assembly for regeneration and initiatives that promote regeneration of brownfield lands over greenfield lands across all tiers of urban settlements including smaller towns and rural villages. • Local Authorities through their respective County Development plans and Local Area Plans will set out policies and objectives to support the reuse/refurbishment of existing disused and derelict rural dwellings for residential purposes community or commercial (including social enterprise) and encourage new uses for disused/derelict farm buildings including residential where appropriate, subject to normal planning considerations and ensure that re-use is compatible with environmental and heritage protection. • The establishment of a data base with site briefs specifically for brownfield sites zoned for development which will be continually renewed and updated as opportunities arise through active land management processes, so that brownfield re-use can be managed and co-ordinated across multiple stakeholders; • Target measures to reduce the extent of vacancy within our region's existing building stock and seek investment in refurbishment initiatives to bring underused property assets into use in the residential market; • Target measures and support initiatives that promote retrofitting and improving the quality of the existing building stock, especially energy efficiency, green infrastructure, digital infrastructure, smart technologies to future proof our existing buildings and neighbourhoods. • In brownfield developments, the preparation of a Construction & Development Waste Management Plan (C&D WMP) should be prepared in the early stages of project development to facilitate suitable arrangements for the proper and authorised management of wastes. • In accordance with the "Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects", published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) and any updated guidelines, Development plans shall seek that a C&D WMP shall accompany a planning application for projects which exceed specified threshold limits for both public and private sectors with the key objectives to (i) minimise the amount of waste generated as part of the project, (ii) maximise the amount of material for re-use on site, (iii) maximise the amount of material which is sent off site for reuse, recycling or reprocessing and (iv) assess by product options and (v) minimise the amount of material sent to landfill/export. Waste management plans should also consider potential impacts arising from spreading of invasive species. • Proposals for brownfield regeneration in strategic locations including docklands, should be accompanied by a site risk assessment and a clear waste plan for any wastes arising, including consideration of hazardous or contaminated material.	No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.
RPO 35 (former RPO 32): Support for Compact Growth	Local Authorities, through Development Plan and Local Area Plan policies, shall identify rejuvenation priorities within our region's settlements which demonstrate achievement of National Strategic Outcome: Compact Growth.	(a) Local Authorities, through Development Plan and Local Area Plan policies, shall identify rejuvenation priorities within our region's settlements which demonstrate achievement of National Strategic Outcome: Compact Growth. (b): Development Plans shall state a minimum requirement to deliver at least half (50%) of all new homes that are targeted in the region's three Cities and suburbs of Cork, Limerick and Waterford, within their existing built up footprints (brownfield and greenfield) in accordance with NPF National Policy Objective 3b (c): Development Plans shall state a minimum requirement to deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements other than the cities and suburbs, within their existing built-up footprints brownfield and greenfield in accordance with NPF National Policy Objective 3c.	The amendments to this RPO are in line with the NPF which has already been subject to assessment.	a) Local Authorities, through Development Plan and Local Area Plan policies, shall identify rejuvenation priorities within our region's settlements which demonstrate achievement of National Strategic Outcome: Compact Growth. b) Development Plans shall set out a transitional minimum requirement to deliver at least half (50%) of all new homes that are targeted in the region's three Cities and suburbs of Cork, Limerick and Waterford, within their existing built up footprints in accordance with NPF National Policy Objective 3b. This will be evidence based on availability and deliverability of lands within the existing built up footprints. c): Development Plans shall set out a transitional minimum requirement to deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements other than the cities and suburbs, within their existing built-up footprints in accordance with NPF National Policy Objective 3c. This will be evidence based on availability and deliverability of lands within the existing built up footprints.	No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.
RPO 36 (former RPO 33): Land Development Agency	To support the role of the Land Development Agency	It is an objective to support the role collaboration and delivery of actions in the Region through initiatives of the Land Development Agency which include co-ordinating appropriate State lands for regeneration and development, opening up key sites which are not being used effectively for housing delivery; and driving strategic land assembly, working with both public and private sector land owners. The co-ordination and selection of sites should be based on a process that examines environmental criteria (see also RPO 1).	The amendment to this RPO requires that a site selection process is undertaken for the selection of key sites. This site selection process should consider the key environmental criteria.	To support the role, collaboration and delivery of actions in the Region through initiatives of the Land Development Agency which include co-ordinating appropriate State lands and private owned lands for regeneration and development, opening up key sites which are not being used effectively for housing delivery; and driving strategic land assembly, working with both public and private sector land owners. The co-ordination and selection of sites should be supported by a quality site selection process that includes an assessment of environmental criteria and constraints (see also RPO 1). The site selection process will recommend which sites to bring forward for development.	No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.
RPO 38 (former RPO 35) Retrofitting Initiative Priorities	Local Authorities, through County Development Plan and Local Area Plan objectives, shall identify retrofitting initiative priorities within settlements that grew rapidly without corresponding investment in infrastructure and amenities which demonstrate opportunities for achievement of National Strategic Outcome: Compact Growth.	(a) Local Authorities, through County Development Plan and Local Area Plan objectives, shall identify retrofitting initiative priorities within settlements that grew rapidly without corresponding investment in infrastructure and amenities which demonstrate opportunities for achievement of National Strategic Outcome: Compact Growth. (b): Support initiatives that seek retrofitting infrastructure to existing buildings including smart technologies, energy efficient and micro renewable systems and seek targeted initiatives and actions at a local level for the refurbishment and upgrading of suitable vacant and underused building stock. (c): Support initiatives that retrofit environmental amenities to address adverse effects on biodiversity and the environment.	The addition of b) to this RPO has a positive impact on CF as it supports energy efficiency. The inclusion of smart technologies also has a positive impact on PHH and MA. However, the retrofitting and regeneration of buildings has the potential to impact on cultural heritage, landscape and biodiversity (i.e. bats) and therefore such plans require to be supported by the necessary environmental assessments. The addition of c) is positive for BFF, W and indirectly for PHH, however where such improvements require new or upgrading of infrastructure, then such plans should be subject to environmental assessments and the outcome of the planning process.	(a): Local Authorities, through County Development Plan and Local Area Plan objectives, will identify retrofitting initiative priorities within settlements that grew rapidly without corresponding investment in infrastructure and amenities which demonstrate achievement of National Strategic Outcome: Compact Growth. (b): Support initiatives that seek retrofitting infrastructure to existing buildings including smart technologies, energy efficient and micro renewable systems and seek targeted initiatives and actions at a local level for the refurbishment and upgrading of suitable vacant and underused building stock. (c): Support initiatives that retrofit environmental amenities to address adverse effects on biodiversity and the environment. (d) Support initiatives that address fuel poverty.	No additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the proposed alterations to the draft plan.
Chapter 4 A Strong Economy innovative and Smart					
RPO 41 (former RPO 39): Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC)	It is an objective to develop the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) initiative as a driver for enterprise growth, investment and attracting entrepreneurial skills and talent to the rural catchments as an economic complement to the role of metropolitan areas and larger urban centres on the AEC.	It is an objective to develop the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) initiative as a driver for enterprise growth, investment and attracting entrepreneurial skills and talent to the rural catchments as an economic complement to the role of metropolitan areas and larger urban centres on the AEC. The RSES recognises the combined advantages and opportunities of the AEC including delivering a high-value and low-carbon economy.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to develop the Atlantic Economic Corridor initiative as a driver for enterprise growth, investment and attracting entrepreneurial skills and talent to the rural catchments as an economic complement to the role of metropolitan areas and larger urban centres on the AEC. The RSES recognises the combined advantages and opportunities of the AEC including delivering a high-value and low-carbon economy.	No change.
RPO 42 (new from MA stage former RPO D) Eastern Corridor		It is an objective to support the development of an Eastern Corridor through the development of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor and strengthening economic links with the South East extending to Rosslare Europort (including public transport connectivity and optimising the potential for rail freight), which is an important economic and transport link, particularly in the post Brexit scenario.	The objective has direct positive impacts for PHH and MA as it is focused on supporting and investment in economic links in the South East. Although, the policy is not specific on how links will be strengthened, it is understood that it would rely on existing infrastructure such as the M11. The inclusion of the wording in brackets is welcome and positive on CF and AQ and indirectly on all environmental aspects. Economic growth also results in population and job growth and as such there is potential for significant negative impacts on BFF, W, LS, AQ, CF and Lands through greenfield and brownfield development, habitat loss and disturbance and emissions to air, soil and water. : The construction and operational impacts arising from any associated development proposals must be subject to robust feasibility, route/site selection, appropriate environmental assessment (EIA, AA EclA and FRA), and the planning process at the project level.	It is an objective to support the development of an Eastern Corridor through the development of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor and strengthening economic links with the South-East, extending to Rosslare Europort (incl. public transport connectivity and optimising the potential for rail freight), which is an important economic and transport link, particularly in the post-Brexit scenario.	No change.
Former RPO 43 (deleted MA Stage) : Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ)	It is an objective to drive sustainable transboundary regional projects and initiatives in Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) in the Southern Region and support investment in the sustainable development of infrastructure to enhance the economic and service functions of urban centres in REDZ area.	RPO Deleted: It is an objective to drive sustainable transboundary regional projects and initiatives in Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) in the Southern Region and support investment in the sustainable development of infrastructure to enhance the economic and service functions of urban centres in REDZ areas.	This RPO has been deleted and therefore the assessment provided in the draft Environmental Report is not relevant.		

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
RPO 56 (former RPO 54): Low Carbon Economy	<p>a. It is an objective to accelerate the transition towards a low carbon economy and a circular economy through mechanisms such as the Climate Action Competitive Fund.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to develop enterprises that create and employ green technologies.</p> <p>c. Local Authorities shall ensure that the development of green industry and technologies incorporates careful consideration of potential environmental impacts at project level including the capacity of receiving environment and existing infrastructure to serve new industries.</p> <p>d. Local Authorities shall include objectives in statutory land use plans to promote energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock and energy efficiency in traditional buildings.</p> <p>e. It is an objective to support investments in energy efficiency of existing commercial and public building stock with a target of all public buildings and at least one-third of total commercial premises upgraded to BER Rating 'B'. Local Authorities shall report annually on energy usage in all public buildings and will achieve a target of 33% improvement in energy efficiency in all buildings in accordance with the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP).</p>	<p>a) The RSES recognises the urgency to transition to a low carbon future and it is therefore an objective to accelerate the transition towards a low carbon economy and a circular economy through mechanisms such as the Climate Action Competitive Fund.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to develop enterprises that create and employ green technologies.</p> <p>c. Local Authorities shall ensure that the development of green industry and technologies incorporates careful consideration of potential environmental impacts at project level including the capacity of receiving environment and existing infrastructure to serve new industries.</p> <p>d. Local Authorities shall include objectives in statutory land use plans to promote energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock and energy efficiency in traditional buildings.</p> <p>e. It is an objective to support investments in energy efficiency of existing commercial and public building stock with a target of all public buildings and at least one-third of total commercial premises upgraded to BER Rating 'B'. Local Authorities shall report annually on energy usage in all public buildings and will achieve a target of 33% improvement in energy efficiency in all buildings in accordance with the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP).</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	<p>(a) The RSES recognises the urgency to transition to a low carbon future and it is therefore an objective to accelerate the transition towards low carbon economy and circular economy through mechanisms such as the Climate Action Competitive Fund;</p> <p>(b) It is an objective to develop enterprises that create and employ green technologies;</p> <p>(c) Local authorities should ensure that the development of green industry and technologies incorporates careful consideration of potential environmental impacts at project level including the capacity of receiving environment and existing infrastructure to serve new industries;</p> <p>(d) Local authorities shall include objectives in statutory land use plans to promote energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock, energy efficiency in traditional buildings and initiatives to achieve Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings (NZE) standards in line with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).</p> <p>(e) It is an objective to support investments in energy efficiency of existing commercial and public building stock with a target of all public buildings and at least one-third of total commercial premises upgraded to BER Rating 'B'. Local authorities shall report annually on energy usage in all public buildings and will achieve a target of 33% improvement in energy efficiency in all buildings in accordance with the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP).</p>	No change.
RPO 62 (former RPO 59) Locations for Employment Development	<p>a. It is an objective to ensure employment locations follow the hierarchy identified in Chapter 3, and ensure they are built fit-for purpose. This includes the provision of access to utilities, connectivity, and other enterprise development factors.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to identify future locations for strategic employment development having regard to accessibility by sustainable transport modes and environmental constraints</p>	<p>a. It is an objective to ensure employment locations follow the hierarchy identified in Chapter 3, and ensure they are built fit-for purpose. This includes the provision of access to utilities, connectivity, and other enterprise development factors.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to identify future locations for strategic employment development having regard to accessibility by sustainable transport modes and environmental constraints</p> <p>(c) It is an objective to reduce the number of unemployment blackspots in the Region through a greater understanding of their nature and causes to assist in identifying appropriate responses and revert reinforcing negative patterns.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	<p>It is an objective to:</p> <p>a) Ensure employment locations follow the hierarchy identified in Chapter 3, and ensure they are built fit-for-purpose. This includes the provision of access to utilities, connectivity, and other enterprise development factors;</p> <p>b) Identify future locations for strategic employment development having regard to accessibility by sustainable transport modes and environmental constraints.</p> <p>c) Support a positive presumption in favour of locating appropriate employment where it would address unemployment blackspots, support sectoral and location-based strengths and synergies with existing employers, take advantage of 'ready to go' property solutions and local ambition.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Former RPO 66 (deleted at MA stage) Overseas Market Entry	It is an objective to enhance and facilitate overseas market entry with administrative solutions, such as pre-clearance of passengers and goods in our international airports.	RPO Deleted: It is an objective to enhance and facilitate overseas market entry with administrative solutions, such as pre-clearance of passengers and goods in our international airports.	This RPO has been deleted and therefore the assessment provided in the draft Environmental Report is not relevant.		
	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support the sustainable development of the potential of the marine environment foster opportunities for innovation in the maritime Economy and drive forward the Region as a first mover under Marine Spatial Planning while preserving the environmental and ecological conservation status of our marine natural resource. Initiatives arising from this objective shall be subject to robust feasibility and site selection, which includes undertaking flood risk assessment and explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European Sites and potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites in advance of any development	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support the sustainable development of the potential of the marine environment foster opportunities for innovation in the maritime economy and drive forward the Region as a first mover under marine spatial planning while preserving the environmental and ecological conservation status of our marine natural resource. Initiatives arising from this objective shall be subject to robust feasibility and site selection, which includes flood risk assessments and explicit consideration of likely significant effects on European sites and potential for adverse effects on their integrity in advance of any development. The RSES encourages close interaction between higher education, state agencies, and enterprise to position the Region in as a leader in this field.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 79 (former RPO 77) Shannon Estuary and Other Harbour Plans	<p>a. The RSES recognises the national and international importance of the Shannon Estuary, its potential to attract multinational development and the significant work that has been undertaken to progress its promotion and development. It is an objective to support and promotes the delivery of the Strategic Development Locations as set out in the SIFP for the Shannon Estuary and zoned in the Local Authority Development Plans.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to promote the SIFP initiative as a good practice model for the Southern Region and to seek the preparation of similar initiatives for Cork Harbour and Waterford Harbour between the relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>c. Such initiatives shall be subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA, SFRA and AA as appropriate.</p>	<p>a. The RSES recognises the national and international importance of the Shannon Estuary, its potential to attract multinational development and the significant work that has been undertaken to progress its promotion and development. It is an objective to support and promotes the delivery of the Strategic Development Locations as set out in the SIFP for the Shannon Estuary subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA undertaken on SIFP and zoned in the Local Authority Development Plans</p> <p>b. It is an objective to promote the SIFP initiative as a good practice model for the Southern Region and to seek the preparation of similar initiatives for Cork Harbour and Waterford Harbour between the relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>c. It is an objective to support the promotion, marketing and seeking of financial and expertise support for the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary and specific projects emerging there from.</p> <p>d. Such initiatives shall be subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA, SFRA and AA as appropriate.</p>	<p>The addition of the reference to mitigation from the SIFP is welcomed and strengthens the protection measures included in the planning hierarchy.</p> <p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>a) The RSES recognises the national and international importance of the Shannon Estuary, its potential to attract multinational development and the significant work that has been undertaken to progress its promotion and development. It is an objective to support and promotes the delivery of the Strategic Development Locations as set out in the SIFP for the Shannon Estuary subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA undertaken on SIFP and zoned in the Local Authority Development Plans.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to promote the SIFP initiative as a good practice model for the Southern Region and to seek the preparation of similar initiatives for Cork Harbour and Waterford Harbour between the relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>c) It is an objective to support the promotion, marketing and seeking of financial and expertise support for the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary and specific projects emerging there from.</p> <p>d) Such initiatives shall be subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA, SFRA and AA as appropriate.</p>	No change.
Chapter 5 Environment: Creating a clean environment for a healthy society					
RPO 87 (former RPO 85): Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030	The Southern Region is committed to the implementation of the policy of Government under Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030. It is an objective to promote change across business, public and residential sectors to achieve reduced Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, improve energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy sources across the key sectors of electricity supply, heating, transport and agriculture	The Southern Region is committed to the implementation of the policy of Government under Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030 and Climate Action Plan 2019. It is an objective to promote change across business, public and residential sectors to achieve reduced Green House Gas (GHG) emissions in accordance with current and future national targets, improve energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy sources across the key sectors of electricity supply, heating, transport and agriculture.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	The RSES is committed to the implementation of the Government's policy under Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-30 and Climate Action Plan 2019. It is an objective to promote change across business, public and residential sectors to achieve reduced GHG emissions in accordance with current and future national targets, improve energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy sources across the key sectors of electricity supply, heating, transport and agriculture.	No change.
RPO 89 (new at MA stage former RPO E) Building Resilience to Climate Change		<p>a) It is an objective to support measures to build resilience to climate change throughout the region to address impact reduction, adaptive capacity, awareness raising and emergency planning.</p> <p>b) Local Authorities and other public agencies shall continue to work with the OPW to implement the Flood Risk Management Plans and address existing and potential future flood risks arising from coastal, fluvial, pluvial, groundwater and potential sources of flood risk.</p>	Support for measures to build resilience to climate change will have generally positive short, medium and long term impacts for CF, MA and PHH in delivering mitigation and adaptation across the region. However it is acknowledged that the development and construction of any infrastructure has potential for both positive and negative impacts across environmental receptors (for example flood defences) depending on the scale, nature and location of such infrastructure. Prior to implementation of any adaptation or mitigation measures there should be a clear assessment which considers reasonable options, site selection and includes robust environmental assessment.	<p>a) It is an objective to support measures to build resilience to climate change throughout the Region to address impact reduction, adaptive capacity, awareness raising, providing for nature-based solutions and emergency planning;</p> <p>b) Local Authorities and other public agencies shall continue to work with the Office of Public Works to implement the Flood Risk Management Plans and address existing and potential future flood risks arising from coastal, fluvial, pluvial, groundwater and potential sources of flood risk.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 90 (new at MA Stage former RPO F) Regional De-carbonisation		It is an objective to develop a Regional Decarbonisation Plan to provide a framework for action on decarbonisation across all sectors. The Regional Decarbonisation Plan will include existing and future targets for each sector. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Regional Decarbonisation Plan for the Southern Region with stakeholders including the Climate Action Regional Offices, the requirements for SEA, AA and the timescale for its preparation.	This policy objective is positive for CF and the broader environment. Objectives which directly or indirectly are aimed at promoting a shift away from use of fossil fuels will have co-benefits for AQ and PHH. Reduced energy based combustion will also result in indirect positive impact for BFF, W and LS through reduced deposition/acidification cause by air pollution. For MA there is potential for some negative impacts through, for example, the phased cessation of the peat powered electricity generating plants and associated peat harvesting in the region. These MA negative impacts may be offset with an investment in the bio-economy in the region.	It is an objective to develop a Regional De-carbonisation Plan to provide a framework for action on de-carbonisation across all sectors. The Plan shall include existing and future targets for each sector. Implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures shall be established with stakeholders, including the Climate Action Regional Offices, following the adoption of the RSES to identify the scope and role of the Plan, the requirements for SEA, AA and the timescale for its preparation.	No change.
RPO 91 (former RPO 87): Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector	It is an objective to support initiatives that support the decarbonisation of the transport sector, moving to the use of clean generated electricity for private and public transportation by 2030	a) It is an objective to seek support initiatives that support will achieve the decarbonisation of the transport sector, moving to the use of clean generated electricity for private and public transportation by 2030	The additions to this RPO are directly positive for CF and AQ as they promote the decarbonisation of the transport sector provision which remains a significant challenge for Ireland generally. However, associated infrastructure (in terms of processing, storage, transport and refuelling) to deliver the policy should be subject to site selection, environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process, as with any infrastructure given the potential for negative impacts on all environmental receptors is sited inappropriate.	It is an objective to: <p>a) Seek initiatives that will achieve the de-carbonisation of the transport sector, moving to the use of clean generated electricity bio-gas, hydrogen and other non-fossil fuels for private and public transportation and provision of clean energy and lower carbon fuelling stations by 2030;</p> <p>b) Pursue policies to reduce reliance on private cars and achieve modal shift to sustainable transportation in conjunction with policies to achieve compact growth and reduce congestion;</p> <p>c) Seek the development of clean energy and lower carbon fuelling and electric vehicle charging stations and infrastructure at the appropriate locations which take into consideration electric, hydrogen, CNG/biogas inter-alia.</p>	No change.
RPO 92 (former RPO 88): Electric vehicle infrastructure	<p>a. It is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of Electric Vehicle charging facilities aligned with our region's transportation networks.</p> <p>b. Through Local Authority County Development Plans and Local Area Plans, It is an objective to encourage a support policies and objectives to integrate Electric Vehicle charging point infrastructure within residential, commercial and mixed-use developments</p>			It is an objective to: <p>(a) Support investment in the sustainable development of Electric Vehicle charging facilities aligned with our Region's transportation networks;</p> <p>(b) Through Local Authority County Development Plans and Local Area Plans, encourage and support policies and objectives to integrate Electric Vehicle charging point infrastructure within residential, commercial and mixed-use developments.</p>	No change.
RPO 93 (former RPO 89) CNG and EV Infrastructure	It is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of CNG refuelling stations aligned with the TEN-T corridors as a renewable technology for servicing public service vehicles and commercial fleets.	It is an objective to: <p>(a) support investment in the sustainable development of CNG refuelling Stations aligned with the TEN-T corridors as a renewable technology for servicing public service vehicles and commercial fleets (b) seek the provision of EV charging point infrastructure within residential, commercial and mixed-use developments.</p>	The addition of EV charging point infrastructure is positive for CF, PHH and MA and indirectly positive for the broader environment. However the selection of sites for charging points should be subject to site selection taking into consideration cultural heritage sites e.g. protected structures and pavements.	It is an objective to: <p>(a) Support investment in the sustainable development of CNG refuelling stations aligned with the TEN-T corridors as a renewable technology for servicing public service vehicles and commercial fleets;</p> <p>(b) Seek the provision of EV charging point infrastructure within residential, commercial and mixed use developments.</p>	No change.

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RPO 94 (former RPO 90): Decarbonisation in the Agricultural Sector	It is an objective to support initiatives to achieve carbon neutrality for agriculture and land-use that does not compromise sustainable food production through programmes including the Green Low Carbon Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS) and the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP) under Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.	It is an objective to support initiatives to achieve carbon neutrality for agriculture and land-use that does not compromise sustainable food production through: i) programmes including the Green Low- Carbon Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS) and the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP) under Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. ii) support for the Departments of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and Communications Climate Action and Environment to enhance the competitiveness of the agriculture sector with an urgent need for mitigation to reduce GHGs as well as adaptation measures.	Recommend clarifying the wording to refer to mitigation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and climate change adaptation. (wording updated) As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support initiatives that advance an approach to achieve carbon neutrality for agriculture and land-use that does not compromise sustainable food production through: (i) Programmes including the Green Low-Carbon Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS) and the Beef Data and Genomics Programme (BDGP) under Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-20; and (ii) Support for the Departments of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and Communications Climate Action and Environment to enhance the competitiveness of the agriculture sector with an urgent need for mitigation to reduce GHGs as well as adaptation measures. The All-of-Ireland Government Plan on Climate Action and Ag-Climateise will guide action in this area.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 95 (former RPO 91): Sustainable Renewable Energy Generation	It is an objective to support and leverage the Southern Region as a leader and innovator in sustainable renewable energy generation	It is an objective to support implementation of the National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP), and the Offshore Renewable Energy Plan and the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in their respective SEA and AA and leverage the Southern Region as a leader and innovator in sustainable renewable energy generation.	Changes are welcome regarding extending wording to make reference to implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA for the offshore renewable energy plan. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support implementation of the National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP), and the Offshore Renewable Energy Plan and the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in their respective SEA and AA and leverage the Region as a leader and innovator in sustainable renewable energy generation.	No change.
RPO 97 (former RPO 93): Power Stations & Renewable Energy	It is an objective to support the sustainable technology upgrading and conversion of power stations in the Southern Region to use energy efficient and renewable energy sources.			It is an objective to support the sustainable technology upgrading and conversion of power stations in the Region to increase capacity for use of energy efficient and renewable energy sources	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 104 (former RPO 100) Energy Storage and Carbon Capture	It is an objective to support investment in initiatives to develop innovation, advances in technology and pilot projects for the sustainable development of energy storage and carbon capture within the region	It is an objective to support investment in initiatives to develop innovation, advances in technology and pilot projects for the sustainable development of energy storage and carbon capture within the region	The addition of the reference to sustainable forestry to support carbon sequestration is positive for CF with indirect positive impacts for all environmental receptors if sited and managed appropriately. Forestry has historically been associated with reduced species diversity, significant land use change, soil erosion and water quality deterioration as a result of stinging and management options. This needs to be fully addressed in sustainable forestry proposals if negative impacts on BFF, S, W, Lands are to be avoided.	It is an objective to support investment in initiatives to develop innovation, advances in technology and pilot projects for the sustainable development of energy storage and carbon capture within the Region and to work with key stakeholders in developing sustainable forestry, including initiatives for native tree planting and better management of peatland and soil management to support carbon sequestration and enhancement of biodiversity.	The changes are welcome. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 105 Clean Electric Heat Technologies & District Heating (Former RPO 101 Clean Electric Heat Technologies and RPO 103 Non Fossil Fuel Heat Sources merged at MA stage as RPO G).	It is an objective to support initiatives to develop clean electric heat technologies in the Southern Region	It is an objective to support development of District Heating schemes by promoting innovation in the use of recoverable heat sources and related technologies. The development of new low carbon heat sources should include non-fossil fuel heat sources including clean electric and renewable gas heat technologies in the region.	This new RPO replaces RPO 101. The amendments aim to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy demand, which is directly positive for CF and AQ and indirectly positive for the broader environment as indicated in the assessment of RPO 101 in the draft environmental report. Any retrofitting of buildings will need to consider potential for negative impacts on CH and Lands, Bats and birds which can be damaged / disturbed during construction works.	It is an objective to support development of district heating schemes by promoting innovation in the use of recoverable heat sources and related technologies. The development of new low carbon heat sources should include non-fossil fuel heat sources including clean electric and renewable gas heat technologies in the Region.	No change.
RPO 106 (former RPO 102) : Future Proofing and Retrofitting	It is an objective to support investment in initiatives to improve energy efficiency and future proof our region's residential, commercial and public building stock, including retrofitting in urban and rural areas.	It is an objective to support implementation of the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP), the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in their respective SEA and AA and investment in initiatives to improve energy efficiency and future proof our region's residential, commercial and public building stock, including retrofitting in urban and rural areas. RSES supports the promotion of sustainable buildings that achieve certification under systems such as the Home Performance Index (HPI) and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) at local authority level.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support implementation of the <i>National Energy Efficiency Action Plan</i> , the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in their respective SEA and AA and investment in initiatives to improve energy efficiency and future proof our Region's residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and public building stock, including retrofitting in urban and rural areas and reduce fuel poverty. RSES supports the promotion of sustainable buildings that achieve certification under systems such as the Home Performance Index and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design at local authority level.	No change.
RPO 107 (former RPO 104) Circular Economy	It is an objective to support initiatives that develop the Circular Economy through implementation of the Southern Regional Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 and any updates to the Plan.	It is an objective to support innovative initiatives that develop the Circular Economy through implementation of the Southern Regional Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 and any updates to the Plan.		It is an objective to support innovative initiatives that develop the circular economy through implementation of the Southern Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-21 and its successor.	No change.
RPO 112 (former RPO 125)	It is an objective to support commitments to achieve and maintain at least Good status, and no deterioration of status, for all water bodies under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and its Programme of Measures, the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan. Key challenges include, inter alia, the need to address significant deficits in urban waste-water treatment and water supply, addressing flooding and increased flood risks from extreme weather events and increased intense rainfall because of climate change.	Wording updated in final Plan. No Material Change.		It is an objective to support commitments to achieve and maintain "At Least Good" status, except where more stringent obligations are required for high ecological status and no deterioration of status for all water bodies under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and its programme of measures, the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan. Key challenges include, inter alia, the need to address significant deficits in urban waste-water treatment and water supply, addressing flooding and increased flood risks from extreme weather events and increased intense rainfall because of climate change.	The changes provide clarity. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 120 Flooding and Coastal Erosion (new from MA Stage former RPO H)		It is an objective to support measures (including Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)) for the management and protection of coastal resources and communities against coastal erosion, flooding and other threats. Statutory land use plans shall take account of the risk of coastal erosion, whereby new development should be avoided in areas at risk of coastal erosion to the greatest extent practicable.	This policy objective is positive for the broader environment as it will have long-term direct positive impacts, particularly for PHH, MA, W and CF, in terms of recognising and adapting to coastal erosion risk, flooding and other coastal threats. Ireland has a dynamic coastline and it is recognised that there are challenges to adapting to coastal erosion, flooding and other threats. Forty percent of Ireland's population lives within 5km of the coast. Our coastal areas are also a key driver for the tourism sector, particularly given the length of quality accessible coastline in the SRA. However coastal areas are a fragile resource and needs to be managed carefully to sustain its character and attributes (i.e. physical, environmental and biodiversity.) This objective is aligned to the collective aims of NPF regarding climate adaptation and mitigation, to address the effects of sea level changes and coastal flooding and erosion and to support the implementation of adaptation and mitigation responses in vulnerable areas. In particular it is seeking to integrate and align approaches to coastal resource management, flood risk, etc. An integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) approach needs to be based on principles of sustainable development. The policy could be more specific about what structures will be put in place to support an integrated approach to CZM. A clear structure for ICZM is needed for the region and demonstrated commitment to collaborate/ co-ordinate between the relevant local authorities (i.e. similar to the Waste Management Strategy) through a committee/ steering group. Also, local policy should encourage an ecosystems services approach to development, located away from coastal areas. Also, a robust feasibility study or plan is required to examine the environmental implication of coastal developments. Mitigation: Structures should be put in place to support an integrated approach to CZM.		As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 126 (former RPO 120) Biodiversity	a. It is an objective to promote biodiversity protection through promoting the integration of Green Infrastructure (GI) and ecosystem services including landscape, heritage, biodiversity and management of invasive and alien species in the preparation of statutory and non-statutory land use plans. b. It is an objective to support Local Authorities in implementing measures designed to identify, conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Southern Region. c. Local Authorities are required to carry out screening of proposed projects and any draft land-use plan or amendment/variation to any such plan for any potential ecological impact on areas designated or proposed for inclusion as Natura 2000/European Sites and shall decide if an Appropriate Assessment is necessary, of the potential impacts of the project or plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000/European Site. d. It is an objective to support Local Authorities to carry out, monitor and review biodiversity plans throughout the region. Planning Authorities should set objectives in their land use plans to implement and monitor the actions as set out in the National and County Biodiversity Plans, as the conservation of biodiversity is an essential component of sustainable development. Local Authorities should address the issue of fisheries protection and invasive introduced species and encourage the use of native species for landscape planting in rural areas, in the review of their biodiversity plans. e. It is an objective to support Local Authorities to work with all stakeholders to conserve, manage and where possible enhance the regions natural heritage including all habitats, species, landscapes and geological heritage of conservation interest and to promote increased understanding and awareness of the natural heritage of the region.	a. It is an objective to promote biodiversity protection and habitat connectivity both within protected areas and in the landscape through promoting the integration of Green Infrastructure (GI) and ecosystem services including landscape, heritage, biodiversity and management of invasive and alien species in the preparation of statutory and non-statutory land use plans. The RSES recognises the role of the National Biodiversity Data Centre through its Citizen Science initiatives b. It is an objective to support Local Authorities acting together with relevant stakeholders in implementing measures designed to identify, conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Southern Region, seek and support the implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, National Biodiversity Action Plan and National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan. c. The Local Authorities are required to carry out screening of proposed projects and any draft land-use plan or amendment/variation to any such plan for any potential ecological impact on areas designated or proposed for inclusion as Natura 2000/European Sites and shall decide if an Appropriate Assessment is necessary, of the potential impacts of the project or plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000/European Site. d. It is an objective to support Local Authorities to carry out, monitor and review biodiversity plans throughout the region. Planning Authorities should set objectives in their land use plans to implement and monitor the actions as set out in the National and County Biodiversity Plans, as the conservation of biodiversity is an essential component of sustainable development. Local Authorities should address the issue of fisheries protection and invasive introduced species and encourage the use of native species for landscape planting in rural areas, in the review of their biodiversity plans. e. It is an objective to support Local Authorities to work with all stakeholders to conserve, manage and where possible enhance the regions natural heritage including all habitats, species, landscapes and geological heritage of conservation interest and to promote increased understanding and awareness of the natural heritage of the region.	The support for the implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, National Biodiversity Action Plan and National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan are welcomed and will lead to indirect positive impacts for BFF, MA, W and PHH by ensuring ecosystem services are sustainable managed. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	a) Promote biodiversity protection and habitat connectivity both within protected areas and in the landscape through promoting the integration of green infrastructure and ecosystem services, including landscape, heritage, biodiversity and management of invasive and alien species in the preparation of statutory and non-statutory land-use plans. The RSES recognises the role of the National Biodiversity Data Centre through its Citizen Science initiatives; b) Support local authorities acting together with relevant stakeholders in implementing measures designed to identify, conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Region; seek and support the implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, National Biodiversity Action Plan and National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan; c) It is an objective to d) Local Authorities are required to carry out required screening of proposed projects and any draft land-use plan or amendment/variation to any such plan for any potential ecological impact on areas designated or proposed for inclusion as Natura 2000/European Sites and shall decide if an Appropriate Assessment is necessary, of the potential impacts of the project or plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000/European Site; e) Support local authorities to carry out, monitor and review biodiversity plans throughout the Region. Planning authorities should set objectives in their land use plans to implement and monitor the actions as set out in the National and County Biodiversity Plans, as the conservation of biodiversity is an essential component of sustainable development. Local authorities should address the issue of fisheries protection and invasive introduced species and encourage the use of native species for landscape planting in rural areas, in the review of their biodiversity plans; f) Support local authorities to work with all stakeholders to conserve, manage and where possible enhance the Regions natural heritage including all habitats, species, landscapes and geological heritage of conservation interest and to promote increased understanding and awareness of the natural heritage of the Region.	No change.

