

Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Statement

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Client:

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1 Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement for the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

1.1 Introduction

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement for the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 (the 'Plan') which was adopted on the 22 February 2023 and is effective from the 05 April 2023.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is derived from European Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (also known as the 'SEA Directive'). SEA is a process for evaluating, at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental quality and consequences of Plans or Programmes (P/Ps). The purpose is to ensure that the environmental consequences of Plans or Programmes are assessed both during their preparation and prior to their adoption. The SEA process also gives specified environmental authorities, interested parties and the general public, an opportunity to comment on the environmental impacts of the proposed Plans or Programmes and to be kept informed during the decision-making process.

The SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) was transposed into national legislation by the:

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

The latter Regulations (i.e. S.I. No. 436 of 2004 as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011) provide for SEA for development plans such as the Fingal Development Plan. The requirement to carry out SEA for such plans is set out in Article 13A(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022, which states that SEA is required where it applies to a development plan for an area the population or the target population of which is less than 10,000 persons. The 2016 Census records the population of Fingal County at 296,020 persons which increased to 329,218 persons as per the preliminary results for 2022 Census. Article 13C also states that a "*draft development plan prepared*

by the manager under section 11(5) of the Act (preparation of a draft development plan) shall be accompanied by or include an environmental report". Therefore, SEA is a mandatory requirement for the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029.

Article 13I of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022 requires that the plan-making authority must make available a SEA Statement summarising how the SEA, environmental considerations, the Environmental Report and consultations have been taken into account in the making of the Plan. In addition, the plan-making authority has to detail the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and the measures decided for monitoring of implementation of the plan on the environment.

This SEA Statement is a reflective document that looks back on the SEA process, what has been achieved and it also sets out what monitoring will be done in the future.

1.2 Content of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement

In accordance with Article 13I of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022 the SEA Statement shall summarise the following:

- (a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan (Chapter 2);
- (b) how:
 - (i) the environmental report prepared pursuant to article 13C,
 - (ii) submissions and observations made to the planning authority in response to a notice under section 12(1) or (7) of the Act, and
 - (iii) any consultations under article 13F.have been taken into account during the preparation of the plan (Chapter 2),
- (c) the reasons for choosing the plan, as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with (Chapter 3), and
- (d) the measures decided upon to monitor, in accordance with article 13J, the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan (Chapter 4).

1.3 Key Stages of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Process

A summary of the key stages of the SEA process are set out in the Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Key Stages of the SEA Process for the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

SEA Stage	SEA Actions
1. Screening	<p>The requirement to undertake a SEA is mandatory for certain Plan / Programme (P / P). Where SEA is not a mandatory requirement, the P / Ps is subject to a ‘Screening process’, to consider if it is <i>likely to have significant effects</i> on the environment, and therefore, if SEA is required.</p> <p>In accordance with Articles 13A(1) and 13C, Screening of the Fingal Development Plan is not required as SEA is a mandatory requirement based on the population or target population for the development plan not being less than 10,000 persons.</p>
2. Scoping	<p>In accordance with Article 13C of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, Fingal County Council undertook consultation with the environmental authorities specified in article 13A(4) of the Regulations in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> methods of assessment for the SEA; contents and level of detail in the Plan / Programme; the stage in the Plan or Programme-making process; and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process in order to avoid duplication of environmental assessment. <p>A SEA Scoping Report was prepared and issued to the environmental authorities in August 2021 with an invitation to return submissions or observations on the Scoping Report. Submissions / observations were received from the following environmental authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Geological Survey, Ireland (GSI) - under the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC); Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Development Applications Unit); Meath County Council; and Waste Policy & Resource Efficiency- (Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications). <p>The submissions / observations provided information on legislation, guidance, sources of information, the baseline environment, and on key considerations for the Draft Plan and the environmental assessment.</p> <p>These assisted, guided and informed the preparation of the Draft Plan and the Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p>