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RPO 130 (former RPO 126) Air Quality	a. It is an objective to improve air quality and help prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions and promotion of measures that improve air quality including provision and management of green areas and vegetation. b. It is an objective to support local data collection in the development of air quality monitoring and to investigate the merits of creating a regional air quality and greenhouse gas emissions inventory to prevent the spread of invasive to sensitive sites.	(a) It is an objective to improve and maintain good air quality and help prevent harmful effects on human health and the environment people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions and promotion of measures that improve air quality including provision and management of green areas and vegetation. (b) It is an objective to support local data collection in the development of air quality monitoring and to investigate the merits of creating a regional air quality and greenhouse gas emissions inventory to prevent the spread of invasive to sensitive sites .	Amendments provide further clarification to the intent of the RPO. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to: (a) Improve and maintain good air quality and help prevent harmful effects on human health and the environment in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions and promotion of measures that improve air quality including provision and management of green areas and vegetation; (b) Support local data collection in the development of air quality monitoring and to investigate the merits of creating a regional air quality and greenhouse gas emissions inventory.	No change.
RPO 131 (former RPO 127) Noise	It is an objective to promote the pro-active management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life and support the aims of the Environmental Noise Regulations through national planning guidance and Noise Action Plans	It is an objective to promote the pro-active management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and the environment and quality of life . It is also an objective to support the aims of the Environmental Noise Regulations through national planning guidance and Noise Action Plans for major urban centres as considered appropriate.	Amendments provide further clarification to the intent of the RPO. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to promote the pro-active management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and the environment. It is also an objective to support the aims of the Environmental Noise Regulations through national planning guidance and Noise Action Plans for major urban centres as considered appropriate.	No change.
Chapter 6 Connectivity					
RPO 133 (former RPO 129) Smart Cities	Develop Smart Cities as engines for a Smart Region and seek investment in the initiatives of stakeholders to achieve the pillars of the EU Digital Single Market.	Develop Smart Cities as engines for a Smart Region (urban and rural), support the initiatives of the All Ireland Smart Cities Forum, seek good practices yielded through living labs, test-beds, seek the deployment of disruptive technologies and smart infrastructures in cities, towns, villages and rural areas and seek investment in the initiatives of stakeholders to achieve the pillars of the EU Digital Single Market.	Amendments provide further clarification to the intent of the RPO. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective: • To develop Smart Cities as engines for a Smart Region (urban and rural) • To support the initiatives of the All Ireland Smart Cities Forum • To seek good practices yielded through living labs, test-beds • To seek the deployment of disruptive technologies and smart infrastructures in cities, towns, villages and rural areas • To seek investment in the initiatives of stakeholders to achieve the pillars of the EU Digital Single Market.	No change.
RPO 134 (former RPO 130) Smart Cities and Smart Region	Build on Smart Cities and Smart Region initiatives in Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Key Towns and wider region and seek investment into broadband, fibre technologies, wireless networks and integrated digital infrastructures to enable actions that sustainably deliver on Smart City projects to increase the innovative, sustainable and competitive placemaking dividend for the Southern Region.	(a) Build on Smart Cities and Smart Region initiatives in Cork, Limerick, Waterford, such as the All Ireland Smart Cities Forum, and seek an extension of such initiatives to towns, villages and rural areas to support a Smart Region. Key towns and wider region and (b) Seek investment into broadband, fibre technologies, wireless networks (including Internet of Things Networks extending across the region) and integrated digital infrastructures to enable actions that sustainably deliver on smart technologies Smart City projects to increase the innovative, sustainable and competitive placemaking dividend for the Southern Region. (c) Support a leadership role for the Southern Region as an innovator in smart technologies and smart mobility. (d) Seek and support investment for initiatives in smart technology as an enabler for education and life-long learning in all locations.	Amendments provide further clarification to the intent of the RPO. Indirect positive impacts for PHH and MA with investment in education and life-long learning. As previously identified, delivery of digital infrastructure has the potential for indirect negative impact on the receiving environment through habitat and species disturbance, pollution events for surface and ground water, impacts to CH and Lands. Roll out plans for such network development must seek to avoid such impacts in the first instance through proper siting and route selection, reuse of existing infrastructure and where necessary mitigation of negative effects. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective: (a) To build on Smart Cities and Smart Region initiatives in Cork, Limerick and Waterford, such as the All Ireland Smart Cities Forum, and seek to extend such initiatives to towns, villages and rural areas to support a Smart Region. (b) To seek investment in broadband, fibre technologies, wireless networks (including an Internet of Things Network across the Region) and integrated digital infrastructures to enable actions that sustainably deliver on smart technologies to increase the innovative, sustainable and competitive placemaking dividend for the Southern Region. (c) To support a leadership role for the Southern Region as an innovator in smart technologies and smart mobility. (d) To seek and support investment for initiatives in smart technology as an enabler for education and life-long learning in all locations.	No change.
RPO 135 (former RPO 131) High quality high capacity international digital transmission	Optimise high quality high capacity international digital transmission connections between the Region, US, UK and Europe through projects such as the Hibernia Express subsea cable line located at Cork Internet Exchange and the Ireland-France Subsea Cable.	a) Optimise the economic opportunities for all locations in the Southern Region from achieving high quality high capacity international digital transmission connections between the Region, US, UK and Europe through projects such as the Hibernia Express subsea cable line located at Cork Internet Exchange and the Ireland-France Subsea Cable. (b) Seek investment and continual strengthening of Metropolitan Area Networks. (c) Support and seek investment in the sustainable delivery of digital infrastructure ducting and dark broadband infrastructure.	Amendments provide further clarification to the intent of the RPO. Indirect positive impacts for PHH and MA with investment in education and life-long learning. As previously identified, delivery of digital infrastructure has the potential for indirect negative impact on the receiving environment through habitat and species disturbance, pollution events for surface and ground water, impacts to CH and Lands. Roll out plans for such network development must seek to avoid such impacts in the first instance through proper siting and route selection, reuse of existing infrastructure and where necessary mitigation of negative effects. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective: (a) To optimise the economic opportunities for all locations in the Southern Region from achieving high quality high capacity international digital transmission connections between the Region, the US, the UK and Europe through support for improved regional digital and internet exchange facilities (subject to required feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes) in each of the region's cities and metropolitan areas and optimise the infrastructure asset of the projects such as projects such as the Hibernia Express subsea cable line located at Cork Internet Exchange and the Ireland-France subsea cable. (b) To seek investment and continual strengthening of Metropolitan Area Networks. (c) To support and seek investment in the sustainable delivery of digital infrastructure ducting and dark fibre infrastructure.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 136 (former RPO 132) National Broadband Plan (NBP)	To expedite the implementation of the National Broadband Plan (NBP).	Seek to expedite the implementation of the National Broadband Plan (NBP) and the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA for the NBP to all locations in the Southern Region and seek reporting procedures to the Southern Regional Assembly on progress and targets being achieved from the relevant State Departments and agencies through effective implementation mechanisms for the RSES.	Suggest extending wording to make reference to implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA for the National Broadband National Strategy. (wording updated) As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to seek to expedite the implementation of the National Broadband Plan and the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA for the NBP to all locations in the Region and seek reporting procedures to the Southern Regional Assembly on progress and targets being achieved from the relevant State Departments and agencies through effective implementation mechanisms for the RSES.	No change.
RPO 137 (former RPO 133) Mobile Infrastructure	To strengthen the continued delivery of high-speed, high-capacity digital and mobile infrastructure investment in our region.	To strengthen the continued delivery of high-speed, high-capacity digital and mobile infrastructure investment in our region and strengthen cross regional integration of digital infrastructures and sharing of networks.	Amendments provide further clarification to the intent of the RPO. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to strengthen the continued delivery of high-speed, high-capacity digital and mobile infrastructure investment in our region and strengthen cross regional integration of digital infrastructures and sharing of networks.	No change.
RPO 138 (former RPO 134) Digital strategies	To promote the preparation and implementation of digital strategies by each Local Authority and seek investment for actions identified.	To promote the preparation and support the implementation of digital strategies by each Local Authority, seek investment for actions identified and support the role and initiatives of the Mobile and Broadband Taskforce in addressing digital and mobile coverage blackspots and rural communications connectivity.	The amendment to this objective is positive for PHH and MA as it addresses broadband coverage in all areas. However, the implementation of RPO 184 for broadband infrastructure along with the mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA for the National Broadband Intervention Strategy are required to ensure potential impacts on the environment are avoided or minimised. Similarly, any infrastructure to support mobile coverage should be subject to site/route selection and environmental assessment.	It is an objective to promote the preparation and support the implementation of digital strategies by each local authority, seek investment for actions identified, and support the role and initiatives of the Mobile and Broadband Taskforce in addressing digital and mobile coverage blackspots and rural communications connectivity.	No change.
RPO 139 (new at MA Stage former RPO I) Low Carbon International Connectivity		In pursuit of the NPF National Strategic Outcome of High-Quality International Connectivity, the RSES seeks that future regional freight, port and airport strategies target initiatives and demonstrate specific actions that transition these sectors to a low carbon future.	This new RPO specifically references low carbon international connectivity with reference to ports, airports and freight. Any actions which support a low carbon future are generally positive for CF however it is not clear who or how this is to be supported across these key sectors as all are emitters not only of GHG but other significant AQ pollutants. The SR includes Waterford, Cork and Shannon airports and the Tier 1 Port of Cork and Shannon Foynes Port and other RPOs in the draft plan related to these assets reference growth and expansion. Intensification of port and airport activities have the potential for negative CF and AQ impacts through the potential for increased aircraft and shipping emissions. Control of aircraft and shipping emissions are outside the control of the RSES and lie with EU ETS and the IMO respectively. Direct emissions from aviation account for about 3% of the EU's total greenhouse gas emissions and more than 2% of global emissions and is one of the fastest-growing sources of greenhouse gas emissions (source: EC). Maritime transport is responsible for about 2.5% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and also increasing (source: International Maritime Organisation, IMO). The strategies for the port development therefore need to establish how they will address not only Scope 1 (direct energy use on site and fleet vehicles) and Scope 2 (electricity imports) GHG emissions [which are indeed part of the solution] but specifically Scope 3 emissions (such as passenger transport by land to these ports as well as air and maritime emissions). This should include consideration of the role for three regionally based airports alongside a motorway and rail network. The strategies for transition must recognise the need for balance and assessment of unintended consequences as options to reduce carbon can also give rise to the potential for environmental effects [e.g. transition from petrol to diesel has resulted in unintended consequences to AQ in some of our cities]. Such proposals must be subject to robust feasibility initially at sectoral level, followed by route selection, appropriate environmental assessment (EIA, AA EClA and FRA) and the outcomes of the planning process at the project level. Finally, it is important to accept that strategies that result in the intensification of use in	In pursuit of the NPF National Strategic Outcome of High-Quality International Connectivity, the RSES supports actions to transition the movement of freight, ports and airports to a low carbon future.	No change.

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			<p>SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES</p> <p>Airports and ports will potentially prohibit the transition of these sectors to a low carbon future as a result of the Scope 3 emissions which are somewhat outside the control of RSES and the port authorities. The strategies can, however, target initiatives and demonstrate specific actions that transition these sectors to a lower carbon future relative to the existing baseline. This would be encouraged and would result in positive CF and AQ impacts but as above, these strategies need to be cognisant of wider environmental implications and potential for unintended negative impacts.</p> <p>Mitigation: Proposals must be subject to robust feasibility initially at sectoral level, followed by route selection, appropriate environmental assessment (EIA, AA EcIA and FRA) and the outcomes of the planning process at the project level.</p>		
RPO 140 (former RPO 135) International Connectivity	<p>a. To sustainably maintain, support and enhance the Region's International Connectivity Transport Network including the Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T)</p> <p>b. To sustainably maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads network including planning for future capacity enhancements to ensure effective land transport connections to the major ports, airports and markets.</p>	<p>(a): To sustainably maintain, support and enhance the Region's International Connectivity Transport Network including the Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T) for road and rail.</p> <p>b. To sustainably maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads and rail network including planning for future capacity enhancements to ensure effective land transport connections to the major ports, airports and markets.</p> <p>c. To support the role of our strategic road and rail networks with a priority on strengthened public transport networks and lower carbon movement of freight, including the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Networks, connecting the region's metropolitan areas, key towns, ports and airports with the Atlantic Economic Corridor, extended Dublin-Belfast-South East Corridor and other urban networks as identified through Section 3.8 of the RSES and City and County Development Plans.</p>	<p>The amendment to this policy to prioritise strengthening public transport networks and low carbon freight movement on the region's networks is directly positive for CF, AQ, PHH and MA. However, as identified in the assessment, linear development has the potential to impact on the wider environment with particular reference to BFF, W, Lands, CH which must be considered in the route/site selection process and necessary environmental assessments.</p>	<p>It is an objective:</p> <p>a) To sustainably maintain, support and enhance the Region's International Connectivity Transport Network including the Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T) which seeks the development of a Europe-wide network of railway lines, roads, inland waterways, maritime shipping routes, ports, airports and railroad terminals.</p> <p>b) To sustainably maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads and rail network including planning for future capacity enhancements to ensure effective land transport connections to the major ports, airports and markets.</p> <p>c) To support the role of our strategic road and sustainable transport networks including connectivity to the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Network, connecting the region's metropolitan areas, key towns, ports and airports with the Atlantic Economic Corridor, extended Dublin-Belfast Eastern Corridor and other urban networks as identified through Section 3.8 of the RSES and City and County Development Plans.</p> <p>d) Sustainably support infrastructure for electric and low carbon fuel infrastructure along TEN-T Core and Comprehensive Network.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 141 (former RPO 136) Regional Freight Strategy	<p>Develop a RSES Regional Freight Strategy which includes the consideration of rail freight in consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, National Transport Authority, Local Authorities, Irish Rail, relevant delivery agencies and the port and airport authorities.</p>	<p>To support the development of a RSES Regional Freight Strategy which includes the consideration of rail freight, the asset of our region's rail network and innovations in the freight handling and transport sector to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, National Transport Authority, Local Authorities, Irish Rail, relevant delivery agencies and the port and airport authorities. Support the feasibility of Limerick Junction having the status of a national rail freight and passenger hub. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Regional Freight Strategy and the timescale for its preparation. The requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives shall be considered, as appropriate, in relation to a Regional Freight Strategy.</p>	<p>The amendments to this policy regarding the RSES Regional Freight Strategy are positive and specify the requirements for SEA and AA, which are welcome.</p> <p>The amended policy also supports the feasibility of Limerick Junction as a national rail freight and passenger hub, which is positive for PHH and MA and indirectly for CF and AQ. However, it is recommended that the feasibility study examine the need and for such a hub and subsequently a site selection and environmental assessment of all possible sites.</p>	<p>It is an objective to support the development of a RSES Regional Freight Strategy which includes the consideration of rail freight, the asset of our region's rail network and innovations in the freight handling and transport sector potential for electrification, lower carbon fuels and technology to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through in consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, National Transport Authority, Local Authorities, Irish Rail, relevant delivery agencies and the port and airport authorities. Support the feasibility of delivering a national rail freight and passenger hub in the region and reinstatement of freight lines on our region's rail network. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Regional Freight Strategy and the timescale for its preparation. The requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives shall be considered, as appropriate, in relation to a Regional Freight Strategy.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 142 (former RPO 137) Ports	<p>To strengthen investment to deliver actions under National Ports Policy and investment in sustainable infrastructure projects that:</p> <p>a. Strengthen and develop the strategic international, national and regional economic roles of our Tier 1 Ports (Port of Cork and Shannon-Foyes Port) and Tier 2 Ports (Port of Waterford and Rosslare Europort);</p> <p>b. Support the achievement of Tier 1 status for the Ports of Waterford and Rosslare Europort;</p> <p>c. Strengthen and develop the strategic regional economic role of other regional fishery harbours, ports and harbours;</p> <p>d. Development proposals will be subject to environmental assessment and feasibility studies to establish that any expansions can be achieved without adverse effects on any European sites and within the carrying capacity of the receiving environment of the ports</p>	<p>To strengthen investment to deliver actions under National Ports Policy and investment in sustainable infrastructure projects that:</p> <p>a. Strengthen and develop the strategic international, national and regional economic roles of our Tier 1 Ports (Port of Cork and Shannon-Foyes Port) and Tier 2 Ports (Port of Waterford and Rosslare Europort);</p> <p>b. Support the achievement of Ports of National Significance (Tier 1) status for the Ports of Waterford and Rosslare Europort</p> <p>c. Strengthen and develop the strategic regional economic role of other regional fishery harbours, ports and harbours;</p> <p>d. Support the export, fisheries, marine tourism and marine economy potential of port and harbour assets in the Southern Region as listed in Table 6.2 and support investment in the transition to smart technologies of port and harbour assets.</p> <p>e. Support the sustainable development of strategically located deep-water ports at Moneypoint and Cahiraon in line with the recommendations of the SIFP for the Shannon Estuary.</p> <p>f. Development proposals will be subject to environmental assessment, implementation of mitigation measures outlined in applicable SEAs and AAs and feasibility studies to establish that any expansions can be achieved without adverse effects on any European sites and within the carrying capacity of the receiving environment of the ports</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO include support for enterprises such as fisheries at ports and harbours and also the sustainable development of deep water ports in line with the SIFP for the Shannon Estuary.</p> <p>Point e) supports development of deep water ports at Moneypoint and Cahiraon, both of which are located on the Shannon Estuary, which is a SAC & SPA and therefore highly sensitive from an ecological perspective.</p> <p>Point f) addresses the need for any plans to facilitate growth and development of ports and harbours first ensure that it will not have any adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites.</p> <p>All port and harbour developments have the potential to impact on BFF and W and therefore should be subject to environmental assessment. Also any mitigation measures identified as part of the SEA and AA for the SIFP and any other SEA and AA processes relating to the proposed development should be implemented</p>	<p>It is an objective to strengthen investment to deliver actions under National Ports Policy and investment in sustainable infrastructure projects that:</p> <p>a. Strengthen and develop the strategic international, national and regional economic roles of our Tier 1 Ports (Port of Cork and Shannon-Foyes Port) and Tier 2 Ports (Port of Waterford and Rosslare Europort) and support the strategic role of our region's port and harbour assets under the National Marine Planning Framework;</p> <p>b. Support the achievement of Ports of National Significance Tier 1 status for the Ports of Waterford and Rosslare Europort</p> <p>c. Strengthen and develop the strategic regional economic role of other regional fishery harbours, ports and harbours;</p> <p>d. Support the export, fisheries, marine tourism and marine economy potential of port and harbour assets in the Southern Region as listed in Table 6.2 and support investment in the transition to smart technologies of port and harbour assets.</p> <p>e. Support the sustainable development of the 9 no. strategic development locations adjoining sheltered deep-water in line with the recommendations of the SIFP for the Shannon Estuary and subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA undertaken on the SIFP.</p> <p>f. Development proposals will be subject to environmental assessment, implementation of mitigation measures outlined in applicable SEAs and AAs and feasibility studies to establish that any expansions can be achieved without adverse effects on any European sites and within the carrying capacity of the receiving environment of the ports</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 145 (former RPO 140) Regional Ports and Harbour Strategy	<p>To develop a RSES Regional Ports and Harbour Strategy in consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, port authorities and other relevant stakeholders</p>	<p>To support the development of a develop a Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through in consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, port authorities, TII, NTA and other relevant stakeholders. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region and the appropriate timescale for its preparation.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region</p> <p>It is an objective to support the development of a Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, port authorities, TII, NTA and other relevant stakeholders. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region and the appropriate timescale for its preparation. The requirements for a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment shall be considered, as appropriate, in relation to a Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region.</p>	<p>Changes are welcome.</p> <p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 146 (former RPO 141) High Quality International Connectivity - Ports	<p>To achieve NSO: High Quality International Connectivity, the following port development actions are identified (subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes) while ensuring the protection of sensitive natural environments and the protection of natura sites, the protection of other harbour interests including recreation, tourism and residential amenity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development and improvement of ports by the relevant responsible commercial State-Owned Enterprises consistent with sectoral priorities defined through National Ports Policy; Continued support for capital infrastructure projects in the Port of Cork's Strategic Development Plan including redevelopment of existing port facilities in Ringaskiddy and preparing City Docks and Tivoli for future regeneration; Continued support for the capital infrastructure projects in the Shannon-Foyes Port Company Infrastructure Development Programme including capacity extension works; Continued support for Rosslare Europort and Port of Waterford to maintain and strengthen linkages with EU markets; Strategic Review of Rosslare Europort; Strengthening and maintaining access to ports through enhanced transport networks and improved journey times including support for M11 and N80 improved connectivity to Rosslare, N28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Road and N21/N69 Limerick to Adare to Foyes; Investment in maritime services programmes to support aids to navigation, Coast Guards and pollution prevention activities. 	<p>To achieve NSO: High Quality International Connectivity, the following port development actions are identified (subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and implementation of mitigation measures outlined in applicable SEAs and AAs) while ensuring the protection of sensitive natural environments and the protection of natura sites, the protection of other harbour interests including recreation, tourism and residential amenity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development and improvement of ports by the relevant responsible commercial State-Owned Enterprises consistent with sectoral priorities defined through National Ports Policy; Continued support for capital infrastructure projects in the Port of Cork's Strategic Development Plan including redevelopment of existing port facilities in Ringaskiddy and preparing City Docks and Tivoli for future regeneration; Continued support for the capital infrastructure projects in the Shannon-Foyes Port Company Infrastructure Development Programme including capacity extension works, infrastructure investment towards deep water berthage on Foyes Island and off shore resources. Continued support for Rosslare Europort and Port of Waterford to maintain and strengthen linkages with EU markets; Strategic Review of Rosslare Europort; Strengthening and maintaining access to ports through enhanced transport networks and improved journey times including support for M11 and N80 improved connectivity to Rosslare, N28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Road and N21/N69 Limerick to Adare to Foyes; Investment in maritime services programmes to support aids to navigation, Coast Guards and pollution prevention activities. 	<p>The amendment includes for infrastructure investment in deep water berthage on Foyes Island offshore resources as identified in the Shannon-Foyes Port Company Infrastructure Development Programme.</p> <p>Foyes Island lies within River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA and the Lower River Shannon SAC and therefore is located in a highly ecological sensitive area. Any development of infrastructure in this area would need to consider potential impacts on these sites in line with the Habitats Directive. Furthermore, any mitigation measures outlined as part of the SEA and AA of relevant plans such as the SFPC Masterplan should be implemented.</p>	<p>It is an objective to achieve NSO: High Quality International Connectivity, the following port development actions are identified, subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and implementation of mitigation measures outlined in applicable SEAs and AAs, while ensuring the protection of sensitive natural environments and the protection of natura sites, the protection of other harbour interests including recreation, tourism and residential amenity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development and improvement of ports by the relevant responsible commercial State-Owned Enterprises consistent with sectoral priorities defined through National Ports Policy; Continued support for capital infrastructure projects in the Port of Cork's Strategic Development Plan including redevelopment of existing port facilities in Ringaskiddy and preparing City Docks and Tivoli for future regeneration; Continued support for the capital infrastructure projects in the Shannon-Foyes Port Company Infrastructure Development Programme including capacity extension works and infrastructure investment towards deep water berthage on Foyes Island and offshore resources. Continued support for Rosslare Europort and Port of Waterford (including the port's strategic plan and Port of Waterford Corporate Plans subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in applicable SEAs and AAs) to maintain and strengthen linkages with EU markets; Strategic Review of Rosslare Europort; Strengthening and maintaining access to ports through enhanced transport networks and improved journey times including support for M11 and N80 improved connectivity to Rosslare, N28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Road and N21/N69 (Foyes to Limerick Road Scheme including Adare bypass); Investment in maritime services programmes to support aids to navigation, Coast Guards and pollution prevention activities. 	<p>Changes are welcome.</p> <p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
RPO 149 (former RPO 144) Regional Airport Strategy	<p>Develop a RSES Regional Airport Strategy in consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, Airport Authorities and other relevant stakeholders in the Southern Region.</p>	<p>To support the development of a Airport Strategy for the Southern Region to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, Airport Authorities, TII, NTA and other relevant stakeholders in the Southern Region. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Airport Strategy for the Southern Region and the timescale for its preparation.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan. It is recommended that the RSES Regional Airport Strategy be subject to environmental assessments to encourage integrated land use planning and environmental protection.</p>	<p>It is an objective to support the development of an Airport Strategy for the Southern Region to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders through consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports, Local Authorities, Airport Authorities, TII, NTA and other relevant stakeholders in the Southern Region. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring structures to be established following the adoption of the RSES will identify the scope and role of the Airport Strategy for the Southern Region and the timescale for its preparation. The requirements for a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment shall be considered, as appropriate, in relation to a Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region.</p>	<p>Changes are welcome.</p> <p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
<p>RPO 150 (former RPO 146) High Quality International Connectivity – Airports</p>	<p>To achieve NSO: High Quality International Connectivity, the following airport development actions for the Region are identified subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <p>a. Continued development and improvement of enterprise assets, access infrastructure, airport infrastructure and services at Cork and Shannon Airports by the relevant responsible commercial State-Owned Enterprises as key economic drivers, national tourism and national business gateways consistent with sectoral priorities defined through National Aviation Policy;</p> <p>b. Continued exchequer support for smaller regional airports under the Regional Airports Programme for Waterford and Kerry Airports and develop their potential as key tourism and business gateways for their regions as a complement to the services provided by the region's national airport gateways of Cork and Shannon.</p>	<p>To achieve NSO: High Quality International Connectivity, the following airport development actions for the Region are identified subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <p>a. Continued development and improvement of enterprise assets, access infrastructure, airport infrastructure and services at Cork and Shannon Airports by the relevant responsible commercial State-Owned Enterprises as key economic drivers, national tourism and national business gateways consistent with sectoral priorities defined through National Aviation Policy;</p> <p>b. Continued support for improved international connectivity through the role of our region's airport assets, support for the sustainable development of infrastructures and the safeguarding of safety zones.</p> <p>c. Support for continued exchequer assistance for regional airports under the Regional Airports Programme, support the role of Waterford Airport and Kerry Airport and develop their potential as key tourism and business gateways for their regions as a complement to the services provided by the region's national airport gateways of Cork and Shannon.</p> <p>d. Support strategic route development for airports outside of Dublin (such as Public Service Obligations) and support extension of Regional Airports Programme.</p> <p>e. Seek strengthened sustainable multi-modal transport access to airports.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO support improved international connectivity of the region's airports, support for the Regional Airports Programme (which includes Kerry and Waterford airports) and the strengthened multi-modal transport access to airports. This is positive for PHH and MA, but has potential to impact on BFF and W due to proximity of surrounding European Sites.</p> <p>There is no change to the assessments regarding the potential impacts arising from the development of regional airports. The inclusion of e) is positive on CF and AQ as it seeks sustainable transport access and thereby should reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.</p> <p>It is noted that the inclusion of new RPO H 'Low Carbon International Connectivity' along with RPO 144, which seeks a regional airport strategy, also support a greener future for the airport sectors.</p> <p>All development proposals arising from this objective should be subject to an environmental assessment including any airport masterplans to better inform land use planning and environmental protection in the region.</p>	<p>It is an objective to achieve NSO: High Quality International Connectivity, the following airport development actions for the Region are identified subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <p>a. Continued sustainable development and improvement of enterprise assets, access infrastructure, airport infrastructure and services at Cork Airport and Shannon International Airport by the relevant responsible commercial State-Owned Enterprises as key economic drivers, national tourism and national business gateways consistent with sectoral priorities defined through National Aviation Policy;</p> <p>b. Continued support for improved international connectivity through the role of our region's airport assets, support for the sustainable development of infrastructures taking into consideration Airport Public Safety Zones and the findings of the ERM Report "Public Safety Zones, 2005" along with general Airport Safeguarding and in particular the Obstacles to aircraft in flight Order, 2005 (S.I.No. 215/2005) and EASA Regulation (EU) No 139/2014.</p> <p>c. Support for continued exchequer assistance for regional airports under the Regional Airports Programme, support the role of Waterford Airport and Kerry Airport and develop their potential as key tourism and business gateways for their regions as a complement to the services provided by the region's national airport gateways of Cork Airport and Shannon International Airport.</p> <p>d. Support strategic route development for airports outside of Dublin and support extension of Regional Airports Programme to all airports under 3 million passengers as permissible under EU guidelines.</p> <p>e. Seek strengthened sustainable multi-modal inter-regional and intra-regional transport access to/from airports.</p> <p>f. Support sustainable innovative policies to boost the economic role of regional airports including through marketing partnerships with airlines, hotels, attractions and other hospitality and tourism sector stakeholders</p>	<p>Changes in objective previously flagged in excel 26-11-19, 3-12-19 & 6-12-19</p>
<p>RPO 151 (former RPO 146) Integration of land use and transport integration</p>	<p>The following principles of land use and transport integration will guide development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For urban-generated development, the development of lands, within or contiguous with existing urban areas should be prioritised over development in less accessible locations; To the extent practicable, residential development should be carried out sequentially, whereby lands which are, or will be, most accessible by walking, cycling and public transport – including infill and brownfield sites – are prioritised; Larger scale, trip intensive developments, such as offices and retail, should primarily be focused into central locations; New employment and residential development should be consolidated in a manner which renders it serviceable by public transport and accessible, at the local level, by walking, cycling and public transport. Within the Metropolitan Areas of Cork, Limerick and Waterford, except in limited planned circumstances, trip intensive developments or significant levels of development should not occur in locations which are not well served by existing high capacity public transport; Land use development in smaller rural towns shall optimise public transport and sustainable travel integration within settlements. Public transport interchange should be facilitated to encourage modal shift to public transport and sustainable travel between settlements and on approach to settlements. The strategic transport function of national roads should be maintained and protected in accordance with national policy; All non-residential development proposals should be subject to maximum parking standards as a limitation to restrict parking provision to achieve greater modal shift; In locations where the highest intensity of development occurs, an approach that caps car parking on an area-wide basis should be applied; Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles should be integrated into developments; The protection of the Natura 2000 networks and the ecological linkages connected to the Natura 2000 network. 	<p>Title change: Integration of Land Use and Transport Integration</p> <p>The following principles of land use and transport integration will guide development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For urban-generated development, the development of lands, within or contiguous with the existing urban areas should shall be prioritised over development in less accessible locations; To the extent practicable, Residential development should shall be carried out sequentially, whereby lands which are, or will be, most accessible by walking, cycling and public transport – including infill and brownfield sites – are prioritised; Larger scale, trip intensive developments, such as offices and retail, shall be should primarily focused into central locations highly accessible by sustainable transport modes; New employment and residential development should shall be consolidated and intensified in a manner which renders it serviceable by public transport and ensures that it is highly accessible, at the local level, by walking, cycling and public transport. Within the Metropolitan Areas of Cork, Limerick and Waterford, except in limited planned circumstances, trip intensive developments or significant levels of development are should not to occur in locations which are not well served by existing high capacity or an approved proposed high capacity public transport scheme that will be operational on commissioning of that development; Land use development in smaller rural towns shall shall optimise public transport and sustainable travel integration within settlements. Public transport interchange should shall be facilitated to encourage modal shift to public transport and sustainable travel between settlements and on approach to settlements. The strategic transport function of national roads shall should be maintained and protected in accordance with national policy; All non-residential development proposals shall should be subject to maximum parking standards as a limitation to restrict parking provision to achieve greater modal shift; In locations where the highest intensity of development occurs, an approach that caps car parking on an area-wide basis shall should be applied; Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles shall should be integrated into developments; The design of all roads and streets within the urban areas, including suburbs, towns and villages within the 60 kph zone shall be as per the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013), being the designated appropriate road design standards for such locations. The protection of the Natura 2000 networks and the ecological linkages connected to the Natura 2000 network. 	<p>Proposed changes are welcome from an environmental perspective. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>Integration of Land Use and Transport</p> <p>The following principles of land use and transport integration will guide development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For urban-generated development, the development of lands, within or contiguous with the existing urban areas will be prioritised over development in less accessible locations; Residential development will be carried out sequentially, whereby lands which are, or will be, most accessible by walking, cycling and public transport – including infill and brownfield sites – are prioritised; Larger scale, trip intensive developments, such as offices and retail, will be focused into central locations highly accessible by sustainable transport modes; New employment and residential development will be consolidated and intensified in a manner which renders it serviceable by public transport and ensures that it is highly accessible, by walking, cycling and public transport. Within the Metropolitan Areas of Cork, Limerick and Waterford, except in limited planned circumstances, trip intensive developments or significant levels of development will not occur in locations which are not well served by existing or proposed high capacity public transport; Land use development in smaller rural towns will optimise public transport and sustainable travel integration within settlements. Public transport interchange will be facilitated to encourage modal shift to public transport and sustainable travel between settlements and on approach to settlements. The strategic transport function of national roads will be maintained and protected in accordance with national policy; All non-residential development proposals will be subject to maximum parking standards as a limitation to restrict parking provision to achieve greater modal shift; In locations where the highest intensity of development occurs, an approach that caps car parking on an area-wide basis will be applied; Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles will be integrated into developments; The design of all roads and streets within the urban areas, including suburbs, towns and villages within the 60 kph zone shall be as per the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, being the designated appropriate road design standards for such locations. The protection of the Natura 2000 networks and the ecological linkages connected to the Natura 2000 network. 	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>RPO 152 (former RPO 147) Local Planning Objectives</p>	<p>The following planning objectives shall be incorporated into County Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Strategic Development Zone Planning Schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The management of space in town and village centres should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes to create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life; Measures to facilitate the complementary use of private car, through appropriate local traffic management including the siting of destination car-parking, is central to achieving the correct balance of modal use; Planning at the local level should prioritise walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres, public transport services, and other services at the local level such as schools; New development areas should be permeable for walking and cycling and the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling facilities should be undertaken where practicable in existing neighbourhoods, to a give competitive advantage to these modes; Where possible, developments should provide for filtered permeability. This would provide for walking, cycling, public transport and private vehicle access but at the same time would restrict or discourage private car through trips; To the extent practicable, proposals for right of way extinguishments should only be considered where these do not result in more circuitous trips for residents accessing public transport, or local destinations; Cycle parking should be appropriately designed into the urban realm and new developments at an early stage to ensure that adequate cycle parking facilities are provided; and For all major employment developments and all schools, travel plans should be conditioned as part of planning permissions and be carried out in a manner consistent with published NTA guidance. 	<p>The following planning objectives shall shall be incorporated into County Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Strategic Development Zone Planning Schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The management of space in urban areas, including suburbs, towns and villages shall in town and village centres should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes, increasing with place context value as per the provisions of the Design Manual for Roads and Streets (2013), to create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life; Measures to facilitate the complementary use of private car, through appropriate local traffic management including the siting of destination car-parking, is central to achieving the correct balance of modal use; Planning at the local level shall should prioritise walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres, public transport services, and other services at the local level such as schools; New development areas shall should be permeable for walking and cycling and the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling facilities shall should be undertaken where practicable in existing neighbourhoods, to a give competitive advantage to these modes; Where possible, developments shall should provide for filtered permeability. This would provide for walking, cycling, public transport and private vehicle access but at the same time would restrict or discourage private car through trips; To the extent practicable, proposals for right of way extinguishments shall should only be considered where these do not result in more circuitous trips for residents accessing public transport, or local destinations; Cycle parking shall should be appropriately designed into the urban realm and new developments at an early stage to ensure that adequate cycle parking facilities are provided. Cycle parking design shall provide different standards for different use groups including residents, employees, customers and visitors; and For all major employment developments and all schools, travel plans with a strong emphasis on sustainable travel modes shall should be conditioned as part of planning permissions and be carried out in a manner consistent with published NTA guidance. 	<p>Proposed changes are welcome from an environmental perspective. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>It is an objective to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes, increasing with place context value as per the provisions of the Design Manual for Roads and Streets, to create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life; Measures to facilitate the complementary use of private car, through appropriate local traffic management including the siting of destination car-parking, is central to achieving the correct balance of modal use; Planning at the local level will prioritise walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres, public transport services, and other services at the local level such as schools; New development areas will be permeable for walking and cycling and the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling facilities shall be undertaken where practicable in existing neighbourhoods, to a give competitive advantage to these modes; Where possible, developments will provide for filtered permeability. This will provide for walking, cycling, public transport and private vehicle access but at the same time will restrict or discourage private car through trips; To the extent practicable, proposals for right of way extinguishments will only be considered where these do not result in more circuitous trips for residents accessing public transport, or local destinations; Cycle parking will be appropriately designed into the urban realm and new developments at an early stage to ensure that adequate cycle parking facilities are provided and designed in accordance with cycle parking design guidelines; and For all major employment developments and all schools, travel plans with a strong emphasis on sustainable travel modes will be conditioned as part of planning permissions and be carried out in a manner consistent with published NTA guidance. Where space or other constraints prevent the full implementation of the provisions of the Design Manual for Roads and Streets, local authorities should be allowed to make their best reasonable efforts in the interests of providing accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists where inability to fulfil the requirements of the manual might otherwise mean that no accessibility improvement at all could be achieved. Support engagement with representatives of disability rights associations by local authorities when planning accessibility works to ensure that the perspective of vulnerable road users is taken into account. 	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>RPO 156 (former RPO 151) Steady State Investment</p>	<p>To strengthen Steady State Investment in our existing regional transport networks to ensure that existing networks are maintained to a high level to ensure quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity to transport users.</p>	<p>To strengthen Steady State Investment in our existing regional transport networks to ensure that existing networks are maintained to a high level to ensure quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity to transport users of all transport modes.</p>		<p>It is an objective to strengthen Steady State Investment in our existing regional transport networks to ensure that existing networks are maintained to a high level to ensure quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity to transport users of all transport modes.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>