SEA Stage	SEA Actions
3. Environmental Assessment and Environmental Report	<p>An assessment of the likely significant impacts on the environment as a result of the Plan through the preparation of the SEA Environmental Report. This was an iterative process with various rounds of environmental assessment as the Draft Plan was prepared.</p> <p>The Environmental Report went on public display with the Draft Plan from 24 February 2022 to 12 May 2022. A total of 1,937 submissions and observations were received on the Draft Plan and a number related directly to the SEA Environmental Report.</p> <p>The Proposed Material Alterations (amendments) (PMA) originated from the consideration of the submissions received on the Draft Plan. The Chief Executive prepared and published a report on the submissions and observations in July 2022 and the Elected Members considered the report at Special Council Meetings in September and October 2022, where they resolved to amend the Draft Plan.</p> <p>The PMA, which were subject to screening and assessment for AA, SEA and Flood Risk, together with an updated SEA Environmental Report, Natura Impact Report (NIR), and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) were placed on public display from 11 November 2022 to 22 December 2022. Errata to the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 were identified and published as a document '<i>Errata to the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029</i>' and was placed on public display from 24 November 2022 to 22 December 2022. A further 197 submissions and observations on the PMA were received.</p> <p>The submissions and observations on the PMA and associated Environmental Report, Natura Impact Report and SFRA were addressed in the Chief Executive's Report of 15 January 2023 and the Members of Fingal County Council formally adopted the new Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 on the 22 February 2023.</p>
4. SEA Statement	<p>Along with the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 coming into effect, the SEA process includes the finalisation of the SEA Environmental Report and the preparation of the SEA Statement (this report) in accordance with Article 13I of Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022, summarising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan; ▪ how the environmental report; submissions and observations made to the planning authority in response to a notice under section 12(1) or (7) of the Act, and any consultations under article 13F of the Regulations have been taken into account during the preparation of the plan; ▪ the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and

SEA Stage	SEA Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">the measures decided upon to monitor, in accordance with article 13J, the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan.
5. SEA Monitoring	The Plan is adopted and implemented, and the environmental effectiveness of the implementation of the Plan is monitored and reported on through the 6 years of the life of the Plan.

1.4 Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

In addition to SEA, there is a requirement under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) (as transcribed into Irish law) to assess whether the Development Plan, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have significant effect on a European site, (which includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)), in view of the site's conservation objectives. The requirement for an assessment derives from Article 6 of the directive, and in particular Article 6(3) which requires that:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation of a 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 for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.”

In accordance with this requirement, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening of the Draft Plan was carried out, in parallel with the SEA process. It was determined that AA was required and a Natura Impact Report (NIR) was prepared to inform an AA and the preparation of the Plan. The AA took a precautionary approach and assessed the impacts that would be anticipated from the implementation of the Development Plan providing the necessary inclusion of mitigation measures and guiding principles at the strategic level of the Plan.

The Development Plan was also subject to an assessment / identification of flood risk for the plan area in accordance with *“The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities”*, 2009, published by the Department for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works (OPW). This addresses the assessment and management of flood risk and surface water in the Plan area and assisted Fingal County Council in making informed strategic land-use planning decisions. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was prepared in parallel with the Plan-making and SEA / AA processes.

The plan-making, SEA, SFRA and AA teams worked closely together throughout the Development Plan process. As a precautionary approach, the Development Plan included environmental protection criteria which require avoidance of European Sites in the first instance, and reiterated the legislative requirement for AA screening and full AA where potential for effects exists. The findings of the AA and SFRA have been integrated into the SEA process.

2 Integration of Environmental Considerations in to the Plan

2.1 Introduction

This section details how both the SEA Environmental Report and submissions and observations made to the planning authority on the Environmental Report and SEA process have been taken into account during the preparation of Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029.

2.2 SEA Consultation

A number of opportunities are integrated into the plan-making process to allow for consultation with the environmental authorities and the general public on the plan and SEA:

- Pre-draft, including consultation on SEA Scoping;
- Draft Plan; and
- Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan.

Submissions and observations were made at each of these stages and these informed the preparation and finalisation of the plan and the SEA process.

2.3 Pre-draft Consultation

In accordance with Section 11(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) Fingal County Council commenced the review of the Fingal Development Plan and the preparation of a new Plan for Fingal and gave notice to this effect on 12 March 2021.

At this initial stage Fingal County Council prepared a Strategic Issues Paper for public consultation on the review of the existing Development Plan and the preparation of the new Development Plan.

The Strategic Issues Paper set out information in relation to:

- People and Place
- Climate Action
- Connectivity and Movement
- Employment, Economy & Dublin Airport
- Cultural Heritage
- Green Infrastructure & Natural Heritage
- Infrastructure & Utilities

The Council circulated the issues paper to the prescribed authorities and environmental authorities set out in Part 3, Article 13 and 13A respectively of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) as well as to key infrastructure providers and stakeholders. The Council made the Issues Paper available to the public and convened a number of public consultation events in the administrative area of Fingal.