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RPO 157 (former RPO 152): Local Transport Plans (LTP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTPs will be prepared for the key settlements by Local Authorities, based on the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) guidance produced by NTA and TII and will be focused on, but not limited to, Key Towns as designated in the RSES and other towns as identified by Local Authorities, including towns in metropolitan areas as a complement to Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and certain other development areas identified within the metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick and Waterford; LTPs will be subject to further environmental assessment at local level as part of the Local area plan process; LTPs will take into consideration the DTTAS National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport 2017-2030; LTPs shall include provision for infrastructure for electric vehicles; Local Link Offices, (Transport Co-Ordination Units) will be consulted in the development of Local Transport Plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTPs will be prepared for the key settlements by Local Authorities, based on the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) guidance produced by NTA and TII and will be focused on, but not limited to, Key Towns as designated in the RSES and other towns as identified by Local Authorities, including towns in metropolitan areas as a complement to Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and certain other development areas identified within the metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford; LTP's will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise the opportunities for the integration of land use and transport planning; Assess the existing traffic, transport and movement conditions within the plan area and in its wider context Plan for the efficient movement of people, goods and services within, to and from the Plan area; Identify the extent to which estimated transport demand associated with local development objectives can be supported and managed on the basis of existing transport assets; and Identify the transport interventions required within the plan area and in the wider context, to effectively accommodate the anticipated increase in demand. LTPs will be subject to further environmental assessment at local level as part of the Local area plan process; LTPs will take into consideration the DTTAS National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport 2017-2030; LTPs shall include provision for infrastructure for electric vehicles; Local Link Offices, (Transport Co-Ordination Units) will be consulted in the development of Local Transport Plans. 	Proposed changes are welcome from an environmental perspective. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTPs will be prepared for the key settlements by Local Authorities, based on the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) guidance produced by NTA and TII and will be focused on, but not limited to, Key Towns as designated in the RSES and other towns as identified by Local Authorities, including towns in metropolitan areas as a complement to Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and certain other development areas identified within the metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford; LTP's will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise the opportunities for the integration of land use and transport planning; Assess the existing traffic, transport and movement conditions within the plan area and in its wider context Plan for the efficient and sustainable movement of people, goods and services within, to and from the Plan area; Identify the extent to which estimated transport demand associated with local development objectives can be supported and managed on the basis of existing transport assets; and Identify the transport interventions required within the plan area and in the wider context, to effectively accommodate the anticipated increase in demand. Prioritise the delivery of sustainable and active travel infrastructure. Plan and target actions for modal shift to sustainable transport modes to facilitate a modal shift away from car dependence. Plan and target actions to retrofit permeability for green modes (walking and cycling) LTPs shall include the perspectives of vulnerable road users (e.g. wheelchair users) to be taken into account in respect of LTP's. LTPs shall be subject to further environmental assessment at local level as part of the Local area plan process; LTPs shall take into consideration the DTTAS National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport 2017-2030; LTPs shall include provision for infrastructure for electric vehicles; Local Link Offices, (Transport Co-Ordination Units) will be consulted in the development of Local Transport Plans. 	The changes will have positive effects on PHH and CH. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 160 (former RPO 155) Smart and Sustainable Mobility	To deliver on NSO: Sustainable Mobility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. This includes the following sustainable mobility investment actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Steady State investment to maintain and upgrade the existing road, rail and bus networks to provide a quality service to transport users; Support initiatives under the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to reduce congestion in our region's cities and enhance sustainable travel options through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smarter Travel projects that include traffic management, bus priority, urban cycling and urban walking routes; Continued investment in bus and rail fleets; Reduction in the use of fossil fuels for public transport and increasing use of technology and green energy sources to pursue low emission public transport fleets; Delivery of the Bus Connects programme for Cork, Limerick and Waterford metropolitan areas including associated customer services and facilities; Development of strategic park and ride sites and customer facilities; and Delivery of comprehensive cycling and walking networks with an emphasis on Cork Limerick and Waterford metropolitan areas 	<p>Retitle: Smart and Sustainable Mobility</p> <p>To deliver on NSO: Sustainable Mobility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. This includes the following sustainable mobility investment actions:</p> <p>Seek investment in initiatives that leverage intelligent transport systems and smart transport services, which would include real time information for all public transport systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the importance of public transport networks and multi-modal interchange. Support Steady State investment to maintain and upgrade the existing road, rail and bus networks to provide a quality service to transport users; Support initiatives under the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to reduce congestion in our region's cities primarily by enhancing and enhance sustainable travel options through Smarter Travel projects that include traffic management, bus priority, urban cycling and urban walking routes; Continued investment in bus and rail fleets; Reduction in the use of fossil fuels for public transport and increasing use of technology and green energy sources to pursue low emission public transport fleets; Delivery of the strategic bus network programme for Cork, Limerick and Waterford metropolitan areas including associated customer services and facilities; Development of strategic park and ride sites and customer facilities; and Investments to facilitate multi-modal travel including park and ride and multi-modal travel Delivery of comprehensive cycling and walking networks with an emphasis on Cork Limerick-Shannon and Waterford metropolitan areas Support and investigate the feasibility of sustainable water transportation services for Cork Harbour, Shannon Estuary and Waterford Harbour. 	The RPO has been broadened to include support for smart transport systems, multi modal travel systems and the sustainable development for water transportation services in Cork, Limerick and Waterford. Encouragement of sustainable mobility patterns has the potential for direct positive impacts for PHH and MA in the short, medium and long term. Furthermore indirect impacts are anticipated for CF, AQ, HH where policy encourages more efficient use of alternatives to private car use. As previously recognised the development of linear infrastructure and supporting site based infrastructure such as interchange facilities has the potential to negatively impact on the environment and as such requires to be supported by route selection and environmental assessments. The inclusion of the sustainable development of water transportation also has the potential to impact on BFF and W as a result of pollution, noise disturbance, spread of invasive species and impacts associated with supporting infrastructure and as such should be subject first to feasibility assessment and where feasible the outcome of the consent process and environmental assessment. All three harbours are located with or adjacent to European Sites and therefore potential impacts on such sites would require consideration	<p>It is an objective to deliver on NSO: Sustainable Mobility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. This includes the following sustainable mobility investment actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek investment in initiatives that leverage intelligent transport systems and smart transport services, which would include real time information for all transport systems. Recognise the importance of public transport networks and multi-modal interchange Support Steady State investment to maintain and upgrade the existing road, rail and bus networks to provide a quality service to transport users; Support initiatives under the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to reduce congestion in our region's cities primarily by enhancing sustainable travel options through Smarter Travel projects that include traffic management, bus priority, urban cycling and urban walking routes; Continued investment in bus and rail fleets; Reduction in the use of fossil fuels for public transport and increasing use of technology and green energy sources to pursue low emission public transport fleets; Delivery of the strategic bus network programmes for Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford metropolitan areas (initiatives identified as Bus Connects in the NDP) including associated customer services and facilities; Investments to facilitate park-and-ride and multi-modal travel Delivery of sustainable comprehensive cycling and walking networks with an emphasis on Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford metropolitan areas; and Support and investigate the feasibility of sustainable water transportation services for Cork Harbour, Shannon Estuary and Waterford Harbour. 	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 161 (new from MA Stage former RPO J) Smart Mobility	To support the transformative potential of E- Mobility, autonomous vehicles, Mobility as a Service transport solutions and other emerging innovations in the transport and mobility sector through transport planning at regional, metropolitan and local level. Seek investment in actions and initiatives that position the region as a leader in the digital transformation of transportation, E-Mobility and sustainable mobility.	This is broadly positive in principle, particularly having long-term direct positive impacts for MA, PHH, AQ and CF. Any infrastructural developments arising, should be subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes for sustainable transport infrastructure development.	It is an objective to support the transformative potential of E- Mobility, autonomous vehicles, Mobility as a Service transport solutions and other emerging innovations in the transport and mobility sector through transport planning at regional, metropolitan and local level. Seek investment in actions and initiatives that position the region as a leader in the digital transformation of transportation, E-Mobility and sustainable mobility.	No change.	
RPO 162 (new from MA stage former RPO K) Multi Modal Travel Integration	To deliver on sustainable mobility, investment is sought in infrastructure to provide for integration between all modes of transport to support the use of sustainable travel choices. Further details will be developed and progressed through Metropolitan Area Transport Plans, Local Transport Plans, in City/County Development Plans, Local Area Plans and SDZ's. Options to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike and Ride facilities Park and Cycle facilities Park and Car Pool facilities Public bicycle sharing facilities Car sharing (GoCar type) Integration of cycling and public transport Carriage of bicycles on trains and (selected) buses Integrated ticketing to include bike and car sharing 	<p>The policy is broadly positive for PHH, MA, AQ and CF in terms of facilitating connectivity and travel modal mix and by ensuring there is support for real world transport options that reduce dependency on low occupancy private car use. As with investment in any infrastructure, the construction of any transport option has inherent potential for negative impacts on BFF, CH, Lands, LS and W in particular as a result of short-term temporary construction-related impacts and longer-term permanent operational impacts, namely through habitat loss, species loss/disturbance and long-term emissions to air, soil and water. There is also potential for permanent loss of greenfield.</p> <p>The planning of such chains through Metropolitan Area Transport Plans, Local Transport Plans, in City/County Development Plans, Local Area Plans and SDZ's must be subject to SEA/ AA/ FRA .</p> <p>The construction and operational impacts arising from any transport proposals must be subject to robust feasibility, route/site selection, appropriate environmental assessment (EIA, AA EclA and FRA), and the planning process at the project level.</p>	<p>It is an objective to deliver on sustainable mobility, investment is sought in infrastructure to provide for integration between all modes of transport to support the use of sustainable travel choices. Further details will be developed and progressed through Metropolitan Area Transport Plans, Local Transport Plans, in City/County Development Plans, Local Area Plans and SDZ's. Options to consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike and Ride facilities Park and Cycle facilities Park and Car Pool facilities Public bicycle sharing facilities Car sharing (GoCar type) Integration of cycling and public transport Carriage of bicycles on trains and (selected) buses Integrated ticketing to include bike and car sharing Integrated ticketing/cards across bike sharing, bus use, train use and car sharing Investigate the feasibility of Mobility Hubs for major developments or multi-developments sharing the facility. The feasibility of e-scooter schemes. 	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	
RPO 163 (new RPO from MA stage former RPO L) Sustainable Mobility Targets	<p>(a): Through effective integration of land-use and transport planning, implementation of RPOs in the RSES and MASPs and actions driven through Development Plan, Local Area Plan, Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and Local Transport Plans, significant progress is sought for the Southern Region to reduce the modal share of private car travel and increase the modal share of travel by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing</p> <p>(b): Support the function of Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and Local Transport Plans to achieve higher rates of modal shift to sustainable transport.</p> <p>(c): National Smarter Travel Targets are supported which seek to achieve a reduction of work-related commuting by private car to 45% of modal share by 2020 and commuting by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing to 55% of modal share by 2020.</p> <p>(d): Targets identified across Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and Local Transport Plans shall be informed by an evidence base of existing performance and will include the identification of actions to help achieve higher performance in modal shift to sustainable mobility. Targets will be reviewed and strengthened for a higher performance continually through effective implementation and monitoring.</p>	<p>This new objective is directly positive for CF and AQ and indirectly positive for PH, BFF and W. It is similar to RPO 155 on 'sustainable mobility'.</p> <p>The new RPO proposes to set out measurable targets that will be monitored and reviewed. Any identified actions to help achieve higher performances in modal shift to sustainable mobility will require feasibility and environmental assessment to ensure potential for negative effects are avoided or minimised.</p>	<p>It is an objective that:</p> <p>(a): Through effective integration of land-use and transport planning, implementation of RPOs in the RSES and MASPs and actions driven through Development Plan, Local Area Plan, Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and Local Transport Plans, significant progress is sought for the Southern Region to reduce the modal share of private car travel and increase the modal share of travel by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing</p> <p>(b): Support the function of Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and Local Transport Plans to achieve higher rates of modal shift to sustainable transport.</p> <p>(c): National Smarter Travel Targets are supported which seek to achieve a reduction of work-related commuting by private car to 45% of modal share by 2020 and commuting by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing to 55% of modal share by 2020. Such targets are nationwide average targets and higher achievement under lower tiered plans such as for metropolitan areas are supported.</p> <p>(d): Targets identified across Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and Local Transport Plans shall be informed by an evidence base of existing performance and will include the identification of actions to help achieve higher performance in modal shift to sustainable mobility. Targets will be reviewed and strengthened for a higher performance continually through effective implementation and monitoring.</p> <p>(e): Local Authorities to set complementary sustainable mobility targets in development plan reviews.</p> <p>(f): Greater emphasis should be placed on encouraging mixed use developments on regeneration sites within the city and suburbs through supportive development plan policies to encourage sustainable mobility trip patterns.</p>	Changes are positive for PHH, AQ and CF. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	
RPO 166 (former RPO 158): Investment in Strategic Inter Regional Multi-Modal Connectivity to Metropolitan Areas and Economic Corridors	<p>a. Achieve and maintain the sustainable development of infrastructure that strengthens the quality of inter-regional connectivity between the metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford to each other and to other regions on the Atlantic Economic Corridor.</p> <p>b. Maintain the efficiency and safety of the existing national primary and secondary roads network by targeted transport demand and improvements.</p>	<p>a. Achieve and maintain the sustainable development of infrastructure that strengthens the quality of inter-regional connectivity between the metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford to each other and to other regions on the Atlantic Economic Corridor, extended Dublin-Belfast Eastern Corridor and to ports and airports, subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>b. Strengthen the quality of north to south Cork to Limerick (proposed M20 and Rail) connectivity, east to west Cork to Waterford (N25) connectivity and east to west Limerick to Waterford (potential upgrade of N24 to M24 and Rail) connectivity.</p> <p>c. Maintain the efficiency and safety of the existing national primary and secondary roads network by targeted transport demand management and infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>d. Facilities for sustainable transport are supported in strengthening the quality of inter-regional connectivity.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO serve to strengthen connectivity within the region through the road and rail network including sustainable transport links within urban areas. This is directly positive for PHH and MA. However, as already identified, the construction of any linear transport option has inherent potential for negative impacts on the environment and in particular on BFF, CH, Lands, LS and W.</p> <p>All associated development should be subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. It is welcome to see the requirement for this noted in section a.</p>	<p>It is an objective to:</p> <p>a. Achieve and maintain the sustainable development of infrastructure that strengthens the quality of inter-regional connectivity between the metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford to each other and to other regions on the Atlantic Economic Corridor, extended Dublin-Belfast Eastern Corridor and to ports and airports</p> <p>b. Strengthen the quality of Cork to Limerick connectivity (proposed M20 and Rail), Cork to Waterford connectivity (N25) and Limerick to Waterford connectivity (N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction and N24 Waterford to Cahir and rail) as identified in the NDP.</p> <p>c. Maintain the efficiency and safety of the existing national primary and secondary roads network by targeted transport demand management and infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>d. Facilities for sustainable transport are supported in strengthening the quality of inter-regional connectivity</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.

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<p>RPO 167 (former RPO 159): National Road Projects</p>	<p>The provision of the following National Road Projects to be delivered during the period up to 2027 to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> M20 Cork to Limerick N8/N25 Dunkettle Interchange; N69 Listowel Bypass; N28 Cork to Ringaskiddy; N21/N69 Limerick to Adare to Foynes; N22 Ballyjourney to Macroom; N72/N73 Mallow Relief Road; N25 New Ross Bypass; M11 Gorey to Enniscorthy <p>The progression of the following National Road Projects at pre-appraisal stages to achieve NSO:</p> <p>Enhanced Regional Accessibility, subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N11 Oligate to Rosslare; N21 Newcastle West Bypass; N21 Abbeyfeale By pass; N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction; N24 Waterford to Cahir; N25 Waterford to Glenmore; N25 Carrigtwohill to Middleton <p>The provision of the following Strategic Road Projects are supported by the RSES to achieve NSO International Connectivity NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility and NSO Sustainable Mobility, subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orbital road network improvements in the Cork Metropolitan Area Cork Northern Ring Road connecting N22 to the M8 (RSES supports the Cork Northern Ring connecting the N22 to M8 as a complementary scheme to the M20 as identified in the NDP) Maintenance and improvements on the N71, N72, N73, N86 Corridors. Upgrade and improve N24 Limerick to Waterford Corridor. Upgrade and improve the N80 Enniscorthy to Carlow, Portlaoise and the Midlands Upgrade and improve the N25 Waterford to Cork Maintain and improve the, N30, N77 and N78 <p>Refer to RSES Chapter 3 Key Towns for specific strategic relief road projects to enable the potential for sustainable growth, regeneration and enhanced active travel and public transport services to town centres in these settlements.</p>	<p>The provision of National Road Projects to be delivered during the period up to 2027 to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes are supported. Under this RPO, where works to any part of the strategic road network are supported, the potential for improved sustainable transport shall be considered.</p> <p>Under this RPO, for identified strategic road network improvements not included in the current NDP for the period 2018-2027, RSES seeks that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's current priorities remain in accordance with National Development Plan 2018-2027 priorities only. Improvements to national roads identified at a regional and local level shall be done in consultation with and subject to agreement with TII in accordance with current project appraisal, environment and planning procedures. DTTS/TII may not be responsible for the funding of any such schemes or improvements. <p>The following National Road Related Schemes and Projects under Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan for National Roads are supported:</p> <p>M20 Cork to Limerick N8/N25 Dunkettle Interchange; N69 Listowel Bypass; N28 Cork to Ringaskiddy; N21/N69 Limerick to Adare to Foynes (including Adare By Pass); N22 Ballyjourney to Macroom; N72/N73 Mallow Relief Road; N25 New Ross Bypass; M11 Gorey to Enniscorthy</p> <p>The progression of the following National Road Projects at pre-appraisal stages to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility, subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes are supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N11 Oligate to Rosslare; N21 Newcastle West Bypass; N21 Abbeyfeale By pass; N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction; N24 Waterford to Cahir; N25 Waterford to Glenmore; N25 Carrigtwohill to Middleton <p>The provision of the following National Road Related Schemes and projects are also supported as strategic regional priorities to achieve NSO Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the recommendations of the three MASP's, the preparation of associated Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and the preparation of Local Transport Plans for key settlements and other urban centres where applicable. These measures are also subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cork Northern Ring Road connecting the N22 to the M8 (a complementary scheme to the M20 identified in the NDP to be assessed as part of an overall transport strategy for the Cork Metropolitan Area. The outcome of the finalised CMATS is required to determine the nature and status of the scheme). Orbital road network improvements in the Cork Metropolitan Area. New or improved orbital routes on the northern and southern sides of Cork City city N27 Cork-Cork International Airport N40 Junction improvements at Curraheen for CSIP Improved road access between the N25 and Cobh (including R624 to Marino Point and Cobh). Limerick Southside Accessibility Project M20/M7 Interchange Limerick Northern Distributor Route (LNDRI) connect N18 to M7. Upgrade and improve the N24 Limerick to Waterford Corridor. New interchange M18 Quin Road Ennis Improvements N71, N72, N73, N86 Corridors N22 Farranfore-Killarney Bypass. M11/M25 from Oligate to Rosslare Improvements to N30 (including Clonroche By Pass) Upgrade N80 Enniscorthy to Carlow and Midlands N80-R448 Carlow Southern Relief Road Maintain and improve N77, N78 Upgrade and improve N29-access to Port of Waterford Belview. Upgrade N62 Horse and Jockey to Thurles, to connect with M7 and M8 N67/N85 Blakes Corner Ennistimon N85 Kilnamona Road Improvement Scheme <p>Refer to RSES Chapter 3 Key Towns for specific strategic relief road projects to enable the potential for sustainable growth, regeneration and enhanced active travel and public transport services to town centres in these settlements.</p>	<p>The proposed changes to the RPO clarify the scope and role for TII where projects fall outside of the NDP for the period 2018-2027. No additional environment impacts identified.</p>	<p>The provision of National Road Projects to be delivered during the period up to 2027 to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes are supported. Under this RPO, where works to any part of the strategic road network are supported, the potential for improved sustainable transport shall be considered. The potential for nature-based design solutions for mitigation design shall be considered. Part (A) Projects Identified Under the NDP including Pre-Appraisal Stages</p> <p>The following National Road Related Schemes and Projects under Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan for National Roads are supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> M20 Limerick to Cork Scheme N8/N25 Dunkettle Road Interchange; N69 Listowel bypass; N28 Cork to Ringaskiddy; N21/N69 Foynes to Limerick Road Scheme (including Adare bypass); N22 Ballyjourney to Macroom; N20 Mallow Relief Road; N25 New Ross Bypass; N11 Gorey to Enniscorthy including N30 link. N86 (Tralee to An Daingean). <p>The progression of the following National Road Projects at pre-appraisal stages to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility, subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N11/N25 Oligate to Rosslare; N21 Newcastle West bypass; N21 Abbeyfeale bypass; N22 Farranfore to Killarney; N24 Waterford to Cahir/Cahir to Limerick Junction; N25 Waterford to Glenmore; N25 Carrigtwohill to Middleton <p>Part B Other Projects</p> <p>Under this RPO, for identified strategic road network improvements not included in the current NDP for the period 2018-2027, RSES seeks that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's current priorities remain in accordance with National Development Plan 2018-2027 priorities only. Improvements to national roads identified at a regional and local level will be done in consultation with and subject to agreement with TII in accordance with current project appraisal, environment and planning procedures. DTTS/TII may not be responsible for the funding of any such schemes or improvements. <p>The provision of the following projects are also supported as strategic regional priorities to achieve NSO Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the recommendations of the three MASP's, the preparation of associated Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and the preparation of Local Transport Plans for key settlements and other urban centres where applicable. These measures are also subject to robust feasibility studies and site/route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cork Northern Ring Road (CNRR) is a complementary scheme to the N/M20 Cork to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme, identified in the NDP. It has been assessed as part of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS). It is expected that the CNRR project will be planned for implementation during the latter period of the CMATS. The finalisation of a route corridor and its protection from development intrusion is an objective of CMATS to allow for changing circumstances including potentially an earlier project delivery requirement. N27 Cork-Cork International Airport N40 Junction improvements at Curraheen for CSIP Limerick Southside Accessibility Project M20/M7 Interchange Limerick Northern Distributor Route (LNDRI) connect N18 to M7. Upgrade and improve the N24 Limerick to Waterford Corridor. New interchange M18 Quin Road Ennis Improvements N71, N72, N73, N77, N78 Corridors Improvements to N30 (including Clonroche By Pass) Upgrade N80 Enniscorthy to Carlow and Midlands Upgrade and improve N29-access to Port of Waterford Belview. Upgrade N62 Horse and Jockey to Thurles, to connect with M7 and M8 N67/N85 Blakes Corner Ennistimon N85 Kilnamona Road Improvement Scheme 	<p>Changes are as a result of relocation between Sub Parts A & B or a more accurate description of schemes. No new projects are included.</p> <p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>RPO 168 (former RPO 160): Investment in Regional and Local Roads</p>	<p>The following national, regional and local road and transport initiatives will be progressed to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shannon Crossing; Dingle Relief Road; Coonagh to Knockalisheen Main Contract; Realignment of R498 Nenagh/Thurles road at Latteragh; Killaloe Bypass/R494 upgrade; Cork Northern Ring Road connecting the N22 to the M8 Carrigaline Western Distributor Road. Cork Airport Improved Connectivity Limerick Northern Distributor Road Limerick Southside Accessibility Project M20/M7 Interchange. Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh and designation to National Road Status Upgrade of the R630 Regional Road linking Middleton to Whitegate Road (Energy Hub). Upgrade of the R558 Regional Road linking Tralee to Fenit Port. Limerick R527 Dock Road, R445 Dublin Road, R527 Tipperary Road. Upgrade and improve the N29 - access to Port of Waterford Belview Upgrade and improve the R418 Tullogh to Castledermot and Junction 4, M9 <p>Examples of projects currently subject to appraisal are set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thurles Relief road; Tralee Northern Relief Road; Carlow Southern Relief Road (N80-R448); Abbey Road to Belmont Link Road – Ferrybank. 	<p>The following regional and local road and transport measures will be progressed to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the recommendations of the three MASP's, the preparation of associated Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and the preparation of Local Transport Plans for key settlements and other urban centres where applicable. These measures are also subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Under this RPO, where works to any part of the strategic road network are supported, the potential for improved sustainable transport shall be considered.</p> <p>Under this RPO, for identified strategic road network improvements not included in the current NDP for the period 2018-2027, RSES seeks that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's current priorities remain in accordance with National Development Plan 2018-2027 priorities only. Improvements to roads identified at a regional and local level shall be in accordance with current project appraisal, environment and planning procedures. DTTS/TII may not be responsible for the funding of any such schemes or improvements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shannon Crossing; Dingle Relief Road; Coonagh to Knockalisheen Main Contract; Realignment of R498 Nenagh/Thurles road at Latteragh; Killaloe Bypass/R494 upgrade; Cork Northern Ring Road connecting the N22 to the M8 The Cork Northern Distributor Road Carrigaline Western Distributor Road. Cork Airport Improved Connectivity Limerick Northern Distributor Road Limerick Southside Accessibility Project M20/M7 Interchange. Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy. Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh and designation to National Road Status Upgrade of the R630 Regional Road linking Midleton to Whitegate Road (Energy Hub) and designation to National Road Status. Upgrading the R586 Regional Road from Bandon to Bantry via Dunmanway and support for designation to National Road Status. Upgrading of the R572 linking Castletownbere Port to the N71 Upgrade of the R558 Regional Road linking Tralee to Fenit Port. 	<p>The proposed changes to the RPO clarify the scope and role for TII where projects fall outside of the NDP for the period 2018-2027. No additional environment impacts identified.</p>	<p>The following regional and local road and transport measures will be progressed to achieve NSO: Enhanced Regional Accessibility subject to the recommendations of the three MASP's, the preparation of associated Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and the preparation of Local Transport Plans for key settlements and other urban centres where applicable. These measures are also subject to robust feasibility studies and site/ route selection to reduce impacts on the environment and required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>Under this RPO, where works to any part of the strategic road network are supported, the potential for improved sustainable transport shall be considered. The potential for nature-based design solutions for mitigation design shall be considered. Part (A) Projects Identified Under the NDP including Pre-Appraisal Stages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shannon Crossing; Dingle Relief Road; Coonagh to Knockalisheen Main Contract; Realignment of R498 Nenagh/Thurles road at Latteragh; Killaloe Bypass/R494 upgrade; Carrigaline Western Distributor Road. <p>Examples of projects currently subject to appraisal are set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thurles Relief road; Tralee Northern Relief Road; Carlow Southern Relief Road (N80-R448); <p>Part B Other Projects</p> <p>Under this RPO, for identified strategic road network improvements not included in the current NDP for the period 2018-2027, RSES seeks that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's current priorities remain in accordance with National Development Plan 2018-2027 priorities only. Improvements to roads identified at a regional and local level will be in accordance with current project appraisal, environment and planning procedures. DTTS/TII may not be responsible for the funding of any such schemes or improvements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New or improved orbital routes on the Northern and Southern sides of Cork City The Cork Northern Distributor Road 	<p>Changes are as a result of relocation between Sub Parts A & B or a more accurate description of schemes. No new projects are included.</p> <p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>

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		<p>Limerick R527 Dock Road, R445 Doolin Road, R527 Tipperary Road.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R471 access to Shannon Free Zone. L3126 to Bunratty Castle. Thurles Inner-Relief Road Upgrade R498 Thurles to Nenagh Improve access from New Ross to the M9 Upgrade and improve the N29 – access to Port of Waterford-Belview Upgrade and improve the R418 Tullow to Castledermot and Junction 4, M9 Upgrade of the R 672 linking Clonmel & Dungarvan <p>Examples of projects currently subject to appraisal are set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thurles Relief road; Tralee Northern Relief Road; Carlow Southern Relief Road (N80-R448); Abbey Road to Belmont Link Road – Ferrybank. <p>Refer to RSES Chapter 3 Key Towns for specific strategic relief road projects to enable the potential for sustainable growth, regeneration and enhanced active travel and public transport services to town centres in these settlements.</p>		<p>Final RSES 31-1-2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh and designation to National Road Status Upgrade of the R630 Regional Road linking Middleton to Whitegate Road (Energy Hub) and designation to National Road Status. Upgrading the R586 Regional Road from Bandon to Bantry via Dunmanway and support for designation to National Road Status. Upgrading of the R572 linking Castletownbere Port to the N71 Upgrade of the R558 Regional Road linking Tralee to Fenit Port. Limerick R527 Dock Road, R445 Dublin Road, R527 Tipperary Road. R471 access to Shannon Free Zone. L3126 to Bunratty Castle. Upgrade R498 Thurles to Nenagh Improve access from New Ross to the M9 Upgrade and improve the R418 Tullow to Castledermot and Junction 4, M9. Upgrade of the R 672 linking Clonmel & Dungarvan Abbey Road to Belmont Link Road – Ferrybank. <p>Refer to RSES Chapter 3 Key Towns for specific strategic relief road projects to enable the potential for sustainable growth, regeneration and enhanced active travel and public transport services to town centres in these settlements.</p>	
<p>RPO 170 (former RPO 162) Rail</p>	<p>To strengthen investment in the maintenance, improvement and strengthening of rail networks in the Region subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimisation of the existing rail network assets and the protection of these assets for our region's transition to greater levels of sustainable mobility, use of rail and achievement of lower carbon emissions; Investment in upgrading and modernisation of fleet, rail infrastructure and passenger facilities; Investment in commuter rail stations and services, especially in cities, suburbs and metropolitan areas; Investment in park and ride and multi-modal transport interconnection facilities with rail networks; Achieve improved journey times and frequencies; As identified in the National Development Plan, the Dublin – Limerick Junction/Cork rail lines are subject to an examination to move to higher speeds leading to improved connectivity to regional cities through improved rail journey times. An evaluation of the economic benefits of high-speed rail between Dublin-Belfast, Dublin-Limerick Junction and Dublin-Cork against improvements to existing line speeds will be carried out against relevant appraisal processes and value-for-money tests required by the Public Spending Code by 2020; Support feasibility assessments and investment in infrastructure to achieve high speed intercity rail services; 	<p>To seek to strengthen investment in the maintenance, improvement and strengthening of the rail network in the Region subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This will provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future proofed infrastructures for rail in our transition to smart transport networks and low carbon society Improved journey times, services and passenger facilities to encourage greater use of rail travel between cities, towns and villages on the rail network across the region. Take immediate actions to transition transport fleets to non-fossil fuel and renewable / low emission energy sources. Invest in integrated, real-time, passenger information systems and passenger facilities. Optimisation of the existing rail network assets and the protection of these assets for our region's transition to greater levels of sustainable mobility, use of rail and achievement of lower carbon emissions; Investment in upgrading and modernisation of fleet, rail infrastructure and passenger facilities; Investment in commuter rail stations and services, especially in cities, suburbs and metropolitan areas; Investment in park and ride and multi-modal transport interconnection facilities with rail networks; Achieve improved journey times and frequencies; As identified in the National Development Plan, the Dublin – Limerick Junction/Cork rail lines are subject to an examination to move to higher speeds leading to improved connectivity to regional cities through improved rail journey times. An evaluation of the economic benefits of high-speed rail between Dublin-Belfast, Dublin-Limerick Junction and Dublin-Cork against improvements to existing line speeds will be carried out against relevant appraisal processes and value-for-money tests required by the Public Spending Code by 2020; Support feasibility assessments and investment in infrastructure to achieve high speed intercity rail services; Optimise rail freight to ports in the Southern Region. 	<p>Proposed changes are welcome from an environmental perspective. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>It is an objective to seek to strengthen investment in the maintenance, improvement and strengthening of the rail network in the Region subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process. This will provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future proofed infrastructures for rail in our transition to smart transport networks and low carbon society Improved journey times, services and passenger facilities to encourage greater use of rail travel between cities, towns and villages on the rail network across the region. Take immediate actions to transition transport fleets to non-fossil fuel and renewable / low emission energy sources. Invest in integrated, real-time, passenger information systems and passenger facilities including weather proofed facilities. Optimisation of the existing rail network assets and the protection of these assets for our region's transition to greater levels of sustainable mobility, use of rail and achievement of lower carbon emissions; Investment in upgrading and modernisation of fleet, rail infrastructure and passenger facilities; Investment in commuter rail stations and services, especially in cities, suburbs and metropolitan areas; Investment in bike- and-ride and park-and-ride and multi-modal transport interconnection facilities with rail networks; Achieve improved and consistent journey times and frequencies; As identified in the National Development Plan, the Dublin – Limerick Junction/Cork rail lines are subject to an examination to move to higher speeds leading to improved connectivity to regional cities through improved rail journey times. An evaluation of the economic benefits of high-speed rail between Dublin-Belfast, Dublin-Limerick Junction and Dublin-Cork against improvements to existing line speeds will be carried out against relevant appraisal processes and value-for-money tests required by the Public Spending Code by 2020; Support feasibility assessments and investment in infrastructure to achieve high-speed intercity rail services; Optimise rail freight to ports in the Southern Region. 	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>RPO 171 (former RPO 163) Bus</p>	<p>To sustainably develop bus networks in the region focused on the following subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process, during the period of the RSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in bus network and service improvements; Network reviews for the larger settlements across the Region, with a view to providing local bus services; Review of local bus services throughout the region, including services to small towns and villages and the rural transport programme; New fare structures; Enhanced passenger information; and Improvements to bus waiting facilities 	<p>Through the functions of the NTA, seek the development of bus networks in the region focused on the following subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process, during the period of the RSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of a bus service network development strategy for the region through the relevant stakeholders Investment in bus network and service improvements; Network reviews for the larger settlements across the Region, with a view to providing improved local bus services; Review of bus services between settlements; Review of local bus services throughout the region, including services to small towns and villages and the rural transport programme; New fare structure that fully integrates all public transport modes including bicycle share, car share etc. Such systems need to be easy to use and attractive for commuters to incentivise uptake, including carrying of bicycles on trains and inter-urban buses. Enhanced passenger information Improvements to bus waiting facilities Support strategic bus networks through identification, safeguarding and phasing of strategic bus network routes throughout Southern Regional Cities Enhanced rural bus services including Local Link and community bus services. Upgrade of bus fleet to low carbon/low emission. Buses to be accessible for all 	<p>The development of a bus service network development strategy is welcomed and will contribute to positive impacts for MA and PHH particularly where consultation can focus on accessibility and inclusivity.</p> <p>Improvements to fare structures and systems management which seek to encourage better uptake of a range of transport modes will also lead to positive impacts for MA and PHH with indirect positive impacts for AQ and CF also. However, as identified in the assessment, the development of bus infrastructure has the potential to impact to the environment.</p> <p>The amendments to include upgrading of bus fleet to low carbon/emissions is positive from and CF and AQ perspective .</p>	<p>It is an objective through the functions of the NTA, to seek the development of bus networks in the region focused on the following subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process, during the period of the RSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of a bus service network development strategy for the region through the relevant stakeholders Investment in bus network and service improvements; Network reviews for the larger settlements across the Region, with a view to providing improved local bus services; Review of bus services between settlements; Review of local bus services throughout the region, including services to small towns and villages and the rural transport programme; New interchange facilities; New fare structure that fully integrates all public transport modes including bicycle share, car share etc. Such systems need to be easy to use and attractive for commuters to incentivise uptake, including carrying of bicycles on trains and inter-urban buses. Enhanced passenger information Improvements to bus waiting facilities and bike-and-ride Support strategic bus networks (initiatives identified as Bus Connects in the NDP) through identification, safeguarding and phasing of strategic bus network Bus Connects routes throughout Southern Region's Cities and metropolitan areas Enhanced rural bus services including Local Link and community bus services. Upgrade of bus fleet to low carbon/low emission. Buses to be accessible for all Support direct inter-regional bus services between the cities and key access points such as airports. 	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>RPO 174 (former RPO 166) Walking and Cycling</p>	<p>The following walking and cycling objectives will guide investment subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the cycle network set out in the three regional cities' metropolitan area Cycle Network Plans, inclusive of key commuter routes and greenways subject to SEA and AA where required; Delivery of cycle routes, Greenway and Blueway corridor projects, having regard to the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways July 2018; Provide safe cycling routes in towns and villages where appropriate across the region; Enhance pedestrian facilities in all urban areas in the region; A buffer distance shall be maintained between walking, cycling, Greenway and Blueway corridors and from coastal areas, particularly those subject to current and future erosion, as well as rivers and canals to ensure protection of riparian zones and; Such initiatives shall commit to feasibility and route selection studies with a view to identifying and subsequently avoiding high sensitivity feeding or nesting points for birds and other sensitive fauna. 	<p>The following walking and cycling objectives are supported and will guide investment subject to the required appraisal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the cycle network set out in the three regional cities' metropolitan area Cycle Network Plans, inclusive of key commuter routes and greenways subject to SEA and AA where required; Delivery of cycle routes, Greenway and Blueway corridor projects subject to appropriate site selection and environmental assessment processes, having regard to the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways July 2018; Provide safe cycling routes in towns and villages where appropriate across the region; Delivery of high-quality safe cycle route network across the region and cycling environments (applicable to cities, towns and villages) with provision for segregated cycle tracks. Development of a safe cycling infrastructure to cater for the needs of all groups of cyclists, especially new cyclists, school children, elderly etc. Safe cycle routes especially in the approach to schools. Greenways in the region shall be linked up to a network to improve connectivity within the region for commuter cyclists in addition to recreational amenity functions. Creating a safer environment for cyclists off the arterial roads shall be supported by large scale 30 km/h limits (except for main arterial roads) and adequate junction re-design. A cycle network that is coherent, continuous and safe, particularly when going through busy junctions. Alternative "quiet" routes must be established and signposted for cycling and walking to improve the experience and uptake of active travel. All significant development proposals shall be required to provide a Quality Audit, as referred to in the Design Manual for Roads and Streets. Place walkability and accessibility by walking mode as a central objective in the planning and design of all new developments/new development areas, transport infrastructure and public transport services. Enhance pedestrian facilities in all urban areas in the region; A buffer distance shall be maintained between walking, cycling, Greenway and Blueway corridors and from coastal areas, particularly those subject to current and future erosion, as well as rivers and canals to ensure protection of riparian zones and; Such initiatives shall commit to feasibility and route selection studies with a view to identifying and subsequently avoiding high sensitivity feeding or nesting points for birds and other sensitive fauna. 	<p>Improvements in walking and cycling investment as outlined in the RPO will have indirect positive impacts for PHH, MA, CF and AQ in particular as it provides real alternatives to private car use. As noted elsewhere in the assessment, delivery of any linear infrastructure has potential for negative impact on a range of environmental receptors as a result of both construction and operation. Cycling and walking routes can result in negative impacts for BFF as a result of habitat loss and disturbance and species disturbance, water pollution, impacts to CH and IadS. These issues can be addressed to a large degree through thoughtful route and site selection.</p>	<p>The following walking and cycling objectives are supported and will guide investment subject to the required appraisal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the cycle network set out in the three regional cities' metropolitan area Cycle Network Plans, inclusive of key commuter routes and greenways subject to SEA and AA where required; Delivery of cycle routes, Greenway and Blueway corridor projects to subject to appropriate site selection and environmental assessment processes, having regard to the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways July 2018; Delivery of high-quality safe cycle route network across the region and cycling environments (applicable to cities, towns and villages) with provision for segregated cycle tracks. Development of a safe cycling infrastructure to cater for the needs of all groups of cyclists, especially new cyclists, school children, elderly etc. Safe walking and cycle routes especially in the approach to schools. Greenways in the region shall be linked up to a network to improve connectivity within the region for walking routes and commuter cyclists in addition to recreational amenity functions. Creating a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists off the arterial roads shall be supported by large scale 30 km/h limits (except for main arterial roads) and adequate junction re-design. A cycle network that is coherent, continuous and safe, particularly when going through busy junctions. Alternative "quiet" routes must be established and signposted for cycling and walking to improve the experience and uptake of active travel. All significant development proposals shall be required to provide a Quality Audit, as referred to in the Design Manual for Roads and Streets. Place walkability and accessibility by walking mode as a central objective in the planning and design of all new developments/new development areas, transport infrastructure and public transport services. Enhance pedestrian facilities in all urban areas in the region; A buffer distance shall be maintained between walking, cycling, Greenway and Blueway corridors and from coastal areas, particularly those subject to current and future erosion, as well as rivers and canals to ensure protection of riparian zones and; Such initiatives shall commit to feasibility and route selection studies with a view to identifying and subsequently avoiding high sensitivity feeding or nesting points for birds and other sensitive fauna. 	<p>Changes refer to inter connections between greenways. Protective Polices RPO 1 and RPO 193 and the in-built mitigation in this RPO are important to ensure that selection and environmental assessment processes are undertaken prior to delivery of such schemes.</p> <p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
Chapter 7 Quality of Life					
<p>RPO 177 (former RPO 169) Childcare, Education, and Health Services</p>	<p>To improve access to Quality Childcare, Education, and Health Services through initiatives and projects under the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2027</p>	<p>To improve access to Quality Childcare, Education, and Health Services through initiatives and projects under the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2027, alignment with Healthy Ireland and support development of outreach and community services for an expanding and ageing population.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>It is an objective to improve access to quality childcare, education, and health services through initiatives and projects under the National Development Plan, alignment with Healthy Ireland and support development of outreach and community services for an expanding and ageing population.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>RPO 178 (former RPO 170) Universal Health Services</p>	<p>Delivery of better universal health services including mental health, at all levels of service delivery</p>	<p>Delivery of better universal health services including mental health, at all levels of service delivery, including provision of 24 Hour Accident and Emergency Services and implementation of Sláintecare for an expanding and ageing population.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>It is an objective to seek the delivery of better universal health services including mental health, at all levels of service delivery, including provision of 24 Hour Accident and Emergency Services and implementation of Sláintecare for an expanding and ageing population across the Region.</p>	<p>No change.</p>

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
RPO 179 (former RPO 171 and RPO 172 combined) Diverse and Socially Inclusive Society	To plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society, prioritising parity of opportunity and improved well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the region through enhanced integration programmes and measures to support sustainably accessible communities and the provision of associated services.	To plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society which: (a) Recognises the positive contribution of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers to multi-cultural communities and the economic life of an area and supports Government policy The Migrant Integration Strategy; (b) Prioritises parity of opportunity and improved well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the region including for example LGBT community, travellers and minority groups through enhanced integration programmes, measures to support sustainable accessible communities and the provision of associated services.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to a plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society which: (a) Recognises the positive contribution of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers to multi-cultural communities and the economic life of an area and supports government policy The Migrant Integration Strategy; (b) Prioritises parity of opportunity and improved well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the Region including for example LGBT+ community, travellers and minority groups through enhanced integration programmes, measures to support sustainable accessible communities and the provision of associated services.	No change.
RPO 180 (New at MA Stage) Volunteering and Active Citizenship		To support the empowerment of individuals and groups in communities through volunteering and active citizenship, recognising the collective contribution of time and effort to the common good. Local Authorities and other public bodies and agencies should support active citizen engagement, whether it is through participation in a resident's association or lobby group, or volunteering to help out in a local sports club, caring for a family member or neighbour or simply being active and caring about the local neighbourhood, the environment as well as larger global and national issues.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support the empowerment of individuals and groups in communities through volunteering and active citizenship, recognising the collective contribution of time and effort to the common good. Local authorities and other public bodies and agencies should support active citizen engagement, such as participation in a resident's association or lobby group, or volunteering to help out in a local sports club, caring for a family member or neighbour or simply being active and caring about the local neighbourhood, the environment as well as larger global and national issues.	No change.
RPO 181 (former RPO 173) Equal Access	To improve equal access for abled and disabled people and universal design for public transport access, housing, social, cultural and recreational facilities and the public realm to improve quality of life equally for abled and disabled citizens in our region. Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to investment in infrastructure and facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment	To promote disability awareness and improve equal access for all through universal design for public transport access, housing, social, cultural and recreational facilities and the public realm to improve quality of life equally for abled and disabled citizens in our region. Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to investment in infrastructure and facilities is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to promote disability awareness and improve equal access for all through universal design for public transport access, housing, social, cultural and recreational facilities and the public realm to improve quality of life equally for abled and disabled citizens in our Region. Local authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to investment in infrastructure and facilities is informed by engagement with representatives of disability support organisations to ensure that perspectives of those they represent (e.g. wheelchair users) are understood and an appropriate level of environmental assessment.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 183 (former RPO 175) Digital Strategies	Local Authority Digital Strategies should ensure that an older age-cohort is not disadvantaged through lack of access to training and supports for new technologies	Local Authority Digital Strategies should ensure that an older age-cohort is not disadvantaged through lack of access to training and supports for new technologies take account of the aging population and varying levels of technological know-how and access and should prepare detailed strategies in collaboration with education providers to address training needs and support digital literacy. These strategies should focus on and promote the development of new technologies, interfaces, and methods to address the challenges faced by the aging population and should prioritise technological solutions that address these challenges. Local authorities and other agencies should prioritise the adoption of technologies that allow for greater access to facilities and services for all citizens regardless of age and technological competency.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	Local Authority Digital Strategies should take account of the aging population and varying levels of technological know-how and access and should prepare detailed strategies in collaboration with education providers to address training needs and support digital literacy. These strategies should focus on and promote the development of new technologies, interfaces, and methods to address the challenges faced by the ageing population and should prioritise technological solutions that address these challenges. Local authorities and other agencies should prioritise the adoption of technologies that allow for greater access to facilities and services for all citizens regardless of age and technological competency.	No change.
RPO 184 (former RPO 176) TUSE and MTU	To support the establishment of the Technological University for the South-East (TUSE) and the Munster Technological University (MTU)	To support the further enhancement of higher education provision in the region through the establishment of two new high quality universities of international standing, the Multi-Campus Technological University of the South East (TUSE) including development of the Wexford Campus and the Munster Technological University (MTU) and development of associated land and buildings for associated enterprise and industry.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support the further enhancement of higher education provision in the Region through the establishment of two new high-quality universities of international standing, the Technological University for the South-East (TUSE), including development of the Wexford Campus, and the Munster Technological University (MTU) and other future collaborations between third level institutions.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 185 (former RPO 177) New School Facilities	To support a planned approach to location of our education provision of new school facilities within reasonable access of public transport and active travel modes. Local Authorities should ensure that a robust site selection process is followed in the selection of new school locations and that decision-making is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment. New development/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.	To support a planned approach to location of our education provision of new school facilities such that proposed locations shall be that are accessible by cycling/walking from the main catchment areas and accessible by public transport with appropriate safe facilities. Local Authorities should ensure that a robust site selection process is followed in the selection of new school locations taking into account proximity to community developments such as community centres, playing fields, libraries etc. so that the possibility of sharing facilities can be maximised. New educational development/infrastructure should be informed by anticipation of demand for student capacity and Local Authorities should ensure that that decision-making is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.	The amendments to this RPO are positive on PHH and MA as they support accessible locations for schools. This is indirectly positive for CF and AQ and the broader environment.	Planned approach to location of school facilities in accordance with the DoHPLG Guidance document The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, such that both proposed locations and existing schools are accessible by cycling/walking from the main catchment areas and accessible by public transport with appropriate safe facilities within reasonable access of public transport and active travel modes. Local authorities should also consider measures that could improve sustainable accessibility to existing school facilities by cycling/walking accessibility or public transport. Local authorities should ensure that a robust site selection process is followed in the selection of new school locations taking into account proximity to community developments such as community centres, playing fields, libraries etc. so that the possibility of sharing facilities can be maximised. New educational development/infrastructure should be informed by anticipation of demand for student capacity and Local authorities should ensure that decision-making is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 189 (former RPO 181) Further Education and Training	It is an objective to increase the investment in our region's Higher Education and Further Education and Training (FET) Sector and Research, Development and Innovation capacity, and the initiatives of the Regional Skills Fora and Lifelong Learning	It is an objective to increase the investment in our region's Higher Education and Further Education and Training (FET) Sector and Research, recognising that (a) the Further Education Sector is a lead contact point for citizens to re-engage with learning and support investment in Development and Innovation capacity, and the initiatives of the Regional Skills Fora and Lifelong Learning and (b) the important role of the Education and Training Boards in the further education sector, creating a diversity of skills, education, lifelong learning and enabling access to job opportunities for citizens is recognised. It is an objective to support investment in ETB facilities and initiatives.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to increase the investment in addressing our Region's educational and skills needs through investment in the higher education and further education and training sector, recognising that: (a) The further education sector is a lead contact point for citizens to re-engage with learning and skills development; (b) The strong partnerships already evident between the training and education institutions and agencies such as the Regional Skills Fora in addressing development and innovation capacity; (c) The important role of the Education and Training Boards in the further education sector, creating a diversity of skills, education, lifelong learning and enabling access to job opportunities for citizens; (d) The critical role of higher education in the continued evolution of the Regional effort to identify and address skills gaps, retraining needs, continuing professional development needs, and the future needs for a sustainable, knowledge driven economy.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 190 (former RPO 182) Lifelong Learning and Healthy City Initiatives	It is an objective to foster an interagency approach to integrating Lifelong Learning and Healthy City initiatives across the region as essential components as exemplified in Cork and Limerick's attainment of UNESCO Learning City status and extend the UNESCO Learning City status to Waterford city, to create a regional knowledge triangle is an explicit aim of the RSES.	(a) foster an interagency approach to integrating Lifelong Learning and Healthy City initiatives across the region as essential components as exemplified in Cork and Limerick's attainment of UNESCO Learning City status and extend the UNESCO Learning City status to Waterford city, to create a regional knowledge triangle is an explicit aim of the RSES. (b) support the Irish Network of Learning Cities and preparation and implementation of a Learning Region Strategy	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to: (a) foster an interagency approach to integrating Lifelong Learning and Healthy City initiatives across the Region as essential components as exemplified in Cork and Limerick's attainment of UNESCO Learning City status and extend the UNESCO Learning City status to Waterford city, to create a regional knowledge triangle is an explicit aim of the RSES; (b) Support the Irish Network of Learning Cities and preparation and implementation of a Learning Region strategy.	No change.
RPO 191 (former RPO 183) Cultural and Creative Sectors	To develop a vibrant cultural and creative sector in the Southern Region as a key enabler for enterprise growth, innovation, regeneration, place-making and community development, health and wellbeing and support measures under Culture 2025, Creative Ireland Strategy 2017-2022 and Action Plan for Rural Development.	To develop a vibrant cultural and creative sector in the Southern Region as a key enabler for enterprise growth, innovation, regeneration, place making and community development, health and well-being and support measures under Culture 2025, Creative Ireland Strategy 2017-2022 and Action Plan for Rural Development. Local Authorities and public agencies should support development of a network of community arts and cultural hubs.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to develop a vibrant cultural and creative sector in the Region as a key enabler for enterprise growth, innovation, regeneration, place-making and community development, health and well-being and support measures under Culture 2025, Creative Ireland Strategy 2017-22 and Action Plan for Rural Development. Local authorities and public agencies should support development of a network of community arts and cultural hubs.	No change.
RPO 193 (former RPO 185) Collaborative Regional Partnerships	It is an objective to develop Collaborative Regional Partnerships to enhance opportunities for the development of cultural and creative strategy across County or SPA boundaries, in conjunction with the Regional Assembly, Fáilte Ireland and other public bodies/agencies/ Government Departments.	It is an objective to develop Collaborative Regional Partnerships to enhance opportunities for the development of cultural and creative strategy across County or SPA boundaries, in conjunction with the Regional Assembly, Fáilte Ireland and other public bodies/agencies/ Government Departments and (b) seek support and investment towards a vibrant network of local/community hubs, based around the region as locations for collaboration and creativity.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to develop collaborative regional partnerships to: (a) Enhance opportunities for the development of cultural and creative strategy across county or SPA boundaries, in conjunction with the Regional Assembly, Fáilte Ireland and other public bodies, agencies and government departments; (b) Seek support and investment towards a vibrant network of local/community hubs, based around the Region as locations for collaboration and creativity.	No change.
RPO 195 (former RPO 187) Language Plans	Support Designated 'Lead Organisations' in the preparation of Language Plans for each of the designated Language Planning Areas and Gaeltacht Service Towns.	Support Designated 'Lead Organisations' and other public bodies in the preparation of Language Plans as the key planning framework for Gaeltacht development in each of the designated Language Planning Areas and Gaeltacht Service Towns. Lead Organisations and other public bodies shall support communities the centralising position of Irish in society and normalising use of Irish through the development of Language Plans.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support designated lead organisations and other public bodies in the preparation of language plans as the key language planning framework for Gaeltacht development in each of the designated Language Planning Areas and Gaeltacht Service Towns. Lead will support communities the centralising position of Irish in society and normalising use of Irish through the development of language plans.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 196 (former RPO 188) Gaeltacht	It is an objective to support the development of a network of economic and social infrastructure to address the remote locations of the Gaeltacht which shall include: • The development of the Gaeltacht network of digital hubs; • Support for the development and upgrading of regional enterprise infrastructure and accommodation for the Gaeltacht and provision of appropriately located zoned and serviced lands to support enterprise space; • Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making relating to the development of social and economic infrastructure including the development of communications and renewable energy are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.	It is an objective to support the development of a network of economic and social infrastructure to address the remote locations of the Gaeltacht which shall include: • Identification of Gaeltacht areas as economic loci and support for the role of Údaras na Gaeltachta in developing economic strengths and opportunities in the Gaeltacht and mechanisms to support access to employment and social enterprise • The development of the Gaeltacht network of digital hubs; • Support for the development and upgrading of regional enterprise infrastructure and accommodation for the Gaeltacht and provision of appropriately located zoned and serviced lands to support enterprise space; • Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making relating to the development of social and economic infrastructure including the development of communications and renewable energy are informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support the development of a network of economic and social infrastructure to address the remote locations of the Gaeltacht, including: • The identification of Gaeltacht areas as economic loci and support for the role of Údaras na Gaeltachta in developing economic strengths and opportunities in the Gaeltacht and mechanisms to support access to employment and social enterprise; • The development of the Gaeltacht network of digital hubs; • Support for the development and upgrading of regional enterprise infrastructure and accommodation for the Gaeltacht and provision of appropriately located zoned and serviced lands to support enterprise space; • Local authorities should ensure that decision-making relating to the development of social and economic infrastructure including the development of communications and renewable energy are informed by an appropriate level of community consultation and environmental assessment	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 198 (former RPO 190) Sport and Community Organisations	To support investment in sport and community organisations in the region through the Sports Capital Programme	To support investment in sport and community organisations in the region through the Sports Capital Programme. Local Authorities shall support the vision and objectives of the National Sports Policy, including working with local sports partnerships, clubs, communities and partnerships within and beyond sport, to increase sport and physical activity participation levels locally.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support investment in sport and community organisations in the Region through the Sports Capital Programme including development of shared local and regional sports and community facilities by local authorities. Local authorities shall support the vision and objectives of the National Sports Policy, including working with local sports partnerships, clubs, communities and partnerships within and beyond sport, to increase sport and physical activity participation levels locally.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 201 (former RPO 193) National Trails, Walking Routes, Greenway and Blueway Corridors	To support investment in the development of walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors within the region and extending into and between our region's settlements. Proposals for investment in walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors should be based on rigorous site/route selection studies and Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to such developments is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment, including all necessary reports to assess the potential impact on designated European sites and on biodiversity outside of formal protections such that proposed development does not contribute to loss of biodiversity.	National Trails, Walking Routes, Greenway and Blueway Corridors To support investment in the development of walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors within the region and extending into and between our region's settlements. Proposals for investment in walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors should be based on rigorous site/route selection studies and Local Authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to such developments is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment, including all necessary reports to assess the potential impact on designated European sites and on biodiversity outside of formal protections such that proposed development does not contribute to loss of biodiversity. Local Authorities and other public agencies shall actively promote and support access to rural areas including upland areas, forestry, coastal areas and the development of and existing walking routes, pilgrim paths, mountain trails and nature trails in conjunction with other public bodies, representative agencies and community groups and shall identify and protect existing paths, walkways and rights of way.	The active promotion of access to rural areas including upland areas, forestry, coastal, etc is positive for PHH and MA. However, as previously assessed in the draft plan, increased tourism and recreation can lead to visitor pressures, trampling, disturbance of habitats, species and cultural heritage. Such proposals will have to have regard to the carrying capacity and sensitivities of the location. The SEA completed for the WAW proposals should be used as an example of proposit planning. Access to such areas should only be provided when it can be shown that that there will be no adverse effect on protected European and National sites.	It is an objective to support investment in the development of walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors within the Region between our Region's settlements and potential for sustainable linkages to create interregional greenways. Proposals for investment in walking and cycling facilities, greenway and blueway corridors should be based on rigorous site/route selection studies and Local authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to such developments is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment, including all necessary reports to assess the potential impact on designated European sites and on biodiversity outside of formal protections such that proposed development does not contribute to loss of biodiversity. Local authorities and other public agencies shall seek to promote and support access to rural areas including upland areas, forestry, coastal areas and the development of existing walking routes, pilgrim paths, mountain trails and nature trails in conjunction with other public bodies, representative agencies and community groups and shall identify and protect existing paths, walkways and rights of way.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 202 (former RPO 194) Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Built Heritage Assets	To support initiatives that enhance and protect our region's unique natural heritage, biodiversity and built heritage assets.	To support initiatives that enhance and protect our region's unique natural heritage, biodiversity and built heritage assets, recognising the contribution which education and outreach can play in developing understanding of biodiversity and heritage in our communities. Such initiatives should secure funding to support projects in the region in line with the National Biodiversity Action Plan".	Additional wording is welcomed and clarifies the intent of the RPO. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support initiatives that enhance and protect our Region's unique natural heritage, biodiversity and built heritage assets, recognising the contribution which education and outreach can play in developing understanding of biodiversity and heritage in our communities. Such initiatives should secure funding to support projects in the Region in line with the National Biodiversity Action Plan.	No change.

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
RPO 208 (former RPO 200) Irish Water and Water Supply	It is an objective to: a. Seek Irish Water to revise the Draft Investment Plan (2020-2024) and subsequent investment plans to align the supply of water services with the settlement strategy and objectives of the Southern Region RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. b. Delivery and phasing of services shall be subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. c. Local Authority Core Strategies shall demonstrate compliance with DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities and demonstrate phased infrastructure led growth to meet demands on the water supply, suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (for example hydromorphological pressures) and prevent adverse impacts the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.	It is an objective to: a. Seek Irish Water to revise the Draft Investment Plan (2020-2024) and subsequent investment plans to align the supply of water services with the settlement strategy and objectives of the Southern Region RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. b. Seek Investment Plans for water services to plan for and address seasonal pressures on critical service infrastructure (such as from tourism), climate change implications (droughts, storms, flooding) and seek active measures to reduce leakage c. Delivery and phasing of services shall be subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. d. Local Authority Core Strategies shall demonstrate compliance with DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities and demonstrate phased infrastructure led growth to meet demands on the water supply, suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (for example hydromorphological pressures) and prevent adverse impacts the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.	Indirect positive impacts for all environmental receptors as a result of this amendment, with particular benefit for W, BFF and PHH. The amendment acknowledges the risks to water quality and the wider environment from seasonal pressures such as tourism.	It is an objective to: (a) Support the implementation of Irish Water Investment Plans (prepared on five-year cycles) and subsequent investment plans and seek such plans to align the supply of water services with the settlement strategy and objectives of the RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford; (b) Support the role of Irish Water Investment Plans in taking into account seasonal pressures on critical service infrastructure, climate change implications and leakage reduction in the design of all relevant projects; (c) Deliver and phase services, subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network; (d) Local Authority Core Strategies shall demonstrate compliance with DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities and demonstrate phased infrastructure led growth to meet demands on the water supply, suitability of new and/or existing drinking water sources (for example hydro morphological pressures) and prevent adverse impacts the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 211 (former RPO 203) Irish Water and Wastewater	It is an objective to seek Irish Water to revise the Draft Investment Plan (2020-2024), and subsequent investment plans, to align the supply of waste water treatment facilities with the settlement strategy and objectives of the Southern Region RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford.	It is an objective to seek Irish Water to revise the Draft Investment Plan (2020-2024), and subsequent investment plans, to align the supply of waste water treatment facilities with the settlement strategy and objectives of the Southern Region RSES, and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford and seek investment Plans for waste water and treatment to plan for and address seasonal pressures on critical service infrastructure (such as from tourism).	Indirect positive impacts for all environmental receptors as a result of this amendment, with particular benefit for W, BFF and PHH. The amendment acknowledges the risks to water quality and the wider environment from arseasonal pressures such as tourism.	It is an objective to support the implementation of Irish Water Investment Plans (prepared on five-year cycles) and subsequent investment plans, to align the supply of wastewater treatment facilities with the settlement strategy and objectives of the RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans for Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. Support the role of Irish Water Investment Plans in taking into account seasonal pressures on critical service infrastructure, climate change implications, and leakage reduction in the design of all relevant projects.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 213 (former RPO 205) Rural Wastewater Treatment Programmes	It is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of rural waste water treatment programmes and supports the initiatives of Irish Water, Local Authorities, communities and developers in small rural settlements to identify sustainable solutions subject to available funding for such services.	It is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of rural waste water treatment programmes and supports the initiatives of Irish Water, Local Authorities, communities and developers in small rural settlements to identify sustainable solutions subject to available funding for such services. Services for towns and villages that currently have no wastewater infrastructure will be prioritised in investment plans.	Indirect positive impacts for all environmental receptors as a result of this amendment, with particular benefit for W, BFF and PHH. The amendment acknowledges the urgency needed for high risk areas where no WW infrastructure exists and the risk to water quality and human health as a result.	It is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of rural wastewater treatment programmes and supports the initiatives of Irish Water, local authorities, communities and developers in small rural settlements to identify sustainable solutions subject to available funding for such services including the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund of the NDP. Investment in Rural Wastewater and Treatment Programmes will be subject to settlement hierarchies and core strategies set out in development plans	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 221 (former RPO 213) Renewable Energy Generation and Transmission Network	Local Authority City and County Development Plans shall support the sustainable development of renewable energy generation and demand centres such as data centres (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) to spatially suitable locations to ensure efficient use of the existing transmission network)	a): Local Authority City and County Development Plans shall support the sustainable development of renewable energy generation and demand centres such as data centres which can be serviced with a renewable energy source (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) to spatially suitable locations to ensure efficient use of the existing transmission network. (b): RSES support strengthened local/community renewable energy networks, micro renewable generation and connections from such initiatives to the grid. (c): RSES supports the Southern Region as a Carbon Neutral Energy Region.	The supporting of development and communities with renewable energy sources is positive from a CF and AQ perspective and also for PHH and MA as community ownership and investment are promoted. However, the development of renewable energy projects should be subject to site selection studies, environmental assessments and the outcome of the planning process.	(a): Local Authority City and County Development Plans shall support the sustainable development of renewable energy generation and demand centres such as data centres which can be serviced with a renewable energy source (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) to spatially suitable locations to ensure efficient use of the existing transmission network; (b): The RSES supports strengthened and sustainable local/community renewable energy networks, micro renewable generation, climate smart countryside projects and connections from such initiatives to the grid. The potential for sustainable local/community energy projects and micro generation to both mitigate climate change and to reduce fuel poverty is also supported; (c): The RSES supports the Southern Region as a Carbon Neutral Energy Region.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 225 (former RPO 217) Gas Network	Subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process where required a. It is an objective to promote the gas network and renewable gas leading to carbon emission reduction in agriculture, industry, heating and transport as well as sustainable local employment opportunities b. It is an objective to strengthen the gas network sustainably to service settlements and employment areas in the Southern Region, support progress in developing the infrastructures to enable permitted gas energy supply facilities, such as the Tarbert/Ballylongford landbank in Co Kerry to enhance the natural gas grid. c. It is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of agricultural biogas sector and regional gas supply projects which strengthen gas networks in the region, and assist integration of renewable gas to the grid network. d. It is an objective to support investment in developing renewable gas and Clean Natural Gas which will help reduce the Green House Gas emissions in both the agriculture and transport sectors and support Carbon Capture and Storage initiatives, which has the potential to decarbonise power generation at scale.	a. It is an objective to promote the gas network and renewable gas leading to carbon emission reduction in agriculture, industry, heating and transport as well as sustainable local employment opportunities. b. Support the transition of the gas network to a "carbon neutral" gas network by 2050, which will drive Ireland and the Southern Region to becoming a low carbon society. c. It is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of agricultural biogas sector and regional gas supply projects which strengthen gas networks in the region and assist integration of renewable gas to the grid network. d. It is an objective to support investment in developing renewable gas and provision of CNG refuelling infrastructure which will help reduce the Green House Gas emissions in both the agriculture and transport sectors and support Carbon Capture and Storage initiatives, which has the potential to decarbonise power generation at scale. e. It is an objective to strengthen the gas network sustainably to service settlements and employment areas in the Southern Region, support progress in developing the infrastructures to enable strategic energy projects in the Southern Region. An example is the Tarbert/Ballylongford landbank in Co Kerry which is a strategic development site under the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary and support for the extension of the Gas Network from Listowel into the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Tri-Angle settlements of Tralee, Killarney and Killorglin.	Gas Networks Ireland has committed to decarbonising the gas sector by 2050. All technologies to decarbonise the sector should be subject to feasibility assessments including assessment of potential impacts on the environment as a result of the development of related infrastructure. Similarly infrastructure to support CNG refuelling infrastructure and the retrofitting required to existing fuelling stations should be subject to environmental assessment. The Tarbert-Ballylongford landbank has already been subject to SEA, SFRA and AA and as such any mitigation measures should be implemented if further development is proposed.	Subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process where required, it is an objective to: a. Promote renewable gas leading to carbon emission reduction in agriculture, industry, heating and transport as well as sustainable local employment opportunities. b. Support the transition of the gas network to a "carbon neutral" gas network by 2050, which will drive Ireland and the Region to becoming a low carbon society. c. Support investment in the sustainable development of agricultural biogas sector and regional gas supply projects which strengthen gas networks in the Region and assist integration of renewable gas to the grid network. d. Support investment in developing renewable gas and provision of CNG refuelling infrastructure which will help reduce the Green House Gas emissions in both the agriculture and transport sectors and support Carbon Capture and Storage initiatives, which has the potential to decarbonise power generation at scale e. Strengthen the gas network sustainably to service settlements and employment areas in the Region, support progress in developing the infrastructures to enable strategic energy projects in the Region. An example is the Tarbert/Ballylongford landbank in Co Kerry which is a strategic development site under the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary and support for the extension of the Gas Network from Listowel into the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Tri-Angle settlements of Tralee, Killarney and Killorglin.	No change.
Chapter 9 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation					
RPO 226 (former RPO 218) Implementation Mechanism for MASPs	Following adoption of the RSES the SRA will establish implementation mechanisms for MASPs	Implementation Mechanism for the Strategy & MASPs Following the adoption of the RSES the SRA will establish robust structures for the implementation phase to ensure the delivery of the Strategy and the MASPs as specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound. The implementation phase will be guided by action plans that include time bound targets, progress indicators and a set project tracking plan in consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the Strategy. implementation mechanisms to oversee progress on the implementation of the MASPs for Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	Within a year of the making of the RSES, the SRA will establish robust structures cross-sectoral stakeholder and cross-boundary local authority steering group committees for the implementation phase to ensure the delivery of the RSES and the MASPs is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound. The implementation phase will include action plans that include time-bound targets, progress indicators and a set project-tracking plan in consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure the effective and efficient delivery.	Changes are welcome. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 227 (former RPO 219) Funding	It is an objective to support Local Authorities in promoting compact growth and sustainable development and in future proofing our cities and towns through the drawdown of investment funds including national rural, urban, technology and climate funds, through EU Regional Operational Programmes and other internal and external collaborations and partnership opportunities	Investment and Funding as follows: It is an objective of the Strategy to support Local Authorities and State Bodies in promoting compact growth and sustainable development and in future proof our cities and towns in achieving the drawdown of investment funds, including national rural, urban, technology and climate funds, the EU Regional Operational Programmes and other EU funds available to the region.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective of the RSES to support local authorities and state bodies and other stakeholders and communities in achieving the drawdown of investment funds, including national rural, urban, technology and climate funds, the EU Regional Operational Programmes and other EU funds available to the Region.	Changes are welcome. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
RPO 229 Monitoring the Strategy (former RPO M)	a. It is an objective to carry out a regular update of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data from EPA State of the Environment Reports and NPWS Article 12 and Article 17 reporting and to make this data publicly available to facilitate evidence-based policy making and evaluation in the Region. b. It is an objective to support the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection.	Monitoring the Strategy The Southern Regional Assembly will put in place a robust and transparent monitoring system to ensure that the progress of the regional objectives can be tracked against their baseline data at regular intervals during the life of the Strategy. This will include: a. making baseline data available as a shared evidence base for the Region to Local Authorities and other public bodies which will inform the preparation and implementation of City & County Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Local Economic & Community Plans. b. It is an objective to carrying out a regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories. date from EPA State of the Environment Reports and NPWS Article 12 and Article 17 reporting on to make this data publicly available to facilitate evidence-based policy making and evaluation in the Region. c. It is an objective to supporting the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection. d. achieving the objectives set out by RPO221 in relation to a functioning Monitoring Committee for the Strategy.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	The Southern Regional Assembly will put in place a robust and transparent monitoring system to ensure that the progress of the regional objectives are tracked against baseline data at regular intervals during the life of the Strategy. This includes: a. Making baseline data available as a shared evidence base, as appropriate, for the Region to local authorities and other public bodies which will inform the preparation and implementation of a local authority's Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans; b. Carrying out regular updates of baseline data for monitoring purposes, including integration of baseline data (including environmental data), if available, from other relevant reports, strategies and data repositories; c. Supporting the establishment of regional working groups to improve the coherence of European Site protection and management, facilitate data sharing and exchange on transboundary sites and to address cross-boundary site and species protection; d. Establishing a monitoring committee with cross-sectoral and cross-regional representation to oversee progress and contribute to the process. The process will facilitate the involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the implementation of the RSES to provide input on progress.	Changes are welcome. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
Cork MASP Policy Objective 1: Cork Metropolitan Area	<p>a. To strengthen the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and the primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region</p> <p>b. To promote the Cork Metropolitan Area as a cohesive single metropolitan employment and property market where population and employment growth is integrated with: (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region reinforced by (ii) the continued regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of the city centre, Cork City Docklands, Tivoli and suburban areas (iii) active land management initiatives to enable future infrastructure led expansion of the city and suburbs (to be assessed by Core Strategy initiatives) and (iv) the regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of metropolitan towns and other strategic employment locations in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>c. Seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see Volume 2 Introduction to MASPs and Appendix 3).</p> <p>d. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate</p> <p>e. The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region</p>	<p>a. To strengthen the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and the primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region</p> <p>b. To promote the Cork Metropolitan Area as a cohesive single functional entity cohesive single metropolitan employment and property market where population and employment growth is integrated with: (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region reinforced by (ii) the continued regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of the city centre, Cork City Docklands, Tivoli and suburban areas (iii) active land management initiatives to enable future infrastructure led expansion of the city and suburbs (to be assessed by Core Strategy initiatives) and (iv) the regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of metropolitan towns and other strategic employment locations in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>c. Seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see Volume 2 Introduction to MASPs and Appendix 3).</p> <p>d. The Cork MASP allows flexibility to respond to changes in planning policy, infrastructure requirements and priorities that will arise in the area which will be added to Cork City as a result of the boundary extension, framed by the principles set out in RPO 8 Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas, other objectives of the Cork MASP and MASP Goal 7 in Appendix 3.</p> <p>e. Support communities in Metropolitan Towns through regeneration initiatives, investment to support retrofitting holistic infrastructures (physical, social, recreational, public transport inter alia) and seek vibrant metropolitan communities with high quality of life, mixed uses and services planned in tandem with and delivered in infrastructure led sustainable compact growth of metropolitan settlements.</p> <p>f. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate</p> <p>g. The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region</p>	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	<p>(a): To strengthen the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region</p> <p>(b): To promote the Cork Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan employment and property market where population and employment growth is integrated with: (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region reinforced by (ii) the continued regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of the city centre, Cork City Docklands, Tivoli and suburban areas (iii) active land management initiatives to enable future infrastructure led expansion of the city and suburbs (to be assessed by Core Strategy initiatives) and (iv) the regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of metropolitan towns and other strategic employment locations in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>(c): Seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see Volume 2 Introduction to MASPs and Appendix 3).</p> <p>d. The Cork MASP allows flexibility to respond to changes in planning policy, infrastructure requirements and prioritises that will arise in the area which will be added to Cork City as a result of the boundary extension, framed by the principles set out in RPO 8 Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas, other objectives of the Cork MASP and MASP Goal 7 in Appendix 3.</p> <p>e. Support communities in Metropolitan Towns through regeneration initiatives, investment to support retrofitting holistic infrastructures (physical, social, recreational, public transport, active travel networks including enhanced filtered mobility for pedestrians and cyclists inter alia), seek vibrant metropolitan communities with a high quality of life, mixed uses and services and seek the infrastructure led sustainable compact growth of metropolitan settlements.</p> <p>(f): Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate</p> <p>(g): The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region</p>	Changes are welcome. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Cork MASP Policy Objective 2: Cork City	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>c. Seek investment to achieve regeneration and consolidation in the city suburbs.</p> <p>d. To strengthen the attributes and opportunities for the city centre, including transformative initiatives such as the City Centre Strategy and other initiatives as identified by the City Development Plan (existing and future).</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>c. Seek investment to achieve regeneration and consolidation in the city suburbs</p> <p>c. Seek investment to achieve regeneration, consolidation in the city suburbs and high quality architectural and urban design responses to enhance the uses of this waterfront</p> <p>d. To strengthen the attributes and opportunities for the city centre, including transformative initiatives such as the City Centre Strategy and other initiatives as identified by the City Development Plan (existing and future).</p> <p>e. Seek investment for the enhancement and refurbishment of existing public buildings as a driver for private sector development e.g. English Market.</p> <p>f. Seek to achieve High Quality Design to reflect the high-quality architectural building stock.</p> <p>g. Seek delivery of a network of large city parks.</p> <p>h. Strengthen Social and Community Development</p> <p>i. Support active regeneration initiatives that are on-going, especially driven through the Local Economic Community Plan, Local Community Development Committee and RAPID initiatives.</p> <p>j. Seek investment towards initiatives that tackle high housing vacancy rates and seek conversion of vacant stock to active housing uses.</p> <p>k. Support investment in strategic national innovation enabling assets within the city, specifically the expansion of Tyndall National Institute to the North Mall and the development of UCC's new Cork University Business School in the city centre</p>	The additions to this RPO will have a positive impact on PHH and MA as they further promote the consolidation and regeneration of the Cork Metropolitan Area. However, the development of brownfield sites and regeneration projects have the potential for negative impacts as identified in the assessment and these should be taken into consideration in the feasibility assessment of sites.	<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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 and high quality architectural and urban design responses to enhance the uses of this waterfront and all urban quarters.</p> <p>(d): To strengthen the attributes and opportunities for the city centre, including transformative initiatives such as the City Centre Strategy and other initiatives as identified by the City Development Plan (existing and future).</p> <p>e. Seek investment for the enhancement and refurbishment of existing public buildings as a driver for private sector development e.g. English Market.</p> <p>f. Seek to achieve High Quality Design to reflect a high-quality architectural building stock in all urban quarters.</p> <p>g. Seek delivery of a network of large city parks and smaller green areas throughout the metropolitan area and inner-city areas.</p> <p>h. Strengthen Social and Community Development</p> <p>i. Support active regeneration initiatives that are on-going, especially driven through the Local Economic Community Plan, Local Community Development Committee and RAPID initiatives.</p> <p>j. Seek investment towards initiatives that tackle high housing vacancy rates and seek conversion of vacant stock to active housing uses.</p> <p>k. Support investment in strategic national innovation enabling assets within the city, specifically the expansion of Tyndall National Institute to the North Mall and the development of UCC's new Cork University Business School in the city centre</p>	Changes are welcome. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Cork MASP Policy Objective 4 Cork Metropolitan Area Regional Interactions	<p>In support of the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as the primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region, seek to strengthen inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity (public transport, strategic road network and digital) subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:</p> <p>a. Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and the other metropolitan areas of Galway, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, strengthen connectivity to the Atlantic Economic Corridor, to the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle and strengthen connectivity on the TEN-T Corridor.</p> <p>b. Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and Key Towns in the Southern Region, especially Key Towns in the South West which include Mallow, Clonakilty, Tralee and Killarney and Dungarvan in the South East.</p> <p>c. Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and settlements in a strategic North Cork AgriTech Network with Mallow Key Town, in a strategic West Cork Marine Network with Clonakilty Key Town and a central North and West Network connecting the two, initiatives which will be progressed through the County Development Plan process.</p> <p>d. Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and the ring towns of Bandon, Fermoy, Macroom, Kinsale and Youghal through the sustainable development of enhanced critical mass to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport and support Kinsale's role as a Principal Tourist Attraction.</p>	<p>In support of the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as the primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region, seek to strengthen inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity (public transport, strategic road network and digital) subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:</p> <p>a. Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and the other metropolitan areas of Galway, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, strengthen connectivity to the Atlantic Economic Corridor, to the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle and strengthen connectivity to the TEN-T Network Corridor.</p> <p>b. Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and Key Towns in the Southern Region, especially Key Towns in the South West which include Mallow, Clonakilty, Tralee and Killarney and Dungarvan in the South East.</p> <p>c. Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and settlements in a strategic North Cork AgriTech Network with Mallow Key Town, in a strategic West Cork Marine Network with Clonakilty Key Town and a central North and West Network connecting the two, initiatives which will be progressed through the County Development Plan process.</p> <p>d. Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and the ring towns of Bandon, Fermoy, Macroom, Kinsale and Youghal through the sustainable development of enhanced critical mass to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport and support Kinsale's role as a Principal Tourist Attraction.</p> <p>e. Recognise the strategic service role of the Cork Metropolitan Area for the Gaeltacht.</p> <p>f. Support multi modal enhanced connectivity between Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford (N20/M20, N24/M24 (via M8) and N25 corridors) and N28 upgrade to Ringaskiddy together with enhanced rail connectivity via the Limerick Junction Rail Hub.</p>	The amendments to this RPO support multi modal connectivity between the Metropolitan areas in the region referring in particular to specific roads and enhanced rail connectivity. This is positive for PHH and MA. However, all road and rail infrastructure should be subject to feasibility assessments, route selection studies, environmental assessments and the outcome of the planning process.	<p>In support of the role of the Cork Metropolitan Area as a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Region, seek to strengthen inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity (public transport, strategic road network and digital) subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:</p> <p>(a): Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and the other metropolitan areas of Galway, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, strengthen connectivity to the Atlantic Economic Corridor, to the Kerry Hub and Knowledge Triangle and strengthen connectivity to the TEN-T Network.</p> <p>(b): Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and Key Towns in the Southern Region, especially Key Towns in the South West which include Mallow, Clonakilty, Tralee and Killarney and Dungarvan in the South East.</p> <p>(c): Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and settlements in a strategic North Cork Agri-Tech Network with Mallow Key Town, in a strategic West Cork Marine Network with Clonakilty Key Town and a central North and West Network connecting the two, initiatives which will be progressed through the County Development Plan process.</p> <p>(d): Between the Cork Metropolitan Area and the ring towns of Bandon, Fermoy, Macroom, Kinsale and Youghal through the sustainable development of enhanced critical mass to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport and support Kinsale's role as a Principal Tourist Attraction.</p> <p>(e): Recognise the role of Cork City as a Gaeltacht Service City under the Gaeltacht Act 2012.</p> <p>(f): Support multi modal enhanced transport and digital connectivity between Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford cities and metropolitan areas and the delivery of infrastructures as supported in objectives under Chapter 6 Connectivity.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Cork MASP Policy Objective 6 National Enablers	<p>a. It is an objective to seek sustainable delivery of enablers as identified in the NPF/NDP for the Cork Metropolitan Area and to progress co-ordination between the principal stakeholders, subject to required feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes. Identification of suitable sites for regeneration and development should be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to implement innovative and collaborative projects through funding mechanisms such as the Urban Regeneration and Development, Rural Regeneration and Development, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies funds.</p>	<p>a. It is an objective to seek sustainable delivery of enablers as identified in the NPF/NDP for the Cork Metropolitan Area and to progress co-ordination between the principal stakeholders, subject to the recommendations of CMATS (see Section 4.0) and required feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes. Identification of suitable sites for regeneration and development should be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns and high-quality design to drive increased density enabling the roll out of sustainable public transport solutions.</p> <p>b. It is an objective to implement innovative and collaborative projects through funding mechanisms such as the Urban Regeneration and Development, Rural Regeneration and Development, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies funds.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	<p>(a): It is an objective to seek sustainable delivery of enablers as identified in the NPF/NDP for the Cork Metropolitan Area and to progress and co-ordination between the principal stakeholders, subject to the recommendations of CMATS (see Section 4.0) and required feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes. Identification of suitable sites for regeneration and development should be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns high-quality design and evidence-based housing demand to drive increased density enabling the roll out of sustainable public transport solutions.</p> <p>(b) It is an objective to implement innovative and collaborative projects through funding mechanisms such as the Urban Regeneration and Development, Rural Regeneration and Development, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies funds.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.