A total of 551 submissions and observations were received in relation to the Strategic Issues Paper. These submissions were summarised in the Chief Executive's Report (2 July 2021) and informed the preparation of the SEA scoping report for consultation with the Environmental Authorities and the preparation of the Draft Plan.

2.4 SEA Scoping Consultation

In accordance with Article 13D of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, a SEA Scoping Report was prepared to allow for scoping on the content of the SEA environmental report with the specified environmental authorities¹. The scoping report provided information in relation to:

- the current knowledge and methods of environmental assessment;
- the contents and level of detail in the plan;
- the stage of the plan in the decision-making process; and
- the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process in order to avoid duplication of environmental assessment.

SEA scoping ensures that the environmental assessment process is focused on the relevant environmental issues and examines issues at the appropriate level of detail and allows for the incorporation of the views of the environmental authorities within the Plan and the SEA Environmental Report.

Scoping with the environmental authorities was initiated in August 2021. Submissions and observations on SEA Scoping were received from the following Environmental Authorities:

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);

¹ The following environmental authorities were notified for the purposes of SEA Scoping: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Environment, Climate and Communications; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Dublin City County Council; South Dublin County Council; Meath County Council; and Kildare County Council

- Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) - under the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC);
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Development Applications Unit);
- Meath County Council; and
- Waste Policy & Resource Efficiency- (Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications).

The submissions provided information on sources of guidance and useful resources and aspects for consideration and incorporation in the Plan and in the SEA Environmental Report. A summary of the submissions received is provided in the Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: SEA Scoping Submissions and Responses

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
1	EPA	<p>Submission noted the role of the EPA as one of the Environmental Authorities and provided a list of recommended guidance and resources including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans - EPA Recommendations and Resources'. June 2021 Version 1.12. <p><u>Specific Comments on Scoping</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'State of the Environment Report – Ireland's Environment 2016' / 'Ireland's Environment - An Integrated Assessment 2020'. Identifies thirteen Key Messages for Ireland which align with many of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Delivering Ireland's long-term sustainable development and environmental protection goals will require a concerted effort by government departments to address these key actions. Community Engagement - the importance and value of community engagement. In preparing the Plan and carrying out the SEA (including developing alternatives), the need to proactively engage local communities should be a core consideration. Sustainable Development Goals. UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. Relevant targets and actions in Ireland's SDG Implementation Plan (DCCAE, 2018) should be integrated as appropriate into the Plan. Topic specific comments - Critical service infrastructure, Integration of transport & land-use planning, Biodiversity, Climate Action (Climate Action Plan, 2019), Coastal Zone Management. SEA process guidance and checklists. Inventory of spatial datasets relevant to SEA. Resources of assistance to the Plan and SEA: Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections for 2018-2040; Integrating Climatic Factors into the Strategic Environmental Assessment Process in Ireland; Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guideline; Integrating Climatic Factors. Good practice note on Cumulative Effects Assessment (EPA, 2020), Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring (EPA, 2020), Integrating climatic factors into SEA (EPA, 	<p>Guidelines & resources are considered within the assessment.</p> <p>Specific comments are noted and addressed.</p> <p>Where information is available these aspects have been considered and were incorporated into the Plan and SEA Environmental Report as appropriate.</p>

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
		<p>2019), Developing and Assessing Alternatives in SEA (EPA, 2015), and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment (EPA, 2012).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance and resources: https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/sea-topic-and-sector-specific-guidance-/ Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool. Available at: www.enviromap.ie EPA SEA Web GIS Tool. Available at: https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/SEA EPA WFD Application. Available at: https://wfd.edenireland.ie/ EPA AA Geo Tool. Available at: https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/AAGeoTool 	
2	<p>Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) (Under Department of Environment, Climate & Communications)</p>	<p>GSI recommends using the data sets, when conducting the EIAR, SEA, planning and scoping processes.</p> <p>Geoheritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSI welcomes the mention and listing of the 21 no. County Geological Sites (CGSs) in Table 5.4 of the SEA. As a minimum, GSI would like the Local Authority to include a policy objective. Listing in the Plan provides protection of the sites against potentially damaging developments that normally require planning permission, such as building, quarrying, landfilling or forestry. National Heritage Plan - major strand of geological nature conservation. The majority of GH sites may differ from ecological sites. Consultation at the earliest stages can identify any issues relevant to an individual site or proposed development. It would also be necessary to include a policy objective to protect geological NHAs as they become designated. <p>Culture and Tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geology has become a large part of Irish tourism - three UNESCO Global Geoparks, and a number of other geo-tourism projects. GSI would encourage FCC to use the geological audit information making it easily available to the general public. 	<p>Specific comments are noted and addressed.</p> <p>Guidelines & resources are considered within the assessment.</p> <p>Where information is available these aspects have been considered and were incorporated into the Plan and SEA Environmental Report as appropriate.</p>