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Cork MASP Policy Objective 7 Integrated Landuse and Transport Planning	<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <p>a. It is an objective to prepare a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)</p> <p>b. Seek investment and delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure as identified through a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy.</p> <p>c. The Core Strategies of City and County Development Plans in the Cork Metropolitan Area shall allocate the distribution of future population and employment growth with the integration of land use and transportation planning principles, public transport nodal points and targets identified through the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, which will be subject to the relevant environmental requirements including SEA and AA as appropriate.</p> <p>d. Achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre, Docklands and city suburban areas. • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a potential new Light Rail Corridor • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Suburban Rail Corridor • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along BusConnects corridors. <p>e. Seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points.</p>	<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA and AA as appropriate:</p> <p>a. It is an objective to prepare a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)</p> <p>b. Seek investment and delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure as identified through a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy and delivery of e-mobility infrastructures to enable a greater shift away from traditional use of private car transport.</p> <p>c. The Core Strategies of City and County Development Plans in the Cork Metropolitan Area shall allocate the distribution of future population and employment growth with the integration of land use and transportation planning principles, public transport nodal points and targets identified through the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, which will be subject to the relevant environmental requirements including SEA and AA as appropriate.</p> <p>d. Achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre, Docklands and city suburban areas. • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a potential new Light Rail Corridor • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Suburban Rail Corridor • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along strategic bus network corridors. <p>e. Identify and deliver strategic locations for increased residential, employment and nodal locations where there is a strong interconnection between the planned Light Rail Transit Route and the BusConnects infrastructure.</p> <p>f. Seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA and AA as appropriate.</p> <p>(a) It is an objective to prepare a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy</p> <p>(b) Seek investment and delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure as identified through the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy and delivery of e-mobility infrastructures.</p> <p>(c): The Core Strategies of City and County Development Plans in the Cork Metropolitan Area shall allocate the distribution of future population and employment growth with the integration of land use and transportation planning principles, public transport nodal points and targets identified through the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy.</p> <p>(d): Achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre, Docklands and city suburban areas. • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a potential new Light Rail Corridor • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Suburban Rail Corridor • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along strategic bus network corridors. <p>(e): Identify and deliver strategic locations for increased residential and employment use at public transport interchange locations relating to the proposed Light Rail Transit Route, Suburban Rail and the strategic bus network, where high levels of accessibility by public transport can be achieved. .</p> <p>(f): Seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Cork MASP Policy Objective 8 Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)	<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes:</p> <p>a. The SRA will seek investment in the sustainable development and implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy and transport initiatives that improve connectivity between the metropolitan area, wider Cork context and wider region. The strategy shall be subject to requires SEA/AA and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>b. The SRA will seek the Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans to identify the public transport corridors and station nodal points on those corridors in Cork Metropolitan Area arising from the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these public transport nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>The following principles are supported by the SRA for investment and sustainable delivery in the Cork Metropolitan Area such as feasibility, planning and environmental processes where applicable:</p> <p>c. East-West Light Rail Public Transport Corridor: A strategic east-west public transport corridor from Mahon to Ballincollig via the City Centre, serving CIT, CUH, UCC, Kent Station, Docklands, Mahon Point. The corridor requires development consolidation along it at appropriate nodal points for a high capacity service.</p> <p>d. Rail Network: Strategic public transport services along the existing rail lines. Strategic priorities will include enhance the commuter rail service with additional stations and fleet, improve intercity journey times and electrification of fleet. On the suburban rail network, the following key components are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * P&R and new station at Blarney/Stone View * New station to serve Monard SDZ * New station to regenerate and intensify Blackpool/Kilbarry * Kent Station as a key interchange node between city centre walking/cycling, LRT and bus network. * New station Tivoli Docks * P&R and new station at Dunkettle. * To Cobh, improved signal operations and new station at Ballynoe interchanging with bus services. * To Midleton, new station Carrigtwohill West, dual track and new station at Water Rock. <p>* Secure the long-term strategic aim of reopening the rail route linking Cork and Midleton to Youghal while also allowing for the development of a greenway from Midleton to Youghal and still allow for future rail use if feasible at a later stage subject to SEA/AA and protection of the Ballyvergan Marsh proposed Natural Heritage Area.</p> <p>f. Core Bus Network: A comprehensive network of high frequency bus services operating on a core radial and orbital bus network as provided for in CMATS providing radial services to other corridors and orbital services across the network. Delivery of Cork BusConnects network, Core Radial Bus Network, Orbital Bus Network, Cross City Network, Supporting Radial Bus Services, Bus Priority, Regional Bus Networks and Metropolitan Town Bus Services are all key components.</p> <p>g. City Centre Movement Strategy: Delivery of the Cork City Centre Movement Strategy 2018-2024</p> <p>h. Walking: Make Cork the most walkable city in Ireland, implement and further develop upon the Cork City Walking Strategy 2013-2018 and strengthen the role of walking through improved walkability, with a particular focus on new development areas, access to services at the local level (including public transport, schools, shops, amenities) and improved pedestrian accessibility to and within the City Centre area, Town/District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres</p> <p>walking-network-district-and-neighbourhood-walking-networks, city-and-town-centre-accessibility. Seek and support greenways for walking in addition to cycling.</p> <p>i. Cycling: Implement and further develop upon the Cork Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Plan 2017, invest in infrastructure to support the integration of cycle networks throughout the Cork Metropolitan Area and region, improve and develop primary, secondary, greenway (including the Lee to Sea Greenway) and feeder cycle networks and support cycling through provision of a high proportion of segregated cycleways to provide a safe infrastructure for all cycling infrastructures including cycle lanes, cycle parking, cycle hire schemes (Cork City Cycle Hire Scheme) and facilities in places of work.</p> <p>j. Public Transport Integration: provision for interchange opportunities across all modes of transport together with information provision and revised fare structures.</p> <p>k. Road Network Improvements: Improvements to the road network to support the sustainable growth of the metropolitan area, while also providing appropriate strategic provision for the movement of goods. Investment in the road network supports sustainable travel modes (walking, cycling, bus networks), supports strategic inter urban and inter regional freight traffic, especially between ports and airports. Improvements discourage secondary local trip and urban expansion based on road corridors. Strategic road corridors identified by separate objective.</p> <p>l. Other Strategic Road Priorities will include implementation of City Centre Movement</p>	<p>New Title: Key Transport Objectives (to be informed by Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy)</p> <p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the finalisation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transportation Strategy (CMATS) and the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA/AA as appropriate.</p> <p>a. The SRA will seek investment in the sustainable development and implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy and transport initiatives that improve connectivity between the metropolitan area, wider Cork context and wider region.</p> <p>b. The SRA will seek the Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans to identify the public transport corridors and public transport nodes-station nodal points on those corridors in Cork Metropolitan Area arising from the CMATS Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these public transport nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>Transport Investment Objectives-The following principles are supported by the SRA as a basis for the sustainable growth of the Cork Metropolitan Area for investment and sustainable delivery in the Cork Metropolitan Area subject to the recommendation of the CMATS and feasibility, planning and environmental processes where applicable:</p> <p>c. Integration of All Sustainable Travel Modes: Infrastructure to provide for integration between all modes of transport to support the use of sustainable travel choices.</p> <p>d. East-West Light Rail Public Transport Corridor: A strategic east-west public transport corridor from Mahon to Ballincollig via the City Centre, serving CIT, CUH, UCC, Kent Station, Docklands, Mahon Point. The corridor requires development consolidation along it at appropriate nodal points for a high capacity service.</p> <p>e. Rail Network: Strategic public transport services along the existing rail lines. Strategic priorities will include enhance the commuter rail service with additional stations and fleet, improve intercity journey times and electrification of fleet. On the suburban rail network, the following key components are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * P&R and new station at Blarney/Stone View * New station to serve Monard SDZ * New station to regenerate and intensify Blackpool/Kilbarry * Kent Station as a key interchange node between city centre walking/cycling, LRT and bus network. * New station Tivoli Docks * P&R and new station at Dunkettle. * To Cobh, improved signal operations and new station at Ballynoe interchanging with bus services. * To Midleton, new station Carrigtwohill West, dual track and new station at Water Rock. <p>* Secure the long-term strategic aim of reopening the rail route linking Cork and Midleton to Youghal while also allowing for the development of a greenway from Midleton to Youghal and still allow for future rail use if feasible at a later stage subject to SEA/AA and protection of the Ballyvergan Marsh proposed Natural Heritage Area.</p> <p>f. Core Bus Network: A comprehensive network of high frequency bus services operating on a core radial and orbital bus network as provided for in CMATS providing radial services to other corridors and orbital services across the network. Delivery of Cork BusConnects network, Core Radial Bus Network, Orbital Bus Network, Cross City Network, Supporting Radial Bus Services, Bus Priority, Regional Bus Networks and Metropolitan Town Bus Services are all key components.</p> <p>g. City Centre Movement Strategy: Delivery of the Cork City Centre Movement Strategy 2018-2024</p> <p>h. Walking: Make Cork the most walkable city in Ireland, implement and further develop upon the Cork City Walking Strategy 2013-2018 and strengthen the role of walking through improved walkability, with a particular focus on new development areas, access to services at the local level (including public transport, schools, shops, amenities) and improved pedestrian accessibility to and within the City Centre area, Town/District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres</p> <p>walking-network-district-and-neighbourhood-walking-networks, city-and-town-centre-accessibility. Seek and support greenways for walking in addition to cycling.</p> <p>i. Cycling: Implement and further develop upon the Cork Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Plan 2017, invest in infrastructure to support the integration of cycle networks throughout the Cork Metropolitan Area and region, improve and develop primary, secondary, greenway (including the Lee to Sea Greenway) and feeder cycle networks and support cycling through provision of a high proportion of segregated cycleways to provide a safe infrastructure for all cycling infrastructures including cycle lanes, cycle parking, cycle hire schemes (Cork City Cycle Hire Scheme) and facilities in places of work.</p> <p>j. Public Transport Integration: provision for interchange opportunities across all modes of transport together with information provision and revised fare structures.</p> <p>k. Road Network Improvements: Improvements to the road network to support the sustainable growth of the metropolitan area, while also providing appropriate strategic provision for the movement of goods. Investment in the road network supports sustainable travel modes (walking, cycling, bus networks), supports strategic inter urban and inter regional freight traffic, especially between ports and airports. Improvements discourage secondary local trip and urban expansion based on road corridors. Strategic road corridors identified by separate objective.</p> <p>l. Other Strategic Road Priorities will include implementation of City Centre Movement</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	<p>Key Transport Objectives (to be informed by and subject to the recommendations of Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy)</p> <p>Subject to the finalisation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transportation Strategy (CMATS) and the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA/AA as appropriate:</p> <p>a. The SRA will seek investment in the sustainable development and implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy and transport initiatives that improve connectivity between the metropolitan area, wider Cork context and wider region.</p> <p>b. The SRA will seek the Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans to identify the public transport corridors and public transport nodes on those corridors in Cork Metropolitan Area arising from the CMATS which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these public transport nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Cork Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>Transport Investment Objectives are supported by the SRA as a basis for the sustainable growth of the Cork Metropolitan Area subject to the recommendation of the CMATS and feasibility, planning and environmental processes where applicable</p> <p>c. Integration of All Sustainable Travel Modes: Infrastructure to provide for integration between all modes of transport to support the use of sustainable travel choices</p> <p>d. East-West Light Rail Public Transport Corridor: A strategic east-west public transport corridor from Mahon to Ballincollig via the City Centre, serving CIT, CUH, UCC, Kent Station, Docklands, Mahon Point. The corridor requires development consolidation along it at appropriate nodal points for a high capacity service.</p> <p>e. Rail Network: Strategic public transport services along the existing rail lines. Strategic priorities will include investment in the Cork Rail Network (serving locations such as Monard, Carrigtwohill, Midleton, Cobh) and enhancing the commuter rail service with additional stations and fleet, improve intercity journey times and electrification of fleet. On the suburban rail network, the following key components are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P&R and new station at Blarney/Stone View • New station to serve Monard SDZ • New station to regenerate and intensify Blackpool/Kilbarry • Kent Station as a key interchange node between city centre walking/cycling, LRT and bus network. • New station Tivoli Docks • P&R and new station at Dunkettle. • To Cobh, improved signal operations and new station at Ballynoe interchanging with bus services. • To Midleton, new station Carrigtwohill West and IDA Carrigtwohill East/ Ballyadam when developed, dual track and new station at Water Rock. <p>• The development of a greenway from Midleton to Youghal and still allow for future rail use if feasible at a later stage subject to SEA/AA and protection of the Ballyvergan Marsh proposed Natural Heritage Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the feasibility of designating Mallow as a Commuter Rail Station (which will assist a revised fare structure) and the opportunity this presents to encouraging a modal shift for commuters in North Cork <p>f. Core Bus Network: A comprehensive network of high frequency bus services operating on a core radial and orbital bus network as provided for in CMATS</p> <p>g. City Centre Movement Strategy: Delivery of the Cork City Centre Movement Strategy 2018-2024</p> <p>h. Walking: Make Cork the most walkable city in Ireland, implement and further develop upon the Cork City Walking Strategy 2013-2018 and strengthen the role of walking through improved walkability, with a particular focus on new development areas, access to services at the local level and improved pedestrian accessibility to and within the City Centre area, Town/District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres. Seek and support greenways for walking in addition to cycling.</p> <p>i. Cycling: Implement and further develop upon the Cork Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Plan 2017, invest in infrastructure to support the integration of the cycle networks throughout the Cork Metropolitan Area and region, improve and develop primary, secondary, greenway (including the Lee to Sea Greenway) and feeder cycle networks and support cycling through provision of a high proportion of segregated cycleways to provide a safe infrastructure for all.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.

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	<p>develop upon the Cork City Walking Strategy 2013-2018 and strengthen the role of walking through improved walking network, district and neighbourhood walking networks, city and town centre accessibility.</p> <p>h. Cycling: Implement and further develop upon the Cork Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Plan 2017, improve and develop primary, secondary, greenway and feeder cycle networks and support cycling through infrastructures including cycle lanes, cycle parking, cycle hire schemes (Cork City Cycle Hire Scheme) and facilities in places of work.</p> <p>i. Public Transport Integration: provision for interchange opportunities together with information provision and revised fare structures;</p> <p>j. Road Network Improvements: Improvements to the road network to support the sustainable growth of the metropolitan area, while also providing appropriate strategic provision for the movement of goods. Investment in the road network supports sustainable travel modes (walking, cycling, bus networks), supports strategic inter urban and inter regional freight traffic, especially between ports and airports. Improvements discourage secondary local trip and urban expansion based on road corridors. Strategic road corridors identified by separate objective.</p> <p>k. Other Strategic Road Priorities will include implementation of City Centre Movement Strategy, Cork Docklands and Tivoli Docks bridge (South Docks Eastern Gateway Bridge, Mill Road) and road infrastructure (South Docks and North Docks Roads, Tivoli Access).</p> <p>l. Management of freight around metropolitan Cork, enabled through Port of Cork relocation to Ringskiddy, construction, logistics and delivery centres.</p> <p>m. Supporting Measures: Further measures to support the delivery of the Strategy, including parking management, Park and Ride, demand management, mobility management, behavioural change programmes, etc</p>	<p>Strategy, Cork Docklands and Tivoli Docks bridge (South Docks Eastern Gateway Bridge, Mill Road) and road infrastructure (South Docks and North Docks Roads, Tivoli Access).</p> <p>im Management of freight around metropolitan Cork, enabled through Port of Cork relocation to Ringskiddy, construction, logistics and delivery centres.</p> <p>Supporting Measures: Further measures to support the delivery of the Strategy-CMAT5 key transport objectives including parking management, Park and Ride, demand management, mobility management, behavioural change programmes.</p>		<p>Public Transport Integration: provision for interchange opportunities across all modes of transport together with information provision and revised fare structures.</p> <p>k. Road Network Improvements: Improvements to the road network to support the sustainable growth of the metropolitan area, while also providing appropriate strategic provision for the movement of goods. Investment in the road network supports sustainable travel modes (walking, cycling, and bus networks), supports strategic inter urban and inter regional freight traffic, especially between ports and airports. Improvements discourage secondary local trip and urban expansion based on road corridors. Strategic road corridors identified by separate objective.</p> <p>l. Other Strategic Road Priorities will include implementation of City Centre Movement Strategy, Cork Docklands and Tivoli Docks bridge (South Docks Eastern Gateway Bridge, Mill Road) and road infrastructure (South Docks and North Docks Roads, Tivoli Access).</p> <p>m. Management of freight around metropolitan Cork, enabled through Port of Cork relocation to Ringskiddy construction, logistics and delivery centres.</p> <p>n. Supporting Measures: Further measures to support the delivery of CMAT5 key transport objectives including parking management, Park and Ride, demand management, mobility management and behavioural change programmes.</p>	
<p>Cork MASP Policy Objective 9 Strategic Road Network Improvements</p>	<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>a. The SRA will seek investment in the implementation and sustainable development of strategic road network improvements for the Cork Metropolitan Area and its improved connectivity to the wider region. This will include the delivery of the following subject to feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>b. Delivery of current Government programmed and proposed national road network improvement schemes relating to the Cork Metropolitan Area and associated inter-urban connecting roads</p> <p>c. Advancing orbital traffic management solutions, through the implementation of appropriate demand management measures, on the N40 and provision of alternative local roads, as deemed necessary. Specific measures should not be introduced in isolation, but only after due consideration of the impacts on access and movement across the city and suburbs, and progressed in parallel with the introduction of the necessary appropriate alternatives to service affected traffic movements</p> <p>d. Enhanced regional connectivity through improved average journey times by road to Limerick and Waterford via proposed M20 Limerick to Cork and the targeted enhancement of the N25 between Cork and Waterford</p> <p>e. Improved connectivity Cork City to Cork Airport</p> <p>f. Dunkettle Interchange</p> <p>g. Cork Northern Ring Road connecting the N22 to the M8 (identified in the NDP as a complementary scheme to the M20).</p> <p>h. Cork Northern Distributor Road</p> <p>i. Access for Monard SDZ (a key enabler for Cork under the NPF)</p> <p>j. Cork City Docks and Tivoli Bridge and Street Infrastructure (including Eastern Gateway Bridge) Cork Docklands infrastructure is a key enabler for Cork under the NPF.</p> <p>k. Improved connectivity Cork City to Cork Airport including N27 (dedicated public transport corridor).</p> <p>l. Improved N22, N25, N27, N71 Inter Regional and Intra Regional corridors.</p> <p>m. Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road Linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh</p> <p>n. Upgrade of the R630 Regional Road Linking Middleton to Whitegate Road (Energy Hub).</p> <p>o. Cork Science and Innovation Park Access (a key enabler for Cork under the NPF)</p> <p>p. Transport packages including road upgrades, relief roads, enhanced public realm, walking and cycling infrastructure for metropolitan towns and urban expansion areas.</p> <p>q. North East Orbital Road (access for residential lands and public transport infrastructure Ballyvolane).</p> <p>r. Advancing transport study measures for Little Island.</p>	<p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appropriate project appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA/AA as appropriate. The upgrade of public transport networks must be the priority for strategic road network improvements under this objective.</p> <p>a. The SRA will seek investment in the management, implementation and sustainable development of strategic road network improvements for the Cork Metropolitan Area and its improved connectivity to the wider region. This will include the delivery of the following:</p> <p>b. Delivery of current Government programmed and proposed national road network improvement schemes relating to the Cork Metropolitan Area and associated inter-urban connecting roads</p> <p>c. Advancing investment in orbital transport corridors orbital traffic management solutions, through the implementation of appropriate demand management measures, on the N40 and provision of alternative local roads, as deemed necessary. Specific measures should not be introduced in isolation, but only after due consideration of the impacts on access and movement across the city and suburbs, and progressed in parallel with the introduction of the necessary appropriate alternatives to service affected traffic movements</p> <p>d. Enhanced regional connectivity through improved average journey times by road to Limerick and Waterford via proposed M20 Limerick to Cork and the targeted enhancement of the N25 between Cork and Waterford</p> <p>e. Improved connectivity Cork City to Cork Airport including the provision of bus priority lanes on the N27 and an improvement in the alignment of the R600 south of the Airport (refer to Cork MASP Policy Objective 14).</p> <p>f. Improved connectivity to the Port of Cork on the N28 Cork to Ringskiddy route</p> <p>g. Dunkettle Interchange</p> <p>h. Cork Northern Ring Road connecting the N22 to the M8 (identified in the NDP as a complementary scheme to the M20) to be informed by the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS). The outcome of the finalised CMATS is required to determine the nature and status of the scheme.</p> <p>i. Cork Northern Distributor Road connecting the N8, all radial distributor roads in the Northern Suburbs and environs of the City, the N20 and the N22</p> <p>j. Access for Monard SDZ (a key enabler for Cork under the NPF)</p> <p>k. Cork City Docks and Tivoli Bridge and Street Infrastructure (including Eastern Gateway Bridge) Cork Docklands infrastructure is a key enabler for Cork under the NPF.</p> <p>l. Improved connectivity Cork City to Cork Airport including N27 (dedicated public transport corridor).</p> <p>m. Improved N22, N25, N27, N71 Inter Regional and Intra Regional corridors.</p> <p>n. Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road Linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh subject to required feasibility, planning and environmental assessment process and support the designation of this route to National Road Status.</p> <p>o. Upgrade of the R630 Regional Road Linking Middleton to Whitegate Road (Energy Hub) and support the designation of this route to National Road Status.</p> <p>p. Cork Science and Innovation Park Access (a key enabler for Cork under the NPF)</p> <p>q. Transport packages including road upgrades, relief roads, enhanced public realm, walking and cycling infrastructure for metropolitan towns and urban expansion areas.</p> <p>r. North East Orbital Road (access for residential lands and public transport infrastructure Ballyvolane).</p> <p>s. Advancing transport study measures for Little Island.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>Strategic Road Network Improvements</p> <p>Seek delivery of the following subject to the outcomes of required appropriate project appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA/AA as appropriate. The upgrade of public transport networks must be the priority for strategic road network improvements under this objective.</p> <p>Sustainable proposals that facilitate the implementation of public transport networks on the strategic road network will be supported.</p> <p>a. The SRA will seek investment in the management, implementation and sustainable development of strategic road network improvements for the Cork Metropolitan Area and its improved connectivity to the wider region. This will include the delivery of the following:</p> <p>b. Delivery of current Government programmed and proposed national road network improvement schemes relating to the Cork Metropolitan Area and associated inter-urban connecting roads</p> <p>c. Advancing investment in orbital transport corridors through the implementation of appropriate demand management measures, on the N40 and provision of alternative local roads, as deemed necessary. Specific measures should not be introduced in isolation, but only after due consideration of the impacts on access and movement across the city and suburbs, and progressed in parallel with the introduction of the necessary appropriate alternatives to service affected traffic movements</p> <p>d. Enhanced regional connectivity through improved average journey times by road to Limerick and Waterford via proposed M20 Limerick to Cork and the targeted enhancement of the N25 between Cork and Waterford</p> <p>e. Improved connectivity Cork City to Cork Airport including the provision of bus priority lanes on the N27 and an improvement in the alignment of the R600 south of the Airport (refer to Cork MASP Policy Objective 14).</p> <p>f. Improved connectivity to the Port of Cork and strategic employment areas on the N28 Cork to Ringskiddy route.</p> <p>g. Dunkettle Interchange</p> <p>h. A Cork Northern Ring Road (CNRR) is a complementary scheme to the N/M20 Cork to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme, identified in the NDP. It has been assessed as part of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS). It is expected that the CNRR project will be planned for implementation during the latter period of the CMATS. The finalisation of a route corridor and its protection from development intrusion is an objective of CMATS to allow for changing circumstances including potentially an earlier project delivery requirement.</p> <p>i. Cork Northern Distributor Road delivering a multi-modal orbital public transport route, accessing planned development lands, connecting to radial distributor roads and providing connectivity at its western end to join the existing N22.</p> <p>j. Access for Monard SDZ (a key enabler for Cork under the NPF)</p> <p>k. Cork City Docks and Tivoli Bridge and Street Infrastructure (including Eastern Gateway Bridge) Cork Docklands infrastructure is a key enabler for Cork under the NPF.</p> <p>l. Improved N22, N25, N27, N71 Inter Regional and Intra Regional corridors.</p> <p>m. Upgrade of the R624 Regional Road Linking N25 to Marino Point and Cobh subject to required feasibility, planning and environmental assessment processes and support the designation of this route to National Road Status</p> <p>n. Upgrade of the R630 Regional Road Linking Middleton to Whitegate Road (Energy Hub) and support the designation of this route to National Road Status.</p> <p>o. Cork Science and Innovation Park Access (a key enabler for Cork under the NPF)</p> <p>p. Transport packages including road upgrades, relief roads, enhanced public realm, walking and cycling infrastructure for metropolitan towns and urban expansion areas.</p> <p>q. North East Orbital Road (access for residential lands and public transport infrastructure Ballyvolane).</p> <p>r. Advancing transport study measures for Little Island.</p> <p>S. Provide improved access infrastructure to IDA Carrigtwohill East / Adam strategic site (N25)</p>	<p>The changes are positive for PHH and MA. All schemes will be subject to project appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes.</p> <p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Policy Objective 11 Transition to Digital Future</p>	<p>The SRA will seek investment in the delivery of accessible and improved high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure in the Cork Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and seek investment in the actions of Local Authority Digital Strategies Support Cork City Councils participation in the European Commission's Digital Cities Challenge programme to develop a digital transformation vision and action plan for Cork to enable a better quality of life in a greener, more innovative and smarter city. Support the initiatives of the Cork Smart Gateway to enable a better quality of life, greener and more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area. Support Cork County Council's Digital Strategy for the County, harnessing the roll out and delivery of high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband to improve "relational proximity", where peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area. Support and seek investment in initiatives enhancing digital infrastructure access in our public buildings and spaces, such as Cork's participation in the WiFi4EU Initiative. 	<p>The SRA will seek investment in the delivery of accessible and improved high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure in the Cork Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and seek investment in the actions of Local Authority Digital Strategies Support and seek investment in Cork City and Cork County Council's Digital Strategies, harnessing the roll out and delivery of various forms of high capacity ICT infrastructure that will support the Digital transformation of Cork and which recognises that ICT or digital connectivity infrastructure requirements will vary depending on the desired outcome, location, activity etc. Support the collection of better real time city data to enable city users and management to make better data driven decisions. Support Cork City Councils participation in the European Commission's Digital Cities Challenge programme to develop a digital transformation vision and action plan for Cork to enable a better quality of life in a greener, more innovative and smarter city. Support the initiatives of the Cork Smart Gateway to enable a better quality of life, greener and more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area. Support Cork County Council's Digital Strategy for the County, harnessing the roll out and delivery of high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband to improve "relational proximity", where peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area. Support and seek investment in initiatives enhancing digital infrastructure access in our public buildings and spaces, such as Cork's participation in the WiFi4EU Initiative. 	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>	<p>The SRA will seek investment in the delivery of accessible and improved high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure in the Cork Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and seek investment in Cork City and Cork County Council's Digital Strategies, harnessing the roll out and delivery of various forms of high capacity ICT infrastructure that will support the Digital transformation of Cork and which recognises that ICT or digital connectivity infrastructure requirements will vary depending on the desired outcome, location, activity etc. Support the collection of better real time city data to enable city users and management to make better data driven decisions. Support Cork City Councils participation in the European Commission's Digital Cities Challenge programme to develop a digital transformation vision and action plan for Cork to enable a better quality of life in a greener, more innovative and smarter city. Support the initiatives of the Cork Smart Gateway to enable a better quality of life, greener and more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area. Support Cork County Council's Digital Strategy for the County, harnessing the roll out and delivery of high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband to improve "relational proximity", where peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area. Support and seek investment in initiatives enhancing digital infrastructure access in our public buildings and spaces, such as Cork's participation in the WiFi4EU Initiative. 	<p>No change.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Policy Objective 12 Infrastructure for Strategic Employment Locations</p>	<p>a. It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p> <p>b. Seek investment and inter agency coordination to the delivery of infrastructure packages to assist the sustainable growth, regeneration and integration of employment land use and sustainable transport planning for existing and future identified locations in the Cork Metropolitan Area.</p>	<p>a. It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p> <p>b. Seek investment and inter agency coordination to the delivery of infrastructure packages to assist the sustainable growth, regeneration and integration of employment land use and sustainable transport planning for existing and future identified locations in the Cork Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>c. Seek sustainable infrastructure investment and support masterplan implementation of HEIs including UCC and CIT and associated centres of research, development and innovation which are supported as strategic regional economic drivers in the Cork MASP.</p> <p>d. Seek sustainable infrastructure investment and support masterplan implementation of the Cork Science and Innovation Park at Curraheen which is supported as a strategic regional economic driver in the Cork MASP.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO seek to support the sustainable development of educational and research facilities, which is positive for PHH and MA and the broader environment. As with any infrastructure development, robust feasibility, site selection and environmental assessment are required to inform decision making.</p>	<p>Infrastructure for Strategic Employment Locations (a): It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.</p> <p>(b): Seek investment and inter agency co-ordination to the delivery of infrastructure packages to assist the sustainable growth, regeneration and integration of employment land use and sustainable transport planning for existing and future identified locations in the Cork Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>c. Seek sustainable infrastructure investment and support masterplan implementation of HEIs including UCC and CIT and associated centres of research, development and innovation which are supported as strategic regional economic drivers in the Cork MASP.</p> <p>d. Seek sustainable infrastructure investment and support masterplan implementation of the Cork Science and Innovation Park at Curraheen which is supported as a strategic regional economic driver in the Cork MASP.</p>	<p>No change.</p>

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<p>Cork MASP Policy Objective 13 Ports of Cork</p>	<p>a. Support sustainable development and investment in the Port of Cork balanced with the protection of the natural environment and Cork Harbour SPA and promote its role as a Tier 1 International Port and driver for the metropolitan, regional and State economy. To support this role, the Cork MASP seeks the following subject to the outcome of required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sustainable development of port infrastructure and facilities under the port's strategic development plans balanced with the protection of Cork Harbour's natural environment. Improved quality of inter-regional transport connectivity and networks improving access to the Port of Cork particularly for freight movement and the quality of the TEN-T Corridor. Investment in strategic transport corridors as referenced in CMATS and Cork MASP The relocation of existing port activities from Cork City and investment in infrastructure to remediate sites and enable regeneration of the Cork City Docks and Tivoli. The appropriate location of SEVESO activities and relocation of these activities from the city docklands subject to required planning and environmental law processes. The sustainable development and strengthening of cruise tourism. Support the feasibility, in co-ordination with relevant stakeholders, to create a more integrated and streamlined approach between planning, environmental and foreshore consenting. Co-ordinate with the relevant Government departments and stakeholders to align the RSES and MASP with opportunities for the region under Marine Spatial Planning. Support investment in the sustainable renewal, development and key interventions that will drive forward the potential of key assets in the Cork Harbour area balanced with protection of the nature conservation values of Cork Harbour, including City Quays and Tivoli renewal, Marino Point, Cork Dockyard, Cobh, Ringaskiddy, Whitegate and Bantry. <p>b. Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC</p>	<p>a. Support sustainable development and investment in the Port of Cork balanced with the protection of the natural environment and Cork Harbour SPA and promote its role as a Tier 1 International Port and driver for the metropolitan, regional and State economy. To support this role, the Cork MASP seeks the following subject to the outcome of required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sustainable development of port infrastructure and facilities under the port's strategic development plans balanced with the protection of Cork Harbour's natural environment. Improved quality of inter-regional transport connectivity and networks improving access to the Port of Cork particularly for freight movement and the quality of the TEN-T Corridor. The delivery of strategic transport network improvements under Cork MASP Objectives 6-9 including improved strategic road access to the Port of Cork Ringaskiddy, Cobh, Marino Point and Whitegate is supported as a critical component for unlocking the full potential of the Port of Cork and to enable regeneration of the Cork Docklands. Investment in strategic transport corridors as referenced in CMATS and Cork MASP The relocation of existing port activities from Cork City and investment in infrastructure to remediate sites and enable regeneration of the Cork City Docks and Tivoli. The appropriate location of SEVESO activities and relocation of these activities from the city docklands subject to required planning and environmental law processes. The sustainable development and strengthening of cruise tourism. Support the feasibility, in co-ordination with relevant stakeholders, to create a more integrated and streamlined approach between planning, environmental and foreshore consenting. Co-ordinate with the relevant Government departments and stakeholders to align the RSES and MASP with opportunities for the region under Marine Spatial Planning. Support investment in the sustainable renewal, development and key interventions that will drive forward the potential of key assets in the Cork Harbour area balanced with protection of the nature conservation values of Cork Harbour, including City Quays and Tivoli renewal, Marino Point, Cork Dockyard, Cobh, Ringaskiddy, Whitegate and Bantry. <p>b. Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC.</p>	<p>Any proposals to unlock future potential for the Port of Cork must have regard to the sensitivities of the area, particularly with respect to BFF and impacts on European sites. The assessment previously presented for Port of Cork related to RPO 137-141 1 presents the implications for port expansion and the sensitivities for the area.</p>	<p>a) Support sustainable development and investment in the Port of Cork balanced with the protection of the natural environment and Cork Harbour SPA and promote its role as a Tier 1 International Port and driver for the metropolitan, regional and State economy. To support this role, the Cork MASP seeks the following subject to the outcome of required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sustainable development of port infrastructure and facilities under the port's strategic development plans balanced with the protection of Cork Harbour's natural environment. Improved quality of inter-regional transport connectivity and networks improving access to the Port of Cork particularly for freight movement and the quality of the TEN-T Corridor. The delivery of strategic transport network improvements under Cork MASP Objectives 6-9 including improved strategic road access to the Port of Cork Ringaskiddy, Cobh, Marino Point and Whitegate is supported as a critical component for unlocking the full potential of the Port of Cork and to enable regeneration of the Cork Docklands. Investment in strategic transport corridors as referenced in CMATS and Cork MASP The relocation of existing port activities from Cork City and investment in infrastructure to remediate sites and enable regeneration of the Cork City Docks and Tivoli. The appropriate location of SEVESO activities and relocation of these activities from the city docklands subject to required planning and environmental law processes. The sustainable development and strengthening of cruise tourism. Support the feasibility, in co-ordination with relevant stakeholders, to create a more integrated and streamlined approach between planning, environmental and foreshore consenting. Co-ordinate with the relevant Government departments and stakeholders to align the RSES and MASP with opportunities for the region under Marine Spatial Planning. Support investment in the sustainable renewal, development and key interventions that will drive forward the potential of key assets in the Cork Harbour area balanced with protection of the nature conservation values of Cork Harbour, including City Quays and Tivoli renewal, Marino Point, Cork Dockyard, Cobh, Ringaskiddy, Whitegate and Bantry. <p>(b): Undertake feasibility studies to determine the carrying capacity of ports in relation to potential for likely significant effects on associated European sites including SPA and SAC</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Policy Objective 14 Cork Airport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the sustainable development of the airport and seek investment in infrastructure and facilities that promote the role of Cork Airport as an international gateway, employment location and economic driver for the region including the following subject to the outcome of required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes: Support the sustainable development and investment in infrastructure and facilities under the Cork Airport Masterplan. Support the sustainable development of enhanced public transport connectivity to the airport including the provision of bus priority lanes on the N27 and an improvement in the alignment of the R600 south of the Airport. Safeguard Public Safety Zones by way of land use planning under the relevant County Development Plan and Local Area Plans. Airport safeguarding priorities required include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airport Noise Zones (Inner and Outer Zones). Airport Public Safety Zones General Airport Safeguarding 	<p>(a): It is an objective to support the sustainable development of the airport and seek investment in infrastructure and facilities that promote the role of Cork Airport as an international gateway, employment location and economic driver for the region including the following subject to the outcome of required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the sustainable development and investment in infrastructure and facilities under the Cork Airport Masterplan (subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA/AA undertaken). Support the sustainable development of enhanced public transport connectivity to the airport including the provision of bus priority lanes on the N27 and an improvement in the alignment of the R600 south of the Airport. <p>Safeguard Public Safety Zones by way of land use planning under the relevant County Development Plan and Local Area Plans. Airport safeguarding priorities required include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airport Noise Zones (Inner and Outer Zones). Airport Public Safety Zones General Airport Safeguarding <p>b: Development Plans should incorporate policies to control inappropriate development which could adversely impact the potential for growth in either airport infrastructure or expansion of routes to international destinations. Safeguard the operation of Cork Airport by way of land use planning under the relevant County Development Plan and Local Area Plans. Airport safeguarding priorities required include:</p> <p>(i): Airport Noise Zones (Inner and Outer Zones). Spatial planning policies in the vicinity of the airport shall recognise and reflect the noise zones associated with Cork Airport. In particular within the Inner Airport Noise Zone provision of new residential and/or other noise sensitive development shall be actively resisted. Within the Outer Noise Zone provision of new residential and/or other noise sensitive development shall be strictly controlled such that future airport expansion on a 24/7 basis is anticipated and planned.</p> <p>(ii): Airport Public Safety Zones In assessing applications for development falling within Public Safety Zones, regard shall be had to the recommendations of the ERM Report "Public Safety Zones, 2005" (or any update thereof) commissioned by the Department of Transport and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, in assessing proposals for development falling within Airport Public Safety Zones.</p> <p>(iii): General Airport Safeguarding In assessing applications for development within the vicinity of Cork Airport, regard will be had to the precautionary principle concerning potential risk to aircraft safety. This includes avoidance of any bird attracting feature or use; unacceptable glint and glare impact towards key airport infrastructure; or intrusion into/infringing of airspace which might create an obstacle or danger to aircraft in flight.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO are positive for PHH and MA as they serve to control development to safeguard any future expansion of cork airport. Given the significant negative impacts that can arise as a result of airport activity e.g. pollution of water, noise exposure for local communities and BFF, traffic etc. expansions at any of the regions airports should be grounded in feasibility study and appropriate assessment of the implications for expansion. This would best be achieved through SEA / AA at the CDP/ LAP level to allow for independent consideration of the level of airport services required. Feasibility should also consider the regional objective toward low carbon connectivity as outlined elsewhere. Any development at Cork Airport should be accompanied by an SEA, EIA, EcIA and AA as appropriate. The reference to completion of SEA/AA on the Masterplan is welcome in this regard.#</p>	<p>(a): It is an objective to support the sustainable development of the airport and seek investment in infrastructure and facilities that promote the role of Cork Airport as an international gateway, employment location and economic driver for the region including the following subject to the outcome of required feasibility, assessment and environmental processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the sustainable development and investment in infrastructure and facilities under the Cork Airport Masterplans and updates to the Cork Airport Special Local Area Plan (subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA/AA undertaken). Support the sustainable development of enhanced public transport connectivity to the airport including the provision of bus priority lanes on the N27 and an improvement in the alignment of the R600 south of the Airport. <p>b: Development Plans should incorporate policies to control inappropriate development which could adversely impact the potential for growth in either airport infrastructure or expansion of routes to international destinations. Safeguard the operation of Cork Airport by way of land use planning under the relevant County Development Plan and Local Area Plans. Airport safeguarding priorities required include:</p> <p>(i): Airport Noise Zones (Inner and Outer Zones). Spatial planning policies in the vicinity of the airport shall recognise and reflect the noise zones associated with Cork Airport. In particular within the Inner Airport Noise Zone provision of new residential and/or other noise sensitive development shall be actively resisted. Within the Outer Noise Zone provision of new residential and/or other noise sensitive development shall be strictly controlled such that future airport expansion on a 24/7 basis is anticipated and planned.</p> <p>(ii): Airport Public Safety Zones In assessing applications for development falling within Public Safety Zones, regard shall be had to the recommendations of the ERM Report "Public Safety Zones, 2005" (or any update thereof) commissioned by the Department of Transport and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, in assessing proposals for development falling within Airport Public Safety Zones.</p> <p>(iii): General Airport Safeguarding In assessing applications for development within the vicinity of Cork Airport, regard will be had to the precautionary principle concerning potential risk to aircraft safety. This includes avoidance of any bird attracting feature or use; unacceptable glint and glare impact towards key airport infrastructure; or intrusion into/infringing of airspace which might create an obstacle or danger to aircraft in flight.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>Cork MASP Policy Objective 15 Cork Tourism</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Title: Cork MASP Tourism</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>d. Value and support cultural amenities, conservation, protection and enhancement of Cork City's natural heritage as key assets to attract tourism.</p> <p>e. Seek sustainable tourism development which reflects the city's distinctive history, culture and environment.</p> <p>f. Promote diversification and innovation in the tourism sector.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>As per previous assessment including potential impacts associated with tourism; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>c. Support the delivery of large-scale all year-round tourist attraction(s) in Cork City and in County Metropolitan Cork.</p> <p>d. Value and support cultural amenities, conservation, protection and enhancement of Cork City's natural heritage as key assets to attract tourism.</p> <p>e. Seek sustainable tourism development which reflects the city's distinctive history, culture and environment.</p> <p>f. Promote diversification and innovation in the tourism sector.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>

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Cork MASP Policy Objective 17 Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation & Greenbelt Strategy	It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of parks, recreation and high quality public open space in the Cork Metropolitan Area. This Strategy may include, inter alia: a. An enhanced network of regional scaled parks in Metropolitan Cork and invest in upgraded facilities including Tramore Valley Park, Marina Park, Bishop Lucey Park Redevelopment, Northwest Regional Park, Riverside Public Walk (Lee Field to the Marina), Lee Fields Walk/Cycle extension to Ballincollig, Lough Redevelopment, Tivoli Docks Park, neighbourhood parks and public parks in the Metropolitan Towns. b. The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including parks, natural green spaces and ecosystems, greenways and blueways. c. 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 d. Protect and proactively manage and integrate natural spaces. e. The sustainable development of key recreation, sports and community facilities across Metropolitan Cork. f. The development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Cork City Council and Cork County Council.	It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of parks, recreation and high quality public open space in the Cork Metropolitan Area. This Strategy may include, inter alia: a. An enhanced network of regional scaled parks in Metropolitan Cork and invest in upgraded facilities including Tramore Valley Park, Marina Park, Bishop Lucey Park Redevelopment, Northwest Regional Park, Riverside Public Walk (Lee Field to the Marina), Lee Fields Walk/Cycle extension to Ballincollig, Lough Redevelopment, Tivoli Docks Park, neighbourhood parks and public parks in the Metropolitan Towns. b. The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including parks, natural green spaces and ecosystems, greenways and blueways. c. The implementation of Greenway initiatives that provide important economic, leisure and tourism, health, active and sustainable travel and environmental benefits to the metropolitan area including the Lee to Sea Greenway initiative. 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 e. Protect and proactively manage and integrate natural spaces. f. The sustainable development of key recreation, sports and community facilities across Metropolitan Cork. g. The development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Cork City Council and Cork County Council.	This RPO now includes support for greenway initiatives including the Lee to Sea Greenway. The Lee to Sea Greenway follows the River Lee from the Inishchara dam to the harbour. It is welcome to see that support for this project will be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments the planning process. It will be important at that consideration is given to potential impacts on European Sites including Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC. See assessment provided for RPO 192&3.	It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of parks, recreation and high quality public open space in the Cork Metropolitan Area. This Strategy may include, inter alia: a) An enhanced network of regional scaled parks in Metropolitan Cork and invest in upgraded facilities including Tramore Valley Park, Marina Park, Bishop Lucey Park Redevelopment, Northwest Regional Park, Riverside Public Walk (Lee Field to the Marina), Lee Fields Walk/Cycle extension to Ballincollig, Lough Redevelopment, Tivoli Docks Park, neighbourhood parks and public parks in the Metropolitan Towns. b) The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including parks, natural green spaces and ecosystems, greenways and blueways. c) The implementation of Greenway initiatives that provide important economic, leisure and tourism, health, active and sustainable travel and environmental benefits to the metropolitan area including the Lee to Sea Greenway initiative subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. 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 e) Protect and proactively manage and integrate natural spaces. f) The sustainable development of key recreation, sports and community facilities across Metropolitan Cork. g) The development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Cork City Council and Cork County Council.	No change.
Cork MASP Policy Objective 18 Transformational Areas and Public Realm	Subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: a. Seek investment in transformational area projects and public realm enhancements in metropolitan urban areas with a focus on city centre regeneration through such initiatives as the Cork City Centre Strategy 2014 and Grand Parade/South Main Street Transformational Area. b. Support and seek investment in the sustainable remediation of Haulbowline Island and its transformation into a public recreational amenity. c. Support the acquisition and development of the City Quays in Cork for a high-quality water front public realm for public use. d. Seek investment in the sustainable development of the Cork Events Centre. e. Seek investment in the strategy and investment programme of the Crawford Art Gallery.	Subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: a. Seek investment in transformational area projects and public realm enhancements in metropolitan urban areas with a focus on city centre regeneration through such initiatives as the Cork City Centre Strategy 2014 and Grand Parade/South Main Street Transformational Area. b. Support and seek investment in the sustainable remediation of Haulbowline Island and its transformation into a public recreational amenity. c. Support the acquisition and development of the City Quays in Cork for a high-quality water front public realm for public use. d. Seek investment in the sustainable development of the Cork Events Centre. e. Seek investment in the strategy and investment programme of the Crawford Art Gallery.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	Subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: a) Seek investment in transformational area projects and public realm enhancements in metropolitan urban areas with a focus on city centre regeneration through such initiatives as the Cork City Centre Strategy 2014 and Grand Parade/South Main Street Transformational Area. b) Support and seek investment in the sustainable remediation of Haulbowline Island and its transformation into a public recreational amenity. c) Support the acquisition and development of the City Quays in Cork for a high-quality water front public realm for public use. d) The cultural and economic significance of the Cork Event Centre is recognised, and delivery of the facility is supported. e) Seek investment in the strategy and investment programme of the Crawford Art Gallery.	No change.
Cork MASP Policy Objective 21 Healthy Cities, Healthy Environment and Health Infrastructure	a. Support the role of Cork as a WHO Healthy City and seek investment in the delivery of recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health services infrastructure that retains and improves on this status, in support of a "healthy heart" to the Cork Metropolitan Area. b. Seek investment in health service infrastructure within the Cork MASP to meet existing and future regional population growth including facilities for Cork University Hospital, the Southern Region's tertiary referral centre and other existing hospitals, the sustainable development of a new acute hospital and new elective hospital to service the increasing population of the metropolitan area and wider Southern Region.	New Title: Healthy Cities, Healthy Environment and Health Infrastructure a. Seek investment in smart technologies which have an increasing role to play to improve air quality, water quality, flood management, noise and light pollution to promote a clean and healthy environment. Additional support is required to ensure a wide penetration of relevant sensors and data collection and analysis support to provide accurate information for people using and managing the city b. Support the role of Cork as a WHO Healthy City and seek investment in the delivery of recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health services infrastructure that retains and improves on this status, in support of a "healthy heart" to the Cork Metropolitan Area. c. Seek investment in health service infrastructure within the Cork MASP to meet existing and future regional population growth including facilities for Cork University Hospital, the Southern Region's tertiary referral centre and other existing hospitals, the sustainable development of a new acute hospital and new elective hospital to service the increasing population of the metropolitan area and wider Southern Region d. Seek delivery and supports to achieve Healthy Ireland objectives.	The additional amendment will have indirect positive impacts for all environmental receptors as it seeks to improve data collection to better inform decision making in relation to environmental impacts.	a. Seek investment in smart technologies which have an increasing role to play to improve air quality, water quality, flood management, noise and light pollution to promote a clean and healthy environment. Additional support is required to ensure a wide penetration of relevant sensors and data collection and analysis support to provide accurate information for people using and managing the city. (b): Support the role of Cork as a WHO Healthy City and seek investment in the delivery of recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health services infrastructure that retains and improves on this status, in support of a "healthy heart" to the Cork Metropolitan Area.	No change.
Cork MASP Policy Objective 22 Social Inclusion	a. Seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Cork City Council and Cork County Council to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion for all citizens across all our communities b. Seek continued investment in initiatives that achieve the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas in the City and Metropolitan Area, in particular supporting the ongoing regeneration of the Cork City RAPID areas of Fairhill/Gurranbraher/Farranree, Knocknaheeny/Churchfield, Mayfield/Blackpool/The Glen and Togher/Mahon. c. Support the development of an Inter-agency Social Enterprise Strategy to support the retention and expansion of existing social enterprises and the development of new social enterprises	a. Seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Cork City Council and Cork County Council to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion for all citizens across all our communities b. Seek continued investment in initiatives that achieve the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas in the City and Metropolitan Area, in particular supporting the ongoing regeneration of the Cork City RAPID areas of Fairhill/Gurranbraher/Farranree, Knocknaheeny/Churchfield, Mayfield/Blackpool/The Glen and Togher/Mahon. c. Support the development of an Inter-agency Social Enterprise Strategy to support the retention and expansion of existing social enterprises and the development of new social enterprises d. Recognise, support and value diversity, especially within the city population and workforce and the implementation of Government policy "The Migrant Integration Strategy."	This addition specifically addresses social integration and diversity with potential for indirect positive impacts for PHH and MA.	a) Seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Cork City Council and Cork County Council to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion for all citizens across all our communities b) Seek continued investment in initiatives that achieve the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas in the City and Metropolitan Area, in particular supporting the ongoing regeneration of the Cork City RAPID areas of Fairhill/Gurranbraher/Farranree, Knocknaheeny/Churchfield, Mayfield/Blackpool/The Glen and Togher/Mahon. c) Support the development of an Inter-agency Social Enterprise Strategy to support the retention and expansion of existing social enterprises and the development of new social enterprises d) Recognise, support and value diversity, especially within the city population and workforce and the implementation of Government policy "The Migrant Integration Strategy".	No change.
Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan					
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 1: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area	a. It is an objective to strengthen the role of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region. b. It is an objective to promote the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan area with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region (ii) compact growth and regeneration of Limerick city centre and suburbs, (iii) compact growth and regeneration of Shannon (iv) active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner. c. It is an objective to seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals'). d. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate e. The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.	a. It is an objective to strengthen the role of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region. b. It is an objective to promote the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan area with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region (ii) compact growth and regeneration of Limerick city centre and suburbs, (iii) compact growth and regeneration of Shannon (iv) active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner. c. It is an objective to seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals'). d: It is an objective to support the socio-economic growth and continued investment, development and the enhancement of connectivity of the Limerick Shannon MASPs hinterland towns, including Nenagh and Tipperary Town. e. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate f. The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.	The amendment to this RPO includes support for connectivity of the Limerick Shannon MASP hinterland towns including Nenagh (see RPO 15) and Tipperary Town. This is positive for PHH and MA as it supports growth and investment. However, there is potential for impacts on BFF and W. Environmental sensitivities for Nenagh have already been described under the assessment of RPO 15. Development in Tipperary Town should consider potential impacts on the Lower River Suir SAC. Therefore, any plans (such as CDP, LAP or Masterplans) or projects related to investment, development or enhancement of connectivity for these areas should be subject to appropriate environmental assessments and the outcome of the planning process.	a) It is an objective to strengthen the role of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region. b) It is an objective to promote the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan area with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and Region (ii) compact growth and regeneration of Limerick city centre and suburbs, (iii) compact growth and regeneration of Shannon (iv) active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner. c) It is an objective to seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals'). d) Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate e) The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Region.	No change.

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
<p>Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 2: Limerick City</p>	<p>The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises that for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and the Mid-West SPA to prosper and development in a sustainable manner, a strong Limerick City is paramount. It is an objective to support the regeneration and continued investment into Limerick City through initiatives such as Limerick 2030 and Limerick Regeneration and to further enhance Limerick City as key economic driver for the Southern Region</p>	<p>a)Support the regeneration and continued investment into Limerick City through initiatives such as Limerick 2030 and Limerick Regeneration and to further enhance Limerick City as key economic driver for the Southern Region. b)Enhance the city centre as the primary commercial area, supporting a range of retail, tourism, social and cultural activities. c)Strengthen the consolidation and regeneration of Limerick City Centre to drive its role as a vibrant living, retailing and working city, the economic, social and cultural heart of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Region. d)Seek investment to achieve brownfield regeneration of city centre sites as high quality, mixed use sustainable and transformative projects which set national and international good practice standards in innovation, quality design, exemplary urbanism and place making. e)Seek investment to achieve regeneration and consolidation in the city suburbs.</p>	<p>The amendments to this RPO provide further support for the regeneration and investment in Limerick City, which is positive for PHH, MA, LandS and CH. As identified in the assessment, overall regeneration initiatives result in positive impacts on the broader environment. However, regeneration also needs to be cognisant of the need for sensitive development of protected building and impact on the skyline/cityscape character. Heritage-led initiatives must also consider impacts to other environmental receptors with particular attention paid to bats.</p>	<p>The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises that for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and the Mid-West SPA to prosper and development in a sustainable manner, a strong Limerick City is paramount. It is an objective to:</p> <p>a. Support the regeneration and continued investment into Limerick City through initiatives such as Limerick 2030 and Limerick Regeneration and to further enhance Limerick City as a primary economic driver for the Southern Region. b. Enhance the city centre as the primary commercial area, supporting a range of retail, tourism, social and cultural activities. c. Strengthen the consolidation and regeneration of Limerick City Centre to drive its role as a vibrant living, retailing and working city, the economic, social and cultural heart of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Region. d. Seek investment to achieve brownfield regeneration of city centre sites as high quality, mixed use sustainable and transformative projects which set national and international good practice standards in innovation, quality design, exemplary urbanism and place making. e. Support collaboration between Limerick City and County Council and the Land Development Agency to masterplan and sustainably develop strategic city centre and Dockland sites in Limerick City, utilising the appropriate planning mechanisms and subject to required environmental assessments. f. Seek investment to achieve regeneration and consolidation in the city suburbs.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 3: Shannon</p>	<p>The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises Shannon as its assets as a significant regional strength and employment centre. It is an objective to support and promote Shannon as a centre for research and development for autonomous vehicles which will complement Shannon's role as a world leader in aviation and aerospace.</p>	<p>a.The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises Shannon as its assets as a significant regional strength and employment centre. It is an objective to support and promote Shannon as a centre for research and development for autonomous vehicles which will complement Shannon's role as a world leader in aviation and aerospace. b. It is an objective to seek investment to deliver a Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) R&D testbed in Shannon c. It is an objective to improve and enhance Shannon as an attractive residential location through placemaking and regeneration initiatives.</p>	<p>The investment in CAV testing in Shannon and a smart city demonstrator in Limerick is broadly positive for environmental receptors and particularly for MA as the objective seeks to explore new technologies that can support better outcomes for urban living. Long term indirect positive impacts may relate to AQ and CF where transport technology can be improved; PHH where technology can support residents and workers etc. The improvement of Shannon as an attractive residential location through placemaking and regeneration is also positive on PHH and MA. As outlined previously regeneration has the potential for both positive and negative impacts on the environment that will need to be considered at the site selection and project stage of development.</p>	<p>a) The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises Shannon as a significant regional strength and employment centre. It is an objective to support and promote Shannon as a centre for research and development for autonomous vehicles which will complement Shannon's role as a world leader in aviation, aerospace, engineering, manufacturing and distribution. b) It is an objective to seek investment to deliver a Connected and Autonomous (CAV) R&D testbed and smart infrastructure in Shannon. c) It is an objective to improve and enhance Shannon as an attractive residential location through placemaking and regeneration initiatives.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>
<p>Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 6 Integration of Transport and Landuse (former LS MASP Objective 6 is now divided into two distinct objectives to replace 6A Integration of Landuse and Transport and 6B Sustainable Transport)</p>	<p>a. It is an objective to prepare a Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP and it is an objective to ensure investment and implementation of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy. b. It is an objective that Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans will identify the public transport corridors and station nodal points on corridors in Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area arising from the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these station nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. c. It is an objective to support the following sustainable transport priorities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: • The implementation of an integrated, multi modal public transport network across the Metropolitan Area servicing strategic residential and employment growth locations. • Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities. • Development and promotion of existing intercity rail and commuter links from Limerick to Dublin, Cork, Galway, together with Ennis, Nenagh, Thurles and Clonmel. • Upgrade and enhancement of the rail line between Limerick and Nenagh and onward line to Ballybrophy. • Upgrade and enhancement of the Western Rail Corridor between Limerick and Ennis and onward line to Athenry. • Reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line, linking Ireland's deepest port to the national rail network • The MASP supports the ambition to create a rail link between Limerick City and Shannon International Airport and this should be investigated further. • Investigate the potential for a higher speed rail link between Dublin and Limerick City.</p>	<p>Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 6A: Integration of Land Use and Transport (a) It is an objective to prepare a Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP and it is an objective to ensure investment and implementation of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy. (b) It is an objective that Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans will identify the public transport corridors and station nodal points on corridors in Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area arising from the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential to support for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these station nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. (c) It is an objective to achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led: • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre and suburbs. • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of Shannon Town. • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along public transportation corridors • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along a Suburban Rail Corridor • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along BusConnects corridors. (d) It is an objective to seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points. 6B Sustainable Transport It is an objective to support the following sustainable transport priorities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the completion of the LSMATs and the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: •Investment in sustainable transport infrastructure and public transport services •The implementation of an integrated, multi modal public transport network across the Metropolitan Area servicing strategic residential and employment growth locations. Other transport measures for consideration, across the wider Mid-West area, may include the following •Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities. •Development and promotion of existing intercity rail and commuter links from Limerick to Dublin, Cork, Galway, together with Ennis, Nenagh, Thurles and Clonmel. •Upgrade and enhancement of the rail line between Limerick and Nenagh and onward line to Ballybrophy. •Upgrade and enhancement of the Western Rail Corridor between Limerick and Ennis and onward line to Athenry. •Reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line, linking Ireland's deepest port to the national rail network •The MASP supports the ambition to create a rail link between Limerick City and Shannon International Airport and this should be investigated further. •Investigate the potential for a higher speed rail link between Dublin and Limerick City. •Improved sustainable transport links between the city centre, University of Limerick and the National Technology Park. •Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities including delivery of the Great Streets project. •The provision of a high-quality cycle network in Limerick City as set out in the Limerick Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Study. •The provision of three new pedestrian/ cycle bridges in the city centre as set out in the World Class Waterfront proposals to improve pedestrian and cycle permeability to key sites.</p>	<p>This RPO has been updated to include support for investment in sustainable transport infrastructure and public transport services, which is positive for PHH, MA, CF and AQ. It also includes for consideration of high-quality cycle network in Limerick City as set out in the Limerick Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Study and the provision of three new pedestrian/ cycle bridges in the city centre as set out in the World Class Waterfront proposals. It is important that such proposals are subject to environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process particularly as the stretch of the River Shannon that runs through the city is a designated SAC. Additions to the revised 6A set to achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led regeneration and consolidation and growth of city centre and suburbs, Shannon town, and residential, employment and nodal locations along public transportation corridors, busConnects, suburban Rail corridor and to seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points. This is positive for PHH and MA as it promotes integration of land use and transport planning thus also leading to positive impacts on CF and AQ and the broader environment. The RPO should be conditional on implementation of the mitigation measures identified by the SEA and AA of the LSMATs and the updated wording is welcome in this regard.</p>	<p>(a) It is an objective to prepare a Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP and it is an objective to ensure investment and implementation of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy. (b) It is an objective that Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans will identify the public transport corridors and station nodal points on corridors in Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area arising from the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential to support high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these station nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. (c) It is an objective to achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led: • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre and suburbs. • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of Shannon Town. • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along public transportation corridors • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along strategic bus network corridors (d) It is an objective to seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 7 Sustainable Transport (former LS MASP Objective 6 is now divided into two distinct objectives to replace 6A Integration of Landuse and Transport and 6B Sustainable Transport)</p>	<p>(This cell is empty in the original image)</p>	<p>(This cell is empty in the original image)</p>	<p>This RPO has been updated to include support for investment in sustainable transport infrastructure and public transport services, which is positive for PHH, MA, CF and AQ. It also includes for consideration of high-quality cycle network in Limerick City as set out in the Limerick Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Study and the provision of three new pedestrian/ cycle bridges in the city centre as set out in the World Class Waterfront proposals. It is important that such proposals are subject to environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process particularly as the stretch of the River Shannon that runs through the city is a designated SAC. Additions to the revised 6A set to achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led regeneration and consolidation and growth of city centre and suburbs, Shannon town, and residential, employment and nodal locations along public transportation corridors, busConnects, suburban Rail corridor and to seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points. This is positive for PHH and MA as it promotes integration of land use and transport planning thus also leading to positive impacts on CF and AQ and the broader environment. The RPO should be conditional on implementation of the mitigation measures identified by the SEA and AA of the LSMATs and the updated wording is welcome in this regard.</p>	<p>a) It is an objective to support the following sustainable transport priorities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to their consistency with the recommendations of LSMATs and the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: • Investment in sustainable transport infrastructure and public transport services. • The implementation of an integrated, multi modal public transport network across the Metropolitan Area servicing strategic residential and employment growth locations. (b) Other transport measures for consideration, across the wider Mid-West area, may include the following: • Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities. • Development and promotion of existing intercity rail and commuter links from Limerick to Dublin, Cork, Galway, together with Ennis, Nenagh, Thurles and Clonmel. • Upgrade and enhancement of the rail line between Limerick and Nenagh and onward line to Ballybrophy. • Upgrade and enhancement of the Western Rail Corridor between Limerick and Ennis and onward line to Athenry. • Reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line, linking Ireland's deepest port to the national rail network • The MASP supports the ambition to create a rail link between Limerick City and Shannon International Airport and this should be investigated further. • Investigate the potential for a higher speed rail link between Dublin and Limerick City. • Improved sustainable transport links between the city centre, Shannon International Airport, LIT, UL and the National Technology Park. • Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities including delivery of the Great Streets project. • The provision of a high-quality cycle network in Limerick City as set out in the Limerick Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Study/LSMATs. • The provision of three new pedestrian/ cycle bridges in the city centre as set out in the World Class Waterfront proposals to improve pedestrian and cycle permeability to key sites.</p>	<p>As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.</p>