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage geology to be a significant part of any tourism initiative. <p>Groundwater</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GWClimate is a groundwater monitoring and modelling project – this data may be useful in relation to Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and management plans. Maps and data are available on the Map viewer. Dataset beneficial to Section 5.5.9 of the SEA Scoping report. <p>Geotechnical Database Resources and 3D Bedrock Geology Models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National geotechnical database and viewer with site investigation data submitted voluntarily by industry. Encourage the use of this database as part of any baseline geological assessment (downloads from our Geotechnical Map Viewer). 3D models can help stakeholders visualize, understand and characterise geology, offering a key element of geotechnical risk management by identifying areas requiring further site investigation. <p>Geohazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSI commends the inclusion of our ‘Landslide Events and Landslide Susceptibility’ database in the SEA Scoping report. <p>Geothermal Energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSI commends the inclusion of Figure 5.14: ‘GSI Geothermal Suitability Map for Fingal - Open Loop’ in the SEA Scoping report. <p>Natural Resources (Minerals/Aggregates)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSI commends the recommendation to use our ‘Aggregate Potential Mapping, Bedrock mapping, Quaternary and Physiographic mapping, National Aquifer and Recharge mapping’ datasets when planning and assessing the environmental aspects of projects in the SEA Scoping report. <p>Geochemistry of soils, surface waters and sediments</p>	

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSI provides baseline geochemistry data for Ireland as part of the Tellus programme. Tellus data for the urban geochemistry mapping (Dublin SURGE project) is available at https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/data-and-maps/Pages/Geochemistry.aspx <p>Geophysical data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSI produces high-resolution geophysical data (Magnetic field, electrical conductivity, natural gamma-ray radiation) of soils & rocks as part of the Tellus programme. Geochemistry and Geophysical datasets would be of benefit in Section 5.4 'Land, Soils and Geology' and Section 5.9.11 'Minerals and Aggregates' of the SEA Scoping report. <p>Marine and Coastal Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSI's extensive database of shipwrecks mapped by the INFOMAR programme, available at: https://www.infomar.ie/maps/story-maps/shipwrecks INFOMAR produces a wide variety of seabed mapping products, available at: https://www.infomar.ie/maps/downloadable-maps/maps Story maps, available at: https://www.infomar.ie/maps/story-maps/exploring-dingle-bay-different-perspective GSI would recommend use of their Marine and Coastal Unit datasets available on website/Map Viewer. The Marine and Coastal Unit also participate in coastal change projects and are undertaking mapping in areas such as coastal vulnerability and coastal erosion. <p>Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSI is undertaking a new coastal vulnerability mapping initiative. Currently the project is being carried out on the east coast and will be rolled out nationally. These index-based maps will offer a simple, easy visual representation of sensitive areas. The above datasets will be of benefit to Section 5.5.5 'Coastal Waters' in the draft SEA. <p>Database Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geological Survey Ireland's Publicly Available Datasets Relevant to Planning, EIA and SEA processes. 	

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
3	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Development Applications Unit)	<p>Architectural Heritage</p> <p>DHLGH concurs with the list of cultural heritage issues extracted from the SEA Scoping report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional areas of assessment are noted along with the recommendation for the establishment of baseline data for cultural heritage within historic urban centres so that information is collated and progress monitored as the Development Plan is implemented. ▪ Baseline data for the levels of vacancy, dereliction should be determined – following the post Covid-19 lockdown and many businesses not reopening. ▪ The condition of protected structures and historic buildings identified as part of ACAs should be included in this survey. ▪ The loss of historic joinery – windows and shopfronts should be evaluated as their craftsmanship and contribution to a distinctive sense of place and a high quality environment should be understood. ▪ The number of historic buildings that have been demolished, poorly repaired or altered should also be considered in the context of the Local Authorities' RPS. ▪ Fingal is recognised as having a resource of rural and urban vernacular buildings which have become increasingly under threat from vacancy and development pressures. ▪ The use of the historic environment viewer is a valuable mapping resource. ▪ The introduction of the Strategic Housing Developments has had a major impact on the planning and development of cultural landscapes. ▪ The inclusion of the number of historical estates and landscapes that have been bought/planned under the development of Strategic Housing Developments should be determined. ▪ The recent sale of Howth Castle (which may be considered of National importance due to its Norman foundation) and the cessation of hundreds of years of residential use in this site is a case in point of a significant impact to the rich cultural heritage of the county. ▪ The connectivity of large housing schemes - car dependent - have a significant and detrimental impact on historic urban centres and their amenity due to the volume of traffic they generate. 	<p>Specific comments are noted and addressed.</p> <p>Where information is available these aspects have been considered and were incorporated into the Plan and SEA Environmental Report as appropriate.</p>