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 8 (former Objective 7) Strategic Road Infrastructure.	It is an objective to deliver the sustainable development of strategic road infrastructure for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and improve transport connectivity to the wider region. This will include the delivery of the following subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: • Improved inter regional connectivity to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area including M20 Limerick to Cork and the upgrading of the N24 to Waterford. • Limerick Northern Distributer Route (LNDR) • N69 Foynes to Limerick road upgrade • Improved accessibility to Limerick Southside including the possible provision of a motorway interchange connection from the M20/M7 to Limerick Southside • Upgrade of the N19 road access to Shannon International Airport. • Upgrade of arterial roads from the motorway network to increase capacity including the provision of public transport infrastructure and Park and Ride, including, for example, R527 Dock Road, R445 Dublin Road, including Junction 28 and R527 Tipperary Road	It is an objective to deliver the sustainable development of strategic road infrastructure for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and improve transport connectivity to the wider region. This will include the delivery of the following subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: • Improved inter regional connectivity to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area including M20 Limerick to Cork and the upgrading of the N24 to Waterford. • Limerick Northern Distributer Route (LNDR) • N69 Foynes to Limerick road upgrade • Improved accessibility to Limerick Southside including the possible provision of a motorway interchange connection from the M20/M7 to Limerick Southside • Upgrade of the N19 road access to Shannon International Airport. • Upgrade of arterial roads from the motorway network to increase capacity including the provision of public transport infrastructure and Park and Ride, including, for example, R527 Dock Road, R445 Dublin Road, including Junction 28 and R527 Tipperary Road • upgrading of the R471. • works to upgrade and improve the road alignment of the L3126 • the upgrade of the Childer's Road/ Ballysimon Road in Limerick City to accommodate bus and cycle facilities.	This RPO now includes 3 additional road schemes. The assessment and mitigation already provided under this RPO regarding development of such schemes remains valid.	It is an objective to maintain and deliver the sustainable development of strategic road infrastructure for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and improve transport connectivity to the wider Region. This will include the delivery of the following subject to their consistency with the recommendations of LSMATS, the outcome of appropriate appraisal, environmental assessments and the planning process: • Improved inter regional connectivity to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area including M20 Limerick to Cork and the upgrading of the N24 to Waterford. • Limerick Northern Distributer Route (LNDR) • Foynes to Limerick Road Scheme (including Adare Bypass) • Improved accessibility to Limerick Southside including the possible provision of a motorway interchange connection from the M20/M7 to Limerick Southside • Upgrade of the N19 road access to Shannon International Airport. • Upgrade of arterial roads from the motorway network to increase capacity including the provision of public transport infrastructure and Park and Ride, including, for example, R527 Dock Road, R445 Dublin Road, including Junction 28 and R527 Tipperary Road. • upgrading of the R471. • works to upgrade and improve the road alignment of the L3126 • The upgrade of the Childer's Road/ Ballysimon Road in Limerick City to accommodate bus and cycle facilities.	Change requires to correct project name. Previously called N69 Foynes to Limerick Road Upgrade. As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 10 (new Objective from MA stage former RPO N) Housing and Regeneration		a) It is an objective to support the environmentally sustainable densification of Limerick City Centre, the assembly of brownfield sites for development and the regeneration and redevelopment of Limerick City Centre to accommodate residential use. The MASP recognises that Living City and Living Georgian City initiatives (and any environmental mitigation arising from the environmental assessment of such strategies) are essential to facilitate compact growth and increased residential density in the city centre. b) It is an objective to enhance Shannon Town as an attractive residential centre through regeneration, active land management initiatives and the redevelopment of Shannon Town Centre. An Action Area Plan for Shannon Town Centre and required environmental assessments including SEA and AA will be prepared within 3 years of the publication of this RSES and MASP. c) It is an objective to ensure investment and delivery of holistic physical, social and environmental infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF and RSES objectives.	The assessment for part a of this objective is similar to the assessment provided for Limerick Shannon MASP Objective 2, which also supports the regeneration of Limerick city. This objective will likely give rise to positive impacts in terms of PHH and MA due to the focus on regeneration and economic stimulation, by focusing development within the city. Through regeneration, uncontrolled run-off or contamination issues are generally improved upon resulting in positive impacts to LS and W. However there are potential negative impacts for BFF, LS and W where regeneration or infill development results in emissions to water or the generation of contaminated material from brownfield sites, such as the intention to extend towards the docks. However there are positive implications for BFF, LS and W where infill development is preferable over the development of greenfield at the edges of the city. Development, once sustainable, should result in positive impacts to AQ and CF however increased emissions due to growth in the city centre may also have negative impacts in this regard. From a landscape and visual perspective regeneration generally results in improved visual impacts, and where development and regeneration has regard to, and can leverage off of, Limerick's cultural heritage assets which are set out in the Limerick 2030 plan, e.g. the Georgian Quarter. The Living City Initiative is a scheme of property tax incentives designed to regenerate both historic buildings and other buildings in Limerick. Regeneration would also need to be cognisant of the need for sensitive development of protected building and the type and scale of development could impact on the skyline/cityscape character. Potential to impact on BFF, particularly bats which may roost in older buildings should also be considered. Part b of this objective relates to the regeneration of Shannon and therefore the assessment above also relates to the regeneration of Shannon. The preparation of an Area Action Plan is welcome, but must be subject to SEA and AA processes. Any infrastructural developments arising from Part c of this objective should be subject to is subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments as appropriate (SEA, EIA, AA, EcIA), and the outcomes of the planning process.	a) It is an objective to support the environmentally sustainable densification of Limerick City Centre, the assembly of brownfield sites for development and the regeneration and redevelopment of Limerick City and Suburbs to accommodate residential use. The MASP recognises that initiatives such as the Living City and Living Georgian City initiatives and other interventions by agencies such as the Land Development Agency (and any environmental mitigation arising from the environmental assessment of such strategies) are essential to facilitate compact growth and increased residential density in the city centre. b) It is an objective to enhance Shannon Town as an attractive residential centre through regeneration, active land management initiatives and the redevelopment of Shannon Town Centre. An Action Area Plan for Shannon Town Centre and required environmental assessments including SEA and AA will be prepared within 3 years of the publication of this RSES and MASP. c) It is an objective to ensure investment and delivery of holistic physical, social and environmental infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF and RSES objectives.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 11 (new Objective from MA stage former RPO O) Economic Resilience and Clusters		It is an objective to develop, deepen and enhance the economic resilience of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area through creating a vibrant and diversified enterprise base, with strong, healthy, connected Clusters drawing on Eolas Comhroinnte Obair le chéile / Shared Knowledge Working Together (ECOLC / SKWT) to assist in bringing disruptive technologies and innovations to national and global markets.	This objective is positive for PHH and MA as it serves to enhance the economic resilience of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. Any infrastructure associated with disruptive technologies needs to be developed in a sustainable manner.	It is an objective to develop, deepen and enhance the economic resilience of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area through creating a vibrant and diversified enterprise base, with strong, healthy, connected Clusters drawing on Eolas Comhroinnte Obair le chéile / Shared Knowledge Working Together (ECOLC / SKWT) to assist in bringing disruptive technologies and innovations to national and global markets.	No change.
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 12 A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI (former Objective 16 Digital Connectivity & Innovation):	a. It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and access for all to digital infrastructure in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. b. It is an objective to seek investment in the initiatives of Local Authority Digital Strategies and investment in initiatives to deliver a greener, more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area. c. It is an objective to deliver high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband so peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area.	Digital Connectivity & Innovation to A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI a. It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and access for all to digital infrastructure in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. b. It is an objective to seek investment in the initiatives of Local Authority Digital Strategies and investment in initiatives to deliver a greener, more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area. c. It is an objective to deliver high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband so peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area. d. It is an objective to seek investment in the sustainable development of initiatives of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in strengthening enterprise assets, fostering competitive locations and conditions for enterprise growth in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. e. It is an objective to implement and develop novel technologies, build a sustainable knowledge base and engage citizens in digital transformation, while minimising the risk of digital inequalities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. In this regard it is an objective to support the Limerick Digital District and to accelerate Limerick's transition to becoming Ireland's first digital city.	The amendments to this RPO will have a positive impact on PHH and MA. The inclusion of 'sustainable development' is positive for the broader environment, however, any sites selected for enterprise growth should be subject to a site selection process that includes consideration of environmental aspects.	a) It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and to seek access for all to digital infrastructure in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. b) It is an objective to seek investment in the initiatives of Local authority Digital Strategies and investment in initiatives to deliver a greener, more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area. c) It is an objective to deliver high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband so peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area. d) It is an objective to seek investment in the sustainable development of initiatives of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in strengthening enterprise assets, fostering competitive locations and conditions for enterprise growth in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. e) It is an objective to implement and develop novel technologies, build a sustainable knowledge base and engage citizens in digital transformation, while minimising the risk of digital inequalities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. In this regard it is an objective to support the Limerick Digital District and to accelerate Limerick's transition to becoming Ireland's first digital city	No change.
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 13 (former Objective 9) Strategic Employment Locations	It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.	a. It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. b. It is an objective to seek investment to deliver a Connected and Autonomous (CAV) R&D testbed and micro smart city infrastructure in Shannon. c. It is an objective to support the development of the Limerick Docklands Strategy within the context of both commercial and potential future residential development.	The investment in CAV testing in Shannon and a smart city demonstrator in Limerick is broadly positive for environmental receptors and particularly for MA as the objective seeks to explore new technologies that can support better outcomes for urban living. Longterm indirect positive impacts may relate to AQ and CF where transport technology can be improved; PHH where technology can support residents and workers etc. It is noted that a detailed ecological assessment was included in Appendix A and environmental Considerations set out in Chapter 6 of the Limerick Docklands Strategy. Any recommended mitigation measures should be implemented as part of the development of the docklands.	a) It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. b) It is an objective to seek investment to deliver a Connected and Autonomous (CAV) R&D testbed and smart infrastructure in Shannon and a smart city demonstrator in Limerick. c) It is an objective to support the development of the Limerick Docklands Strategy within the context of both commercial and potential future residential development.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 16 (former Objective 12) Shannon Foynes Port	a. It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, to support the continued expansion of Shannon Foynes Port and to recognise the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland by virtue of its deep waters. b. It is an objective to support and promote the inclusion of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it would bring significant investment opportunities to the region in the form of FDI potential and as well as supporting enhanced external connectivity with Ireland's European partners. c. It is an objective to support the reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line and the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme	a. It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process including SEA and AA as appropriate, to support the continued expansion of Shannon Foynes Port and to recognise the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland by virtue of its deep waters. b. It is an objective to support and promote the inclusion of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it would bring significant investment opportunities to the region in the form of FDI potential and as well as supporting enhanced external connectivity with Ireland's European partners. c. It is an objective to support the reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line and the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme. d. It is an objective to safeguard and maintain Foynes Island as a vital port asset and to support the provision of natural deep water berthage on the island.	This objective seeks to safeguard and maintain Foynes Island in the context of the Shannon-Foynes Port. It also supports the reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line and the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme. The development of port infrastructure or any improvements in transport infrastructure to the port have the potential to impact on the environment and therefore it is important that such development is subject to feasibility, site selection and environmental assessments as appropriate (SEA, EIA, AA, EcIA), and the outcomes of the planning process. It is noted that the Shannon Foynes Port is located directly adjacent to the Lower River Shannon Estuary SAC and River Shannon & River Fergus Estuaries SPA. The amended wording regarding SEA and AA are welcome as this RPO will require the implementation of the mitigation measures identified by the SEA and AA of the SIFP.	a) It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, including SEA and AA as appropriate, to support the continued expansion of Shannon Foynes Port and to recognise the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland by virtue of its deep waters. b) It is an objective to support and promote the inclusion of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it would bring significant investment opportunities to the region in the form of FDI potential and as well as supporting enhanced external connectivity with Ireland's European partners. c) It is an objective to support the reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line and the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme. d) It is an objective to safeguard and maintain Foynes Island as a vital port asset and to support the provision of natural deep water berthage on the island	No change.
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 17 (former RPO 13) Retail	a. A Joint Retail Strategy shall be prepared in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. b. It is an objective to support Limerick City Centre in maintaining its dominant retail function in the Mid-West hierarchy. The RSES supports and promotes the continued expansion and enhancement of retail development within the City Centre c. It is an objective to investigate the potential to develop a distinct shopping character to increase Shannon's attraction and to complement the retail function of Limerick city centre	a. Within one year of the adoption of the RSES/MASP a Joint Retail Strategy shall be commenced for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Joint Retail Strategy shall include – inter alia- the defined area of the Core City Shopping Area, the location of Suburban or District Shopping Centres, a map to indicate sustainable travel routes to/from each shopping area. b. It is an objective to support Limerick City Centre in maintaining its dominant retail function in the Mid-West hierarchy. The RSES supports and promotes the continued expansion and enhancement of retail development within the City Centre. c. It is an objective to protect and enhance customer experience of visiting Limerick City Centre through facilitating a mixed expansion of services including high order comparison retailing in conjunction with service, cultural and entertainment facilities through appropriate and sensitive redevelopment and infill development. d. It is an objective to develop a distinct shopping character to increase Shannon's attraction and to complement the retail function of Limerick city centre.	This RPO has been updated to include further enhancements to the Joint retail strategy including identification of sustainable travel routes which is positive for the broader environment with potential indirect positive impacts for AQ and CF as well as PHH. A focus on sustainable travel modes would be a further positive addition to the commitment for travel routes. Redevelopment and infill projects have the potential for long-term positive impacts for PH, MA, CH, W and Lands by improvements to social fabric and reuse of building stock, improvements to drainage and control of run-off. As with all such redevelopment there is also potential for direct and indirect negative impacts on BFF e.g. bats and birds which may use sites or features for nesting and perching, CH if redevelopment of building stock is not carried out in an architecturally sensitive manner and also on W and S arising from potential for contamination for historic activities.	a) Within one year of the adoption of the RSES/MASP a Joint Retail Strategy shall be commenced for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Joint Retail Strategy shall include – inter alia- the defined area of the Core City Shopping Area, the location of Suburban or District Shopping Centres, a map to indicate sustainable travel routes to/from each shopping area. b) It is an objective to support Limerick City Centre in maintaining its dominant retail function in the Mid-West hierarchy. The RSES supports and promotes the continued expansion and enhancement of retail development within the City Centre. c) It is an objective to protect and enhance customer experience of visiting Limerick City Centre through facilitating a mixed expansion of services including high order comparison retailing in conjunction with service, cultural and entertainment facilities through appropriate and sensitive redevelopment and infill development. d) It is an objective to develop a distinct shopping character to increase Shannon's attraction and to complement the retail function of Limerick city centre.	No change.

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 18 (former Objective 14) Strong Education Assets and Availability of Talent	a. It is an objective to support the existing educational facilities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area which includes University of Limerick/ Mary Immaculate/ Limerick Institute of Technology and the Shannon College of Hotel Management as critical drivers of economic development and the fostering of an innovative, knowledge-based economy for the Metropolitan Area. b. The MASP recognises that the Mid-West Action Plan for Jobs (APIJ) and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum works collaboratively with all the agencies focusing on key actions and opportunities that the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area can offer in terms of employment generation and the fostering of the knowledge based economy, in particular relating to clustering of expertise e.g. aviation, med-tech, agri-food etc. It is an objective that the Mid-West APJ and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum continue their work to deliver significant benefits to the Metropolitan Area and Mid-West.	a. It is an objective to support the existing educational facilities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area which includes University of Limerick/ Mary Immaculate/ Limerick Institute of Technology and the Shannon College of Hotel Management as critical drivers of economic development and the fostering of an innovative, knowledge-based economy for the Metropolitan Area. b. The MASP recognises that the Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan (REP) and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum works collaboratively with all the agencies focusing on key actions and opportunities that the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area can offer in terms of employment generation and the fostering of the knowledge based economy, in particular relating to clustering of expertise e.g. aviation, med-tech, agri-food etc. It is an objective that the Mid-West REP and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum continue their work to deliver significant benefits to the Metropolitan Area and Mid-West. c. It is an objective to support investment in Higher Education Institutes, Education and Training Board, apprenticeships and skills development in the Metropolitan Area as an enabler for jobs growth. This includes, inter alia, investment in LIT, UL, associated research institutes and facilities, the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and initiatives applied to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area under the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum and Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan (REP). d. It is an objective to support Limerick as a Learning City, and Limerick's role in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. It is also an objective to seek investment in initiatives under the Learning City initiative and to support the spread of such initiatives in the metropolitan area and region wide. e. It is an objective to support the delivery of a Regional Design Centre to provide the focus for linkages between third level institutes, private design companies and enterprise.	Proposed amendments relate to educational supports. Indirect positive impacts for PHH and MA are anticipated as a result. Reference to investments in UL, etc. may result in additional infrastructure. As with any infrastructure development robust feasibility, route/site selection and project assessment will be needed to ensure protection of the environment in the short-long term.	a) It is an objective to support the existing educational facilities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area which includes UL, Mary Immaculate, LIT and the Shannon College of Hotel Management as critical drivers of economic development and the fostering of an innovative, knowledge-based economy for the Metropolitan Area. b) The MASP recognises that the Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan (REP) and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum works collaboratively with all the agencies focusing on key actions and opportunities that the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area can offer in terms of employment generation and the fostering of the knowledge based economy, in particular relating to clustering of expertise e.g. aviation, med-tech, agri-food etc. It is an objective that the Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum continue their work to deliver significant benefits to the Metropolitan Area and Mid-West. c) It is an objective to support investment in Higher Education Institutes, Education and Training Board, apprenticeships and skills development in the Metropolitan Area as an enabler for jobs growth. This includes, inter alia, investment in LIT, UL, associated research institutes and facilities, the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and initiatives applied to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area under the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum and Mid-West Action Plan for Jobs Regional Enterprise Plan (REP). d) It is an objective to support Limerick as a Learning City, and Limerick's role in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. It is also an objective to seek investment in initiatives under the Learning City initiative and to support the spread of such initiatives in the metropolitan area and region wide. e) It is an objective to support the delivery of a Regional Design Centre to provide the focus for linkages between third level institutes, private design companies and enterprise.	No change.
Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 19 (former Objective 15) Tourism	a. It is an objective to support investment in infrastructure, increased capacity of Shannon International Airport, road and rail accessibility, to maximise the potential of tourism subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. b. It is an objective to support the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a tourism destination. This will require the promotion of the tourism assets of the Mid-West SPA which include, inter alia, Ireland's Lakelands, the Shannon Estuary and its islands, greenways, blueways, Munster Vales the Burren, Cliffs of Moher, West Clare NST tourism route, Loop Head, Bunnraty, Holy Island, Lough Derg, St. Johns Castle. c. It is an objective to ensure collaboration between Local Authorities and tourism agencies to develop attractions such as the Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartland's	a)It is an objective to support investment in infrastructure, increased capacity utilise the existing spare capacity of Shannon International Airport and to improve road and rail accessibility to maximise the potential of tourism subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. b)It is an objective to support the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a tourism destination. This will require the promotion of the tourism assets of the Mid-West SPA which include, inter alia, the Hunt Museum, Adare Heritage Centre, the Milk Market, Ballyhoura Mountain Trails, Thomond Park, the Great Southern Greenway, the Frank McCourt Museum, Pery Square, Limerick Gallery of Arts, Foyes Flying Boat Museum, Red Mile, Ireland's Lakelands, the Shannon Estuary and its islands, greenways, blueways, Munster Vales the Burren, Cliffs of Moher, West Clare NST tourism route, Loop Head, Bunnraty Castle, Holy Island, Lough Derg, King John's Castle.	The amendment to 'utilise existing spare capacity' at Shannon Airport is welcome from an environmental perspective as existing services can be used instead of developing new infrastructure. The addition of tourism sites and amenities is positive on PHH and MA, but as already noted should be subject to feasibility and environmental assessments to ensure tourism can be integrated with nature conservation in a sustainable manner. Although additional mitigation has been added in this regard, any future development of tourism/recreational/amenity facilities should include an assessment of any impacts that may arise from increased visitor pressures, in particular, on sensitive Natura 2000 habitats. Mitigation Any future development of the tourism/recreational/amenity facilities should include an assessment of any impacts that may arise from increased visitor pressures, in particular,	a) It is an objective to support investment in infrastructure, utilise the existing spare capacity of Shannon International Airport and to improve road and rail accessibility to maximise the potential of tourism subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. b) It is an objective to support the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a tourism destination. This will require the promotion of the tourism assets of the Mid-West SPA, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. c) It is an objective to ensure collaboration between Local authorities and tourism agencies to develop attractions such as the Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Ancient East, and Ireland's Hidden Heartland's.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Draft Waterford Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 2: Driving Regional Growth for the South-East It is an objective to support the role of the Waterford Metropolitan Area as the primary driver of economic and population growth in the South-East SPA in conjunction with Key Towns of Carlow, Clonmel, Dungarvan, Kilkenny and Wexford, seek to strengthen inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity (public transport, strategic road network and digital) subject to robust route/site selection and the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. a. Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and the other metropolitan areas of Dublin, Limerick Shannon and Waterford, strengthen connectivity to the Southern Region Ports, Atlantic Economic Corridor and strengthen connectivity on the TEN-T Corridor. b. Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and Key Towns in the Southern Region, especially Key Towns in the South East c. Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and the Key Towns and settlements in South Tipperary Urban Network and Transport Corridor, the Wexford- Rosslare Euro Port Change Location, and potential connection to the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor with a view to an Extended East Coast Corridor from Rosslare Europort to Larne which would include Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford as strategic locations on the Corridor. These initiatives, which will be progressed through the County Development Plan process, support the economic spread from the Waterford Metropolitan Area to stimulate employment led growth and regeneration across the wider region. d. Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and Hinterland Towns of Carrick-on-Suir, New Ross & Environs and Tramore.	It is an objective to support the role of the Waterford Metropolitan Area as the primary driver of economic and population growth in the South-East SPA in conjunction with Key Towns of Carlow, Clonmel, Dungarvan, Kilkenny and Wexford, seek to strengthen inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity (public transport, strategic road network and digital) subject to robust route/site selection and the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: a. Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and the other metropolitan areas of Dublin, Limerick Shannon and Waterford, strengthen connectivity to the Southern Region Ports, Atlantic Economic Corridor and strengthen connectivity on the TEN-T Corridor. b. Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and Key Towns in the Southern Region, especially Key Towns in the South East c. Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and the Key Towns and settlements in the Limerick-Waterford Transport and Economic network/axis and the Eastern Corridor (Dublin-Belfast Corridors extending to Rosslare Europort) which would include Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford as strategic locations on the Corridor. These initiatives, which will be progressed through the County Development Plan process, support the economic spread from the Waterford Metropolitan Area to stimulate employment led growth and regeneration across the wider region. d. Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and Hinterland Towns of Carrick-on-Suir, New Ross & Environs and Tramore. e. It is an objective to support the socio-economic growth and continued investment, development and the enhancement of connectivity of the Waterford MASPs Hinterland Towns including of Carrick-on-Suir, New Ross & Environs and Tramore.	The amendment to this RPO includes support for connectivity of the Waterford MASP hinterland towns. This is positive for PHH and MA as it supports growth and investment. However, Carrick-on-Suir is located adjacent to the Lower River Suir SAC; New Ross is located adjacent to the River Barrow and Nora SAC; and Tramore is located within and adjacent to the Tramore Back Strand SAC and the Tramore Dunes and Back Strand SPA. Therefore, any plans (such as CDP, LAP or Masterplans) or projects related to investment, development or enhancement of connectivity for these areas should be subject to appropriate environmental assessments and the outcome of the planning process.	It is an objective to support the role of the Waterford Metropolitan Area as a primary economic driver for the Southern Region in conjunction with Key Towns of Carlow, Clonmel, Dungarvan, Kilkenny and Wexford, seek to strengthen inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity (public transport, strategic road network and digital) subject to robust route/site selection and the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: (a): Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area, the Port of Waterford (Belview) and the other metropolitan areas of Dublin, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, strengthen connectivity to the Southern Region Ports, Atlantic Economic Corridor and strengthen connectivity on the TEN-T Corridor. (b): Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and Key Towns in the Region, especially Key Towns in the South East (c): Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and the Key Towns and settlements in the Limerick – Waterford Transport and Economic network/axis and the Extended Eastern ern Corridor (Dublin-Belfast Corridor extending to Rosslare Europort & Network linkage to New Ross /Waterford) which would include Gorey, Enniscorthy and Wexford as strategic locations on the Corridor. These initiatives which will be progressed through the County Development Plan process, to support the economic spread from the Waterford Metropolitan Area to stimulate employment led growth and regeneration across the wider region. (d) Between the Waterford Metropolitan Area and Hinterland Towns of Carrick-on-Suir, New Ross and Tramore. (e) It is an objective to support the socio-economic growth and continued investment, development and the enhancement of connectivity of the Waterford MASPs Hinterland Towns including of Carrick-on-Suir, New Ross and Tramore	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Waterford MASP Policy Objective 5 Investment in Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity	It is an objective to seek investment and stakeholder co-ordination on the sustainable development of infrastructure capacity (physical, multi-modal transport networks, digital/smart, green and social/community) to enable the Waterford Metropolitan Area fulfill its potential as a regional driver subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process	Waterford MASP Objective 5 Investment in Infrastructure & Digital Connectivity (a) It is an objective to seek investment and stakeholder co-ordination on the sustainable development of infrastructure capacity (physical, multi-modal transport networks, digital/smart, green and social/community) to enable the Waterford Metropolitan Area fulfill its potential as a regional driver subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. (b) It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and access for all to digital infrastructure in the Waterford Metropolitan Area. (c) It is an objective to seek investment in the initiatives of Local Authority Digital Strategies and investment in initiatives to deliver a greener, more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area. (d) It is an objective to deliver high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband so peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area.	The amendments to this RPO, which specify that digital infrastructure is subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process and the development of a greener more innovative smarter city are welcome. These will bring positive impacts to PHH and MA and the broader environment.	(a) It is an objective to seek investment and stakeholder co-ordination on the sustainable development of infrastructure capacity (physical, multi-modal transport networks, digital/smart, green and social/community) to enable the Waterford Metropolitan Area fulfill its role potential as a primary economic driver in the region subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. (b) It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and access for all to digital infrastructure in the Waterford Metropolitan Area. (c) It is an objective to seek investment in the initiatives of Local Authority Digital Strategies and investment in initiatives to deliver a greener, more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area. (d) It is an objective to deliver high capacity ICT infrastructure and high-speed broadband connections internationally and to the larger urban centres and peripheral locations in the wider region.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Waterford MASP Policy Objective 6 Sustainable Transportation	a. It is an objective to prepare a Waterford Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP with all relevant stakeholders and it is an objective to ensure investment and implementation of the Waterford Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy. b. Local Authorities and public bodies including state transport agencies shall prioritise investment in the following road and rail infrastructure in the Metropolitan Area in support of Modal Shift from the private car to sustainable transport subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, including measures to address environmental issues associated with brownfield development: • Relocation of the Railway Station to the North Quays • Improved connectivity between the city centre and the North Quays and wider Ferrybank area including provision of a pedestrian/public transport bridge; • New Link Road from Abbey Road to Belmont to improve sustainable connectivity and linkages between residential areas; • Bus Services: Extensive bus network across the Metropolitan Area with longer operational hours and increased frequencies to encourage the significant modal shift from the private car to sustainable transportation; • Development of new sustainable travel routes including greenways & blueways. Potential for further extensions exists which could build a metropolitan wide cycle network with the Deise Greenway established as a sustainable economic corridor through the county; • Development of a more walkable City. • Development of the 10- minute city concept for Waterford to drive integration of sustainable mobility with land-use planning, zoning, transport infrastructure (particularly public transport modes) in local level planning.	6(A) Integration of Land Use and Transport It is an objective to prepare a Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP with all relevant stakeholders and will be an objective of WMATS to secure investment for the implementation of it's recommendations subject to the outcome of the WMATS and environment assessment and the planning process including SEA/AA as appropriate: (b) It is an objective that Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans will identify the public transport corridors and nodal points on corridors in Waterford Metropolitan Area arising from the Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Waterford Metropolitan Area. (c) It is an objective to achieve the National Strategic Outcomes for Regeneration through: • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre and suburbs. • Delivery of the North Quays Innovation District SDZ regeneration project for integrated sustainable development through the provision of supporting transport infrastructure and services • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along public transportation corridors • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along strategic bus networks corridors. (d) It is an objective to seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points. (e) Sustainable Transport It is an objective to support following sustainable transport priorities in the Waterford Metropolitan Area for consideration in the preparation of the Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (WMATS) subject to the outcomes of the WMATS, the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process including SEA/AA as appropriate: • Relocation of the Railway Station to the North Quays Innovation District with more direct access to city centre; • Improved connectivity between the city centre and the North Quays Innovation District and wider Ferrybank area including provision of a pedestrian/public transport bridge and proposed road bridge from The Mall to Ferrybank; • Provision of an additional Downstream Crossing to provide a link to the south bank of the River Suir in the vicinity of Maypark or Ardkeen, which would serve to create greater connectivity between lands to the North and South of the Suir, improve access to University Hospital Waterford and ease congestion on the existing crossing. The policies and objectives outlined would assist in the realisation of objectives relating to transportation	This RPO has been updated to include support for investment in sustainable transport infrastructure and public transport services, which is positive for PHH, MA, CF and AQ. It also includes for a downstream crossing on the River Suir, which is a designated SAC and as such as the potential to impact on BFF and W. It is important that any proposals are subject to environmental assessment and the outcome of the planning process particularly as the stretch of the River Suir that runs through the city is a designated SAC. Further amendments to this RPO set to achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led regeneration and consolidation and growth of city centre and suburbs, North Quays, and residential residential, employment and nodal locations along public transportation corridors, busConnects, suburban Rail corridor and to seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points. This is positive for PHH and MA as it promotes integration of land use and transport planning thus also leading to positive impacts on CF and AQ and the broader environment. The amendments also refer to the SEA and AA of the WMATS, which will require the implementation of the outlined mitigation measures. This wording is welcome.	Waterford MASP Policy Objective 6 (a): Integration of Land Use and Transport a. It is an objective to prepare a Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (WMATS) during the lifetime of this MASP with all relevant stakeholders. Transport investment requirements in the Waterford Metropolitan Area will be identified and prioritised, subject to the recommendations of the WMATS and outcome of environment assessment and the planning process including mitigation under SEA/AA as appropriate: (b) It is an objective that Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans will identify the public transport corridors and nodal points on corridors in Waterford Metropolitan Area arising from the Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Waterford Metropolitan Area. (c) It is an objective to achieve the National Strategic Outcomes for Regeneration through: • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre, Cultural Quarter and suburbs. • Delivery of the North Quays Innovation District SDZ regeneration project for integrated sustainable development through the provision of supporting transport infrastructure and services • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along public transportation corridors • Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along strategic bus networks corridors. (d) It is an objective to seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points. Waterford MASP Policy Objective 6 (b): Sustainable Transport It is an objective to support the following sustainable transport priorities in the Waterford Metropolitan Area subject to their consistency with the recommendations of the WMATS the outcomes of the WMATS, the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process including mitigation under SEA/AA as appropriate: • Relocation of the Railway Station to the North Quays Innovation District with more direct access to city centre; • Improved connectivity between the city centre and the North Quays Innovation District and wider Ferrybank area including provision of a pedestrian/public transport bridge and proposed road bridge from The Mall to Ferrybank; • Provision of an additional Downstream Crossing to provide a link to the south bank of the River Suir in the vicinity of Maypark or Ardkeen, which would serve to create greater connectivity between lands to the North and South of the Suir, improve access to University Hospital Waterford and ease congestion on the existing crossing. The policies and objectives outlined would assist in the realisation of objectives relating to transportation	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.