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenity and long term use of the historic building may be rendered unviable/unattractive for residential uses due to loss of amenity noise and poor air quality arising from the encroachment of oversized development, major infrastructural projects or upgrades. The Climate Action risk assessment should also inform areas of cultural heritage significance and surviving integrity that need to be sustained in all future spatial plans and policies with particular regard to the coastal towns and their historic infrastructure, ports, harbours, defences etc. The Department would welcome consideration of the evaluation of the above in addition to those scheduled in Section 5.7.5 SEA Scoping report. <p>Nature Conservation</p> <p>Observations on various sections of the SEA Scoping Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Section 5.22 Overview of Biodiversity in Fingal</u>: It is noted that there is no reference to the ancient woodlands present in Fingal at Knockmaroon, Luttrellstown and St. Catherine's Park in the Liffey Valley and in Santry Demesne, the latter two areas included in Fingal County Council's park system. It is recommended that there should be references to the presence of these ancient woodland areas, and the occurrence in them of plant species indicative of old woodland, such as toothwort and yellow archangel (a Red Data Book species) and Hairy St. John's-wort, a protected species, in the corresponding section of the SEA Environmental Report supporting the draft Plan. <u>Section 5.2.7 Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)</u>: In Table 5.2 pNHAs in the Vicinity of the Plan Area, it should be noted that the Skerries Islands pNHA is actually within the Draft Plan Boundary rather than adjacent to the Draft Plan Area, as the Skerries Islands, being above the mean high tide water mark, are actually part of Fingal County. <u>Section 5.2.9 UNESCO Biosphere Reserve</u>: In relation to the Biosphere Reserve encompassing Dublin Bay and its environs, it is noted that the term 'Biosphere' is used to this area throughout the text of this section except for in its title. However, the official UNESCO designation for the 	

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
		<p>area is the Dublin Bay Biosphere Reserve, and the term 'Biosphere' in standard usage actually refers to all the parts of the planet earth inhabited by biological organisms. It is therefore recommended that the term Biosphere Reserve should be used in all instances in County Council documentation when referring to the UNESCO designated area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Section 5.2.14.4 Flora Protection Order</u>: Sites where plant species listed under the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015, Statutory Instrument S.I No. 356 of 2015, occur are protected under this order. In addition to the species mentioned in this section of the SEA Scoping Report, the following species listed under this order occur in Fingal: Borrer's saltmarsh-grass in the Mayne River Marsh, Baldoyle (in the ownership of the County Council), hairy St. John's-wort at Knockmaroon, Luttrellstown, St. Catherine's Park and Santry Demesne (the last two sites are County Council parks,) and meadow barley in the Mayne River Marsh and near the Baldoyle Estuary. ▪ <u>Section 5.2.16 Existing Biodiversity Issues</u>: Biodiversity issues/pressures relevant to Fingal County are listed, but it is noted that not specifically mentioned are the potentially problematic effects of the greenways planned on areas designated, or areas proposed for designation, to conserve biodiversity. The potential effects in particular of the proposed Fingal Coastal Way on the Rogerstown Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Rogerstown Special Protection Area (SPA), and the proposed Royal Canal Greenway on the Royal Canal pNHA was highlighted in the submission of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and the Media in May of this year at the 'Issues Papers' stage of the Fingal CDP review process. These potential effects of greenways planned for the County on sites designated, or proposed for designation, for conservation should be given due consideration in the SEA Environmental Report. <p>Also referred to in this 'Issues Papers' stage submission were the potential impacts on coastal European sites likely to result from increased recreational use, such as damage to vegetation from trampling and disturbance of birds and other fauna. Consideration of these potential impacts should also be undertaken in the SEA Environmental Report.</p>	

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Section 5.4.3.2 Forestry and Woodlands</u>: There is no mention of the presence of the ancient woodlands referred to already in relation to Section 5.22 above at Knockmaroon, Luttrellstown and St. Catherine's Park in the Liffey Valley and Santry Demesne. It is recommended that these woodlands should be referred to in this section of the SEA ER. ▪ <u>Section 5.9.4.1 Public Lighting</u>: There is mention that light pollution can have a negative impact on biodiversity by affecting the diurnal patterns of plants and animals. Artificial lighting can also prevent light sensitive bat species, which like all bat species area are afforded strict protection under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), from utilising otherwise suitable locations for roosting or foraging. For instance the illumination of the surfaces of water bodies and riparian zones can deter their usage by Daubenton's bats, which characteristically feed over and along watercourses. The SEA ER should consider the potential impacts of light pollution on bats and other species of fauna occurring in Fingal and propose mitigation measures to avoid such impacts where feasible. It is understood that FCC intends, in the near future, to modify the lighting installed for a number of years along the stretch of the Royal Canal Greenway between Ashtown and Castleknock so that it will be movement activated during most of the nocturnal hours. This welcome initiative is to be undertaken to minimise the lighting's effects on bat species and especially on Daubenton's bat, and could usefully be pursued elsewhere in the County in similar riparian situations. 	
4	Meath County Council (MCC)	<p>MCC recognises the importance of collaboration with adjoining Local Authorities in environmental matters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The review of the current Meath CDP is nearing completion. Fingal County Council, will be notified when the plan is adopted. <p>MCC suggests that the following should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impacts on designated sites of mutual interest including the Natura 2000 network as sites including the River Boyne/Blackwater SAC and SPA are within 15km of the Draft Plan area. ▪ The requirements of the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Objectives. 	<p>Specific comments are noted and addressed.</p> <p>Where information is available these aspects have been considered and were incorporated into the Plan and SEA Environmental</p>

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Meath CDP 2013-2019 and the Draft Meath CDP 2021-2027 contain a Landscape Character Assessment. It is requested that this document be considered and referenced. The Meath CDP 2013-2019 and the Draft Meath CDP 2021-2027 contain a list of Protected Views and Prospects. It is requested that this document be considered and referenced. The Meath CDP 2013-2019 and the Draft CDP 2021-2027 contain a record of protected structures. It is requested that this document be considered and referenced. Potential impacts the delivery of a number of significant transport projects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N2 Rath to Kilmoon road project; Increased capacity on the M3; Road link between the M3 (junction 4 Clonee/R157 Dunboyne -Maynooth Road and the M4 (at Lucan/Leixlip). Upgrading of R125 Ashbourne to Swords. The implementation of the NTA Cycle Network Plan for the Greater Dublin Area. The Dart+ west project and other public transport projects should form part of the assessment. The consultation distances for a number of SEVESO sites in Fingal extend into County Meath, this should also be considered in the context of the preparation of the Environmental Report. The settlements of Ashbourne including the Ballymadun employment area and Dunboyne-Clonee adjoin Fingal, the proximity of these areas should form part of the considerations during this part of the plan review process. <p>In conclusion, MCC wishes to express its thanks for the opportunity to input into the SEA process and requests that the above comments are taken into account in the preparation of the SEA Environmental Report.</p>	Report as appropriate.
5	Waste Policy & Resource Efficiency (Department of the Environment,	<p>Please see below reply on behalf of the Waste Policy & Resource Efficiency Division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In respect of waste and landfills in the within documentation, we would be obliged if the local authority would consult directly with their respective Regional Waste Management Planning. 	Comment is noted.

No.	Stakeholder	Summary of Submission	Comment
	Climate and Communications)		

2.5 Selection of Strategic Environmental Objectives for Assessment of the Plan

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures derived from environmental protection objectives established at international and / or national level (e.g. through EU Directives). SEOs are used as standards against which the provisions of the Plan can be evaluated, in order to identify areas in which significant adverse impacts are likely to occur, if unmitigated.

Therefore, the primary objective of the SEA is to provide for a high level of environmental protection and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029. The SEOs assist in the prediction, description and monitoring of impacts on the environment as a result of the Plan. Indicators allow impacts to be assessed and highlighted in a simple and effective manner. Indicators can also be used to form the basis of a monitoring programme for the Plan, see Section 4 (Monitoring Measures and Reporting). The SEOs