RPO Number and Title	Draft RSES 18-12-18	Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES	Final RSES 31-1-2020	SEA / AA / FRA Assessment of Proposed Amendments to Draft RSES
		<p>Material Amendments for Public Consultation 12th Sep-11th Oct 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Link Road from Abbey Road to Belmont to improve sustainable connectivity; • Development of a Metropolitan Area Public Transport system including routes from the City Centre to WIT, Waterford University Hospital, Port of Waterford at Belview and consideration of routes from strategic settlements outside the metropolitan area including Tramore, New Ross and Carrick-on-Suir. Development of sustainable travel options to support and facilitate improved access to the City Centre, from the wider urban area, north and south of the river by walking, cycling and public transport including Quick, frequent and convenient bus services and provision for Park and Ride facilities in tandem with the Green Route, additional cycle lanes. • Measures to encourage Modal shift to bus and rail for commuters into the city and measures to support regeneration, consolidation and employment led growth of strategic settlements along the Rail Corridor from Clonmel into Waterford. • Bus Services: Extensive bus network across the Metropolitan Area with longer operational hours and increased frequencies to encourage the significant modal shift from the private car to sustainable transportation; • Development of new sustainable travel routes including greenways & blueways. Potential for further extensions exists which could build a metropolitan wide cycle network with the Waterford Greenway established as a sustainable economic corridor through the county; • Development of a more walkable City. • Development of the 10 minute city concept for Waterford to drive integration of sustainable mobility with land-use planning, zoning, transport infrastructure (particularly public transport modes) in local level planning 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Link Road from Abbey Road to Belmont to improve sustainable connectivity; • Development of a Metropolitan Area Public Transport system including routes from the City Centre to WIT, Waterford University Hospital, Port of Waterford at Belview and consideration of routes from strategic settlements outside the metropolitan area including Tramore, New Ross and Carrick-on-Suir. Development of sustainable travel options to support and facilitate improved access to the City Centre, from the wider urban area, north and south of the river by walking, cycling and public transport including Quick, frequent and convenient bus services and provision for Park and Ride facilities in tandem with the Green Route, additional cycle lanes. • Measures to encourage Modal shift to bus and rail for commuters into the city and measures to support regeneration, consolidation and employment led growth of strategic settlements along the Rail Corridor from Clonmel into Waterford. • Bus Services: Extensive bus network across the Metropolitan Area with longer operational hours and increased frequencies to encourage the significant modal shift from the private car to sustainable transportation; • Development of new sustainable travel routes including greenways & blueways. Potential for further extensions exists which could build a metropolitan wide cycle network with the Waterford Greenway established as a sustainable economic corridor through the county; • Development of a more Walkable City. Support traffic calming measures to make the Metropolitan Area such as shared streets and pedestrian friendly environments with wider footpaths, identification of walking routes with improved signage, creation of places and spaces to meet and rest, street tree planting. • Development of the 10 minute city concept for Waterford to drive integration of sustainable mobility with land-use planning, zoning, transport infrastructure (particularly public transport modes) in local level planning 	
Waterford MASP Policy Objective 7 Regional Connectivity	It is an objective to support the development of improved Regional Connectivity through development of strategic transport infrastructure to support the sustainable development of the South-East Waterford City Region subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process. Local Authorities and public bodies including state transport agencies shall prioritise investment in the following road and rail infrastructure subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the Waterford -Limerick/Shannon Strategic Transport Corridor to include upgrading of N24 and Rail line for faster journey times and improved public transport frequencies • Improvements to the Waterford -Cork Strategic Transport Corridor to include upgrading of N25 and additional options for Park and Ride into Cork and Waterford. • Improvements to the Waterford – Rosslare Europort & Wexford Strategic Transport Corridor to include improved road and rail connectivity into Rosslare Europort from Waterford, recognising the important role of Rosslare Europort as a passenger and freight port for the Waterford Metropolitan Area and wider-Southern Region. • Measures to support Modal Change through transfer of freight from road to rail through increased use of freight sidings (or creation of new rail connections) at the ports and other locations throughout the South-East Waterford City Region. • Retention of the Waterford -Rosslare Rail line for future freight rail connectivity for Rosslare Europort. 	It is an objective to support the development of improved Regional Connectivity through development and maintenance of strategic transport infrastructure to support the sustainable development of the South-East Waterford City Region subject to the outcome of the WMATS where applicable, appropriate appraisal, environmental assessments and the planning process. Local Authorities and public bodies including state transport agencies shall prioritise investment in the following road and rail infrastructure, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process: <p>a)The maintenance and enhancement of the national roads network, catering for transport demand within the Waterford Metropolitan Area, for improved inter-urban / interregional connectivity/ reduced journey times and for improved access to international gateways, including Port of Waterford, Rosslare-Europort and Waterford Airport, through:</p> <p>i)Delivery of current Government programmed and proposed national road network improvement schemes relating to the Waterford Metropolitan Area and associated inter-urban connecting roads.</p> <p>ii)The maintenance and optimisation of the strategic road network's capacity and utility, through the implementation of appropriate demand management measures.</p> <p>b) Improvements to the Waterford -Limerick/ Shannon Strategic Transport Corridor to include upgrading of N24 and Rail line for faster journey times and improved public transport frequencies on public bus and rail services.</p> <p>c) Improvements to the Waterford -Cork Strategic Transport Corridor to include upgrading of N25 and additional options for Park and Ride into Cork and Waterford.</p> <p>d) Improvements to the Waterford – Rosslare Europort & Wexford Strategic Transport Corridor to include improved road and rail connectivity into Rosslare Europort from Waterford, recognising the important role of Rosslare Europort as a passenger and freight port for the Waterford Metropolitan Area and wider-Southern Region.</p> <p>e)The optimal use of the rail network, connecting Waterford at a regional and national level, in catering for the movement of people and goods including development of commuter rail services into Waterford.</p> <p>f) Retention of the Waterford -Rosslare Rail line for future freight and passenger rail connectivity for Rosslare Europort</p> <p>g) Measures to support Modal Change through transfer of freight from road to rail through increased use of freight sidings (or creation of new rail connections) at the ports and other locations throughout the South-East Waterford City Region.</p>	The amendments to this RPO provide additional clarity on regional connectivity. Maintenance and enhancement of the national road network is identified as amendments to this RPO. This has direct positive impacts in the long term for PHH and MA as maintaining the network ensures it is fit for purpose and safe into the future. Maintaining the network also contributes indirectly to positive AQ and CF in terms of ensuring the roads function as intended and can cater for the most effective driving conditions possible to reduce vehicle emissions. It is noted that any enhancements or new connections in the National roads network would be subject to Tii planning guidance which supports robust route selection and project environmental appraisal. The additional reference to demand management is positive as it clearly points to solutions which reduce the need for new or enhanced road network and instead focusses on driver behaviour and alternative options to new roads with long term positive impacts for AQ, CF, BFF, LandS LS, CH, W etc. all of which can be negatively impacted from new road infrastructure. Robust feasibility, route selection, appropriate environmental assessment (EIA, AA EclA and FRA) and the outcomes of the planning process at the project level will be required for all new transport infrastructure. Improved access, reduced journey times, improved rail network, are all positive for PHH and MA and indirectly positive for CF and AQ.	It is an objective to support the development of improved Regional Connectivity through development and maintenance of strategic transport infrastructure to support the sustainable development of Waterford and the South-East subject to the outcome of WMATS where applicable, appropriate appraisal, environmental assessments and the planning process: <p>Local Authorities and public bodies including state transport agencies shall prioritise investment in the following road and rail infrastructure subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process to deliver enhanced regional connectivity:</p> <p>a) The maintenance and enhancement of the national roads network, catering for transport demand within the Waterford Metropolitan Area, for improved inter-urban / interregional connectivity/ reduced journey times and for improved access to international gateways, including Port of Waterford, Rosslare-Europort and Waterford Airport, through:</p> <p>(i) Delivery of current Government programmed and proposed national road network improvement schemes relating to the Waterford Metropolitan Area and associated inter-urban connecting roads.</p> <p>(ii) The maintenance and optimisation of the strategic road network's capacity and utility, through the implementation of appropriate demand management measures.</p> <p>(b) Improvements to the Waterford -Limerick/Shannon Strategic Transport Corridor to include upgrading of N24 and Rail line for faster journey times and improved public transport frequencies on public bus and rail services.</p> <p>• (c) Improvements to the Waterford -Cork Strategic Transport Corridor to include upgrading of N25 and additional options for Park and Ride into Cork and Waterford.</p> <p>• (d) Improvements to the Waterford – Rosslare Europort & Wexford Strategic Transport Corridor to include improved road and rail connectivity into Rosslare Europort from Waterford, recognising the important role of Rosslare Europort as a passenger and freight port for the Waterford Metropolitan Area and wider-Southern Region.</p> <p>• (e) The optimal use of the rail network, connecting Waterford at a regional and national level, in catering for the movement of people and goods including development of commuter rail services into Waterford.</p> <p>• (f) Retention of the Waterford -Rosslare Rail line for future freight and passenger rail connectivity to for Rosslare Europort.</p> <p>• (g) Measures to support Modal Change through transfer of freight from road to rail through increased use of freight sidings (or creation of new rail connections) at the ports and other locations throughout the South-East .</p>	No change.
Waterford MASP Objective 8 Housing and Regeneration (new Objective at MA Stage former RPO P)		<p>a) It is an objective to support the densification of Waterford City Centre, the assembly of brownfield sites for development and the regeneration and redevelopment of Waterford City Centre to accommodate residential use. The MASP recognises that initiatives will facilitate compact growth and increased residential density in the city centre.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to ensure investment and delivery of comprehensive infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF and RSES objectives.</p>	This policy objective is focused on delivering compact growth. Overall compact growth will give rise to direct and indirect positive impacts in terms of PHH and MA as a result of the focus on infill, regeneration and focusing development within the city and urban footprints, which safeguards long term wellbeing of established communities. Compact growth can facilitate better coordination of critical services such as water and waste water treatment, etc. This also has direct positive impacts for PHH and MA and indirect positive impacts on BFF, W, LS. However, any infrastructure development has the potential to negatively impact on the environment and this will require consideration in the planning of developments. The application of existing mitigation including WE1,WE2 and WE4 will be essential to protecting the natural and cultural assets when developing and regenerating the city.	<p>a) It is an objective to support the the high-quality compact growth of Waterford City Centre and suburban areas, the assembly of brownfield sites for development and the regeneration and redevelopment of Waterford City Centre to accommodate residential use. The MASP will support initiatives which facilitate compact growth and which promote well designed high-density residential developments which protect amenities and in the city centre and suburban areas.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to ensure investment and delivery of comprehensive infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF and RSES objectives.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Waterford MASP Policy Objective 12 A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI (new at MA Stage former RPO Q)		<p>a) It is an objective to seek investment in the sustainable development of initiatives of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in strengthening enterprise assets, fostering competitive locations and conditions for enterprise growth in the Waterford Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to implement and develop novel technologies, build a sustainable knowledge base and engage citizens in digital transformation, while minimising the risk of digital inequalities in the Waterford Metropolitan Area.</p>	See previous assessment of Waterford MASP for initiatives to development in that area. This additional objective will give rise to indirect positive impacts for PHH and MA in the long-term. The reference to 'sustainable' is welcome however suggest it should refer to development of sustainable initiatives rather than sustainable development of initiatives.	<p>a) It is an objective to seek investment in the sustainable development of initiatives of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in strengthening enterprise assets, fostering competitive locations and conditions for enterprise growth in the Waterford Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>b) It is an objective to implement and develop novel technologies, build a sustainable knowledge base and engage citizens in digital transformation, while minimising the risk of digital inequalities in the Waterford Metropolitan Area.</p>	No change.
Waterford MASP Policy Objective 13 Economic Resilience and Clusters (new at MA Stage former RPO R)		It is an objective to develop, deepen and enhance the economic resilience of the Waterford Metropolitan Area through creating a vibrant and diversified enterprise base, with strong, healthy, connected Eolas Comhroinnte Obair le cheile / Shared Knowledge Working Together (ECOLC/SKWT) Clusters which assist in bringing disruptive technologies and innovations to national and global markets.	See previous assessment of Waterford MASP for initiatives to development in that area. This additional objective will give rise to indirect positive impacts for PHH and MA in the long-term.	It is an objective to develop, deepen and enhance the economic resilience of the Waterford Metropolitan Area through creating a vibrant and diversified enterprise base, with strong, healthy, connected Eolas Comhroinnte Obair le cheile / Shared Knowledge Working Together (ECOLC/SKWT) Clusters which assist in bringing disruptive technologies and innovations to national and global markets.	No change.
Waterford MASP Policy Objective 19 (former Objective 16) Retail	Within one year of adoption of the RSES/MASP a Joint Retail Strategy shall be prepared for the Waterford Metropolitan Area in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Joint Retail Strategy shall include – inter alia- the defined area of the Core City Shopping Area, the location of Suburban or District Shopping Centres, a map to indicate sustainable travel routes to/from each shopping area.	Within one year of the adoption of the RSES/MASP a Joint Retail Strategy shall be prepared for the Waterford Metropolitan Area in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Joint Retail Strategy shall include – inter alia- the defined area of the Core City Shopping Area, the location of Suburban or District Shopping Centres, a map to indicate sustainable travel routes to/from each shopping area which prioritise cycle and pedestrian access over cars. It is an objective to protect and enhance customer experience of visiting Waterford City Centre through facilitating a mixed expansion of services including high order comparison retailing in conjunction with service, cultural and entertainment facilities through appropriate and sensitive redevelopment and infill development.	This RPO has been updated to include further enhancements to the Joint retail strategy through appropriate and sensitive redevelopment and infill development. Redevelopment and infill projects have the potential for long-term positive impacts for PH, MA, CH, W and LandS by improvements to social fabric and reuse of building stock, improvements to drainage and control of run-off. As with all such redevelopment there is also potential for direct and indirect negative impacts on BFF e.g. bats and birds which may use sites or features for nesting and perching. CH if redevelopment of building stock is not carried out in an architecturally sensitive manner and also on W and S arising from potential for contamination for historic activities.	<p>(a) Within one year of adoption of the RSES/MASP a Joint Retail Strategy shall be prepared for the Waterford Metropolitan Area in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Joint Retail Strategy shall include – inter alia- the defined area of the Core City Shopping Area, the location of Suburban or District Shopping Centres, a map to indicate sustainable travel routes to/from each shopping area, which prioritise cycle and pedestrian access over cars.</p> <p>(b) It is an objective to protect and enhance customer experience of visiting Waterford City Centre through facilitating a mixed expansion of services including high order comparison retailing in conjunction with service, cultural and entertainment facilities in the wider City Centre including Cultural Quarter and the heritage experience available in the "Viking Triangle as well as appropriate and sensitive redevelopment and infill development.</p>	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.
Waterford MASP Policy Objective 23 (former Objective 20) Lifelong Learning and Skills	It is an objective to support measures to develop Waterford as a Learning City including community education initiatives and support for lifelong learning and skills training including the development of the necessary infrastructure and facilities, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process	It is an objective to support measures to develop Waterford as a UNESCO Learning City including community education initiatives and support for lifelong learning and skills training, recognising the requirements for accessible Irish Language Learning for children and adults and linguistic diversity in a multi-cultural society through including the development of the necessary infrastructure and facilities, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support measures to develop Waterford as a UNESCO Learning City including community education initiatives and support for lifelong learning and skills training recognising the requirements for accessible Irish Language Learning for children and adults and linguistic diversity in a multi-cultural society through the development of the necessary infrastructure and facilities, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.	No change.
Waterford MASP Policy Objective 24 (former Objective 21): Social Inclusion	It is an objective to support and seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Local Authorities to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion for all citizens across all our communities, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.	It is an objective to support and seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Local Authorities to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion and diversity for all citizens across all our communities, supporting integration of new communities, refugees and asylum seekers. All actions and initiatives shall be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.	As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.	It is an objective to support and seek investment in delivering actions and stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Local Authorities to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion and diversity for all citizens across all our communities, supporting integration between established communities, of new communities, refugees and asylum seekers. All actions and initiatives shall be subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.	N+A1.F337o change.

2.2 Assessment of Amendments to Plan

The following sub sections highlight in red, the proposed material changes to the draft plan along with a corresponding environmental assessment of the changes.

2.2.1 Material Amendment No. 2

It is proposed to insert additional text in Chapter 2 as follows:

Climate Change represents the most serious threat to human life and the environment.

If action is not taken on a global scale, the consequences are that global warming will continue and will change weather patterns, cause sea levels to rise, threatening the future of entire nations and posing wider risks in terms of degradation of biodiversity and threatening the planet's ability to provide adequate food and shelter for the human population.

Ireland and the EU are signatories to the Paris Agreement, a legally binding international agreement to restrict global temperature rises to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and with the aim to limit the increase to 1.5°C, since this would significantly reduce risks and the impacts of climate change. Ireland's international commitments on the climate also extend to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and, in particular, SDG 13 to 'take action to combat climate change and its impacts.'

The international and EU commitments to climate action are enacted in Ireland through the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, 2015, which provides the statutory framework to pursue decarbonisation by 2050. The legal commitments will be now augmented and driven by the Government's Climate Action Plan 2019 – To Tackle Climate Breakdown' to integrate effective Climate Action measures into national policies backed by the Climate Action Fund.

The Southern Regional Assembly will support implementation of the Government's Climate Action Plan 2019 – and the RSES has identified three Priority Areas for Action to bring about a Transition to a Low Carbon Economy and Society:

- Decarbonisation,
- Resource Efficiency and
- Climate Resilience i.e. how we adapt to climate change or reduce harmful impacts on people, infrastructure and property and the natural environment.

All of the global risks of climate change are risks to the Region, where the extensive coastline and island communities are exposed to future changes in sea levels. The Southern Regional Assembly is committed under the National Mitigation Plan¹ to lead a regional response as part of its statutory planning role through the RSES - to put in place a high-level regional strategy for Transition to a Low Carbon Economy and Society across all sectors.

Action on climate change will be achieved through implementation of RSES across all areas of the Strategy, and in all economic sectors, where the combined effort of all Local Authorities and their local communities, Government Departments and State Agencies will be required to implement objectives for Compact Growth, Sustainable Travel and Place-Making to reduce travel demand between residential areas and centres of employment, education and commerce.

Existing targets for reduction of emissions across different sectors will be further developed including key targets for 55% movement by sustainable transport modes and will be followed up by robust implementation of timebound and measurable objectives on climate action for the region.

¹ Action 18 Community engagement, participation and acceptance, spatial planning and regulation.

Once adopted, the implementation structures can be established to pursue the objectives identified in the RSES – including the Priority Areas for Action.

2.2.1.1 Assessment

The addition of the above text does not change the assessment of the relevant RPOs on decarbonisation, resource efficiency and planning for climate resilience. Therefore, there are no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.

No further mitigation is proposed.

2.2.2 Material Amendment No. 6

It is proposed to amend Table 3.2 in Section 3.5 as follows:

Table 3.2 be amended as follows:

Table 3.2 – Settlement Typology			
Category	Attributes	Place	Policy Level
Key Towns	Large population scale urban centre functioning as self-sustaining regional drivers.	Kilkenny Ennis Carlow Tralee Wexford Clonmel	RSES Development Plan
	Strategically located urban centres with accessibility and significant influence in a sub-regional context.	Killarney Mallow Nenagh Thurles Newcastle West Clonakilty Dungarvan Gorey	

2.2.2.1 Assessment

The assigning of the two attributes to reflect Table 3.2 does not affect the assessment provided for the Key Towns in the Environmental Report. Therefore, there are no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan. No mitigation is proposed.

No further mitigation is proposed.

2.2.3 Material Amendment 7

It is proposed to remove and insert additional text in Section 3.5 as shown in blue & strikethrough below:

The framework for identifying Key Town is provided in National Policy Objective 9 of the NPF and 14 Key Towns are identified in the RSES based on these criteria reflecting the differing urban structures across the Southern Region and their strategic role and location. ~~The Key Towns reflect the differing urban structures across the Southern Region and are based on their strategic role and location.~~ They play a critical and strategic role in underpinning the strategy and ensure the consolidation and spread of growth beyond the cities to the sub regional level. It is envisaged that the Key Towns will be a focus for significant growth (more than 30%). The nature, scale and phasing of this growth will be determined by Local Authorities depending on capacity analysis of each town. For some this will result in significant

population growth - in others the emphasis may be on growth of services and facilities with more limited growth in population.

~~The NPF highlights the role of employment and states that population only partly explains Irelands urban structure and where jobs are located. Towns with a critical population mass for example (Kilkenny, Ennis, Carlow, Tralee, Wexford and Clonmel) are important generators of economic activity have a large sphere of influence and have thus been identified as Key Town. Certain large towns and employment centres with a population base of more than 10,000 people or more than 2,500 jobs were considered along with other factors. Other towns were considered in consultation with relevant Local Authorities and have been included as Key Towns based on the role, they can play in strengthening the regions urban structure, geographic location, track record, encouraging population growth in strong employment and service areas and potential for sub regional interdependencies.~~

Six of the Key Towns have a very significant population scale; Kilkenny City, Ennis, Carlow, Tralee, Wexford and Clonmel. These are major centres for delivery of public services, with large hospitals, third level education, courts, local authority, government and other functions as well as economic and business roles and higher order retail functions. These Key Towns function as self-sustaining regional drivers **and have a comparable structure to the five regional growth centres identified in the NPF.** They have considerable scope for growth and it is envisaged that local authorities should plan for population growth more than 30% by 2040.

The large scale Key Towns are complemented by a network of Key Towns; Killarney, Mallow, Nenagh, Thurles, Newcastle West, Clonakilty, Dungarvan and Gorey that will play a significant role in strengthening the regions urban structure, based on their geographic location, track record of performance and delivery, encouraging population growth in strong employment and service areas, potential for sub-regional interdependencies which creates scope for collaboration and complementarily and supporting balanced employment led growth. It is envisaged that local authorities would also plan for significant growth in these Key Towns based on capacity analysis including historic growth levels.

2.2.3.1 Assessment

The assessments and the recommended mitigation measures for the 14 key towns remain unchanged as a result of the above changes regarding scope for growth. Future growth of key towns should have regard to the environmental sensitivities outlined in the draft Environmental Report. Furthermore growth should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and other bodies such as Irish Water to ensure that sufficient services e.g. wastewater capacity are in place so as not to contribute to degradation on the environment.

No further mitigation is proposed.

2.2.4 Material Amendment No. 24

It is proposed to insert additional text in Section 3.8 as follows:

Limerick-Waterford Economic and Transport Corridor

The Limerick - Waterford Economic and Transport Corridor links key regional cities and towns by rail and road and is one the primary networks and economic drivers for the Southern Region. The RSES support enhanced connectivity between the MASP cities by the M24 (potential upgrade of N24 to M24), enhanced rail services including development Limerick Junction as a National Freight Hub. The Corridor is uniquely placed in the centre of the region with a number of large towns in Tipperary along its corridor - Clonmel, Carrick on Suir; Tipperary and Cahir all of which have strong economic, social and cultural associations. The network has been developed and supported through a number of intra-regional economic and tourism initiative including the Munster Vales, Butler trail, Historic Town Walls and the River Suir Blueway. The Corridor is also unique in that it connects the Atlantic Economic Corridor and the Eastern Economic Corridor. The RSES will support the further development and investment in this corridor, building on its connectivity; strong urban framework and economic clustering of activities.

2.2.4.1 Assessment

The Limerick - Waterford Economic and Transport Corridor will have direct positive impacts for PHH and MA as it focuses on supporting connectivity between Limerick and Waterford through transport (see RPO 158) and rail services (see RPO 136). However, development of transport networks also has the potential for significant negative impacts on the environment and as such should be subject to detailed route/site selection, environmental assessments and the outcome of the planning process.

No further mitigation is proposed.

2.2.4.2 Final Plan

The members of the assembly voted to accept the Director's recommendation to reject the proposed material amendment.

2.2.5 Material Amendment No. 126

It is proposed to insert additional text in Section 4.2 of the Limerick Shannon MASP as shown in blue below:

The NPF and Implementation Roadmap provided by the DHPLG set out the population allocations and targets for each local authority area including projections to achieve accelerated urban growth². The NPF sets out ambitious targets for Limerick City and Suburbs of a population of least 141,000 by 2040 (as per Table 4.1 of the NPF). The proposed inclusion of the four Tipperary DEDs within the MASP will require a reassessment of population allocation within Tipperary to support the growth of the newly defined area reflecting its proposed inclusion in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area³.

The NPF and Implementation Roadmap also refer to further qualified allowances which may apply to deliver on accelerated urban growth in Metropolitan Areas. National Policy Objective 68 states a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan may enable up to 20% of the phased population growth targeted in the principle city and suburban area, to be accommodated in the wider metropolitan area i.e. outside the city and suburbs or contiguous zoned area, in addition to growth identified for the Metropolitan Area.

This will be subject to:

- Any relocated growth being in the form of compact development, such as infill or sustainable urban extension.
- Any relocated growth being served by high capacity public transport and/or related to significant employment provision; and
- National Policy Objective 9.

This may be relevant in the Limerick Shannon context given for example the need for change to a more balanced concentric city through strategic proposals for development at Mungret and by opening the north eastern quadrant (in both Limerick and Clare) facilitated by the development of the LNDR. The application of NPO68 will be subject to review by the MASP Implementation Group.

As required under the NPF 50% of all new housing within Limerick City is to occur within the existing city and suburbs footprint, through brownfield, infill and regeneration. Outside of Limerick City, 30% of

² In addition, the Dept have clarified that the 25% Headroom identified in the Roadmap can apply to the County Clare area of the Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area.

³ The proposed inclusion of the four Tipperary DEDs within the MASP is made on the basis of the application of NPF allowances to these four areas on the same basis as the other local authorities included in the MASP (including the application of the 25% Headroom).

all new homes that are targeted in settlements is to occur within their existing built-up footprints as per National Policy Objective 3 (c) of the NPF.

Refer to Chapter 9 regarding implementation of the MASP.

New Table: Population Projections 2026 and 2031 for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area⁴

Area	Population 2016	Projected Population 2026	Projected Population 2031
Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick)	89,671	112,089	123,298
Limerick City and Suburbs (in Clare)	4,521	5,607	6,150
Subtotal	94,192	117,696	129,448
Remainder Metropolitan Area (Limerick)	15,281	19,453	21,611
Remainder Metropolitan Area (Clare)	22,947	25,414	26,463
Tipperary Metropolitan Area	7,499	8,324	8,624
Subtotal	45,727	53,191	56,698
Total Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area	139,919	170,887	186,146

2.2.5.1 Assessment

The seeking of compact growth and regeneration in existing built-up envelopes with high capacity public transport and/or related to significant employment provision will bring positive impacts for PHH, MA and BFF. However, as identified in the previous assessment of the RPOs for the Limerick Shannon MASP, it is vital that infrastructure and services e.g. transport, wastewater and water supply, are phased in tandem with planned population growth to ensure that the carrying capacity of the environment isn't exceeded. See also assessment provided for the amendment to the Limerick Shannon MASP boundary in Section 2.3.

Mitigation:

⁴ The overall population projections for each county, as provided in the NPF Implementation Roadmap (July 2018), do not change in light of these MASP projections figures.

In preparing Core Strategies for development plans, Local Authorities shall determine the hierarchy of settlements in accordance with the hierarchy, guiding principles and typology of settlements in the draft RSES, within the population projections set out in the National Planning Framework to ensure that towns grow at a sustainable and appropriate level, by setting out a rationale for land proposed to be zoned for residential, employment and mixed-use development across the Region. Core Strategies shall also be developed having regard to the infill/brownfield targets set out in National Planning Framework National Policy Objectives 3a-3c.

2.2.5.2 Final Plan

The members of the assembly voted to accept the director’s recommendation to reject the proposed boundary extension to the Limerick Shannon MASP. The text in the first paragraph of Section 2.2.5 has been amended to remove reference to the population allocation within an extended metropolitan area.

As per previous assessment; no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from this proposed alteration to the draft plan.

2.2.6 Material Amendment No. 139

It is proposed to insert additional text in Section 4.3 of the Waterford MASP as shown in blue below:

The NPF and Implementation Roadmap sets out projections to achieve accelerated urban growth. The NPF and Implementation Roadmap also refer to potential qualified allowances which may apply to deliver on accelerated urban growth in Metropolitan Areas⁵. National Policy Objective 68 states a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan may enable up to 20% of the phased population growth targeted in the principle city and suburban area, to be accommodated in the wider metropolitan area i.e. outside the city and suburbs or contiguous zoned area, in addition to growth identified for the Metropolitan Area.

This will be subject to:

- Any relocated growth being in the form of compact development, such as infill or sustainable urban extension.
- Any relocated growth being served by high capacity public transport and/or related to significant employment provision; and
- National Policy Objective 9.

This may be relevant in the Waterford context given the need for change to a more balanced concentric city which would require significant growth, development (and infrastructure) on the northern side of the River Suir (predominantly in Co Kilkenny) **and this should be subject to review by the MASP Implementation Group.**

New Table: Population Projections 2026 and 2031 for the Waterford Metropolitan Area⁶

Settlement	2016	2026	Uplift	2031 (see Note 5)	Uplift (see Note 5)
City & suburbs (Kilkenny) <i>+ 60% to 2040</i>	5,288	6,608	1,320	7,268	660
Remainder Metropolitan	2,951	3,321	370	3,506	185

⁵ The Department have clarified that the 25% Headroom identified in the Roadmap can apply to the County Kilkenny area of the Waterford Metropolitan Area

⁶ The overall population projections for each county, as provided in the NPF Implementation Roadmap (July 2018), do not change in light of these MASP projections figures.

Area (Kilkenny) + 30% to 2040					
City and suburbs (Waterford) + 60% to 2040	48,216	60,716	12,500	66,966	6,250
Remainder Metropolitan Area (Waterford) + 30% to 2040	3,399	3,819	420	4,029	210
METRO AREA TOTAL POP. (+34,007 to 93,861 in 2040)	59,854	74,464	14,610	81,769	7,305

Notes :

1. Waterford City and Suburbs: Population 2016 53,504 as per NPF/Census 2016
2. County Population Growth as per NPF & Implementation Roadmap
3. Metro Area Pop Growth to 2040: +60% for Waterford City and Suburbs in Cos Kilkenny & Waterford as per NPF NPO 8
4. Metro Area (Remainder) in Cos Kilkenny & Waterford +30% to 2040
5. Final projections for period 2026 to 2031 to be determined by Implementation Body

PRIORITIZING A BALANCED CONCENTRIC METRO AREA FOR WATERFORD

The ambitious targets for 60%+ population growth by 2040 seek to build the critical mass of Waterford as a balanced Concentric metropolitan area, north and south of the River Suir. In the long term a greater proportion of the population will live north of the River.

The steps required to achieve this Core MASP objective are both long term and short term:

Short term:

In terms of physical development, the early enablers that will start the process are (a) the development of a new bridge to link the City Centre to the North Quays, (b) relocation of the railway station to a new Integrated Transport Hub on the North Quays and (c) development of the Abbey Link Road in Ferrybank. All 3 enablers support significant population and employment growth north of the river. All 3 enablers are identified in the RSES & MASP and both the New Bridge and Abbey Link Road are currently in the planning phase and could be ready to proceed in the next 2 years with funding.

Long Term

In order to re-balance the city there will be a need for a high degree of co-ordination across the entire Metropolitan Area. The Implementation Structures to be established will need to oversee revisions to current population targets at each Review to pursue the objective of re-balancing of overall population in favour of higher growth and population allocations north of the River. In the context of the significant growth targets set for the overall Metropolitan Area this will not impede growth or development in the city centre and suburbs south of the river.

The long terms goals include building additional river crossings to create sustainable movement networks across the metropolitan area, increasing north-south connectivity and creating attractive high-quality urban neighbourhoods with local amenities using LAP and Masterplan processes.

Delivery:

Delivery of the short and long term goals requires the early establishment of MASP implementation structures /unit following adoption of the RSES/MASP, a distinct multi-annual funding stream linked to the NDP and the early development of the critical infrastructure identified as ‘key change parameters’ that will deliver both ‘compact regeneration and growth’ – delivering on NPF strategy for Metropolitan Areas (requirements of each MASP, page 135, NPF).

As required under the NPF, 50% of all new housing within Waterford City and Suburbs is to occur within the existing city and suburbs footprint, through brownfield, infill and regeneration. Outside of Waterford City and Suburbs, 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements is to occur within their existing built-up footprints as per National Policy Objective 3 (c) of the NPF.

Refer to Chapter 9 regarding implementation of the MASP.

2.2.6.1 Assessment

There are no additional likely significant effects (either positive or negative) in respect of the SEA/AA/FRA from the above proposed alterations to the draft plan.

Future growth of Waterford and Kilkenny cities should have regard to the environmental sensitivities outlined in the Environmental Report. Furthermore growth should be planned for on a phased basis in consultation with the local authority and other bodies such as Irish Water to ensure that sufficient services e.g. wastewater capacity are in place so as not to contribute to degradation on the environment.

No further mitigation is proposed.

2.3 Assessment of Amendment 120 - Limerick Shannon MASP Boundary

It is proposed to extend the Limerick Shannon MASP to include four Tipperary DEDs of Ballina, Birdhill, Kilcomenty and Newport in Co. Tipperary (see Figure 2.1).

The discussion arising from the environmental sensitivity mapping (see Figure 2.2) for the Limerick Shannon MASP (see Section 8.5.1 of the Environmental Report) has been updated below to include the expanded Limerick Shannon MASP Boundary i.e. including the DEDs of Ballina, Birdhill, Kilcomenty and Newport.

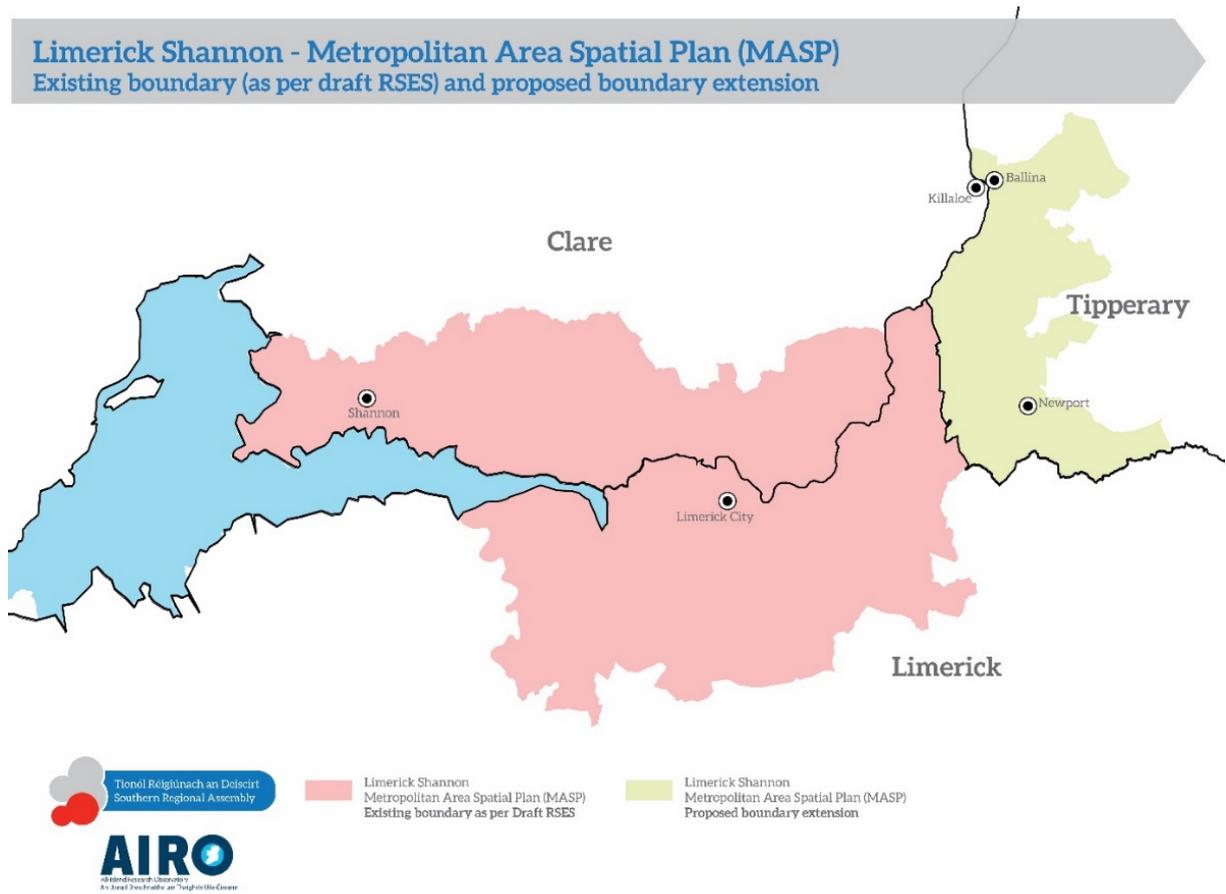


Figure 2.1 Limerick Shannon MASP & Proposed Boundary Extension (September 2019)

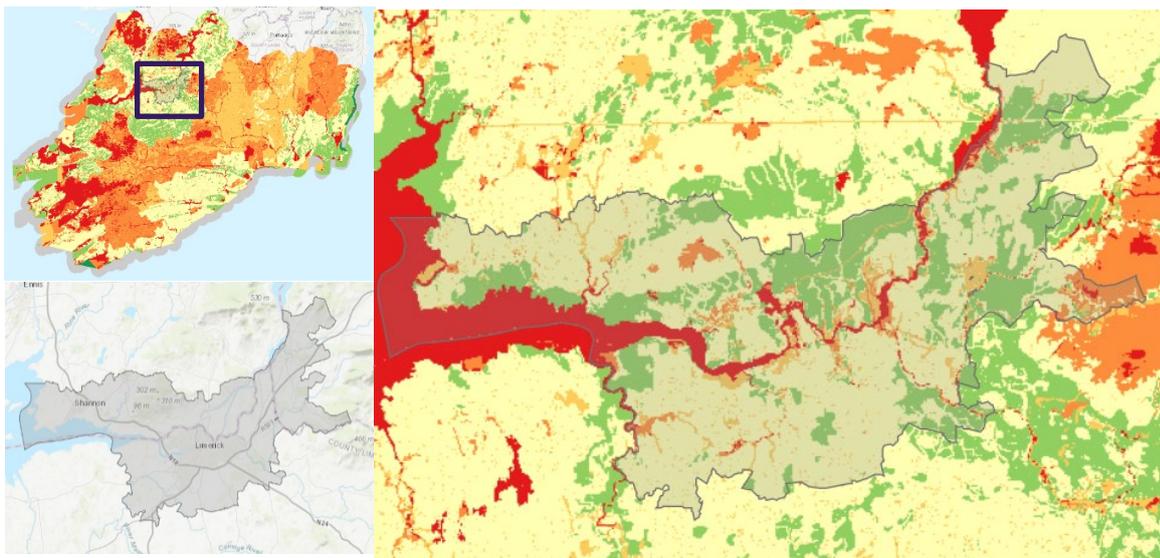


Figure 2.2 Updated Environmental Sensitivity Mapping for Extended Limerick Shannon MASP (September 2019)

The results of the environmental sensitivity mapping illustrate that Limerick MASP is characterised by extremely sensitivity areas along the Shannon estuary, which cover extensive areas to the west of the MASP and transverse the city. The extreme sensitivity relates to the various ecological designations (i.e. SAC, SPA and pNHA), as well as to the coastal and fluvial flood risk along the Shannon and Abbey rivers. Ecological designations also (SACs, NHAs and pNHAs), including peat bogs, to the north and north-east of the city centre define additional pockets of very high sensitivity. Susceptible areas are also apparent along the Shannon river, the Cloverhill stream (to the north-west of the city) and Newport river (to the north-east), indicative of the intrinsic sensitivity of these surface drinking waters protected under the WFD. The underlying aquifer vulnerability and poor groundwater status for the most part of the southern half of the MASP render large areas of moderate sensitivity. Environmentally robust areas (of very low vulnerability) can be found immediately to the north-east of the city centre, between Parteen and Clonlara village, and to the south-east, around Newport.

Figure 2.3 presents the key strategic sites listed in the MASP and further consideration is presented below.

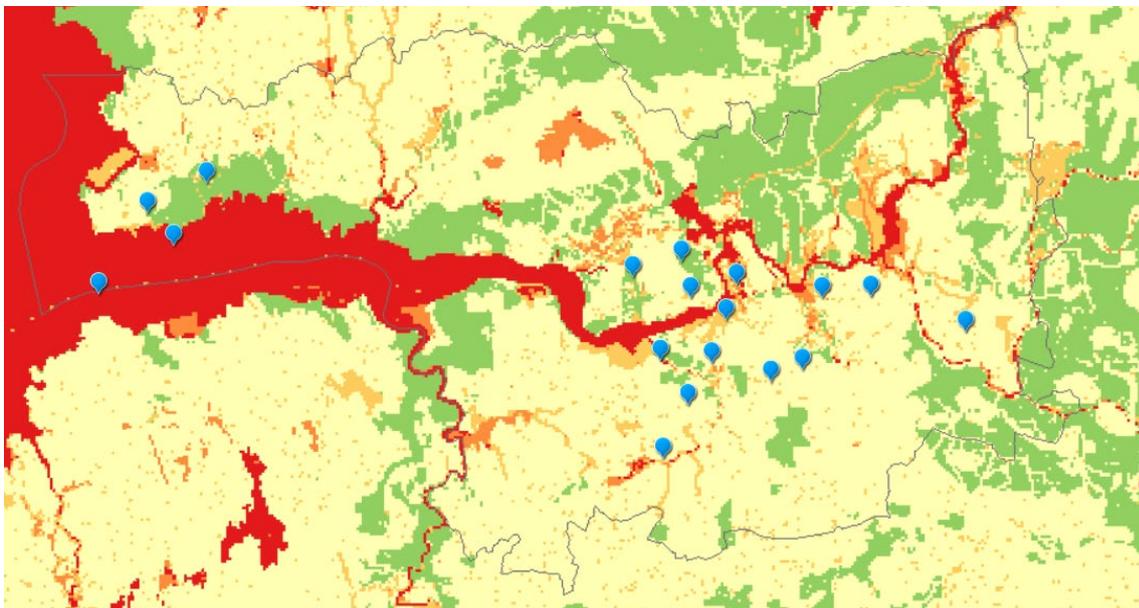


Figure 2.3 Updated Environmental Sensitivity Mapping for Extended Limerick Shannon MASP showing Strategic Sites (September 2019)

While some of the employment locations are in environmentally robust areas, a number of them fall within areas of moderate environmental sensitivity, requiring consideration of groundwater status and vulnerability. More importantly, the identified regeneration and employment areas on or close to the shores of the Shannon estuary and its tributaries should duly consider potential effects on the integrity of the designated habitats and species, as well as the potential risk of for flooding.

2.3.1.1 Assessment

The extension of the Limerick Shannon MASP boundary results in the inclusion of further rural areas associated with the addition of the four Tipperary DEDs into the MASP boundary. Any growth in such areas should only take place where infrastructure and services have capacity or where services e.g. transport, wastewater and water supply, are phased in tandem with any planned population growth to ensure that the carrying capacity of the environment isn't exceeded. In this regard it is noted that the Waste Water Treatment Plants at Ballina/Killaloe and Newport are both operating over capacity and operations have resulted in licence non compliances. Furthermore, it is unlikely that such areas would be serviced by high capacity public transport services, which would have a negative impact on AQ and CF.

Any development of green field sites would also result in negative impacts on BFF, W and CH.

Mitigation:

The Limerick Shannon MASP provides a first step in outlining the vision for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. Further development plan processes are warranted to address the detail and complexity of the issues arising for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area including the extended area and to address the wider planning and environmental issues associated with the MASP in particular the in-combination effects.

2.3.1.2 Final Plan

The members of the assembly voted to accept the director's recommendation to reject the proposed boundary extension of the Limerick Shannon MASP.



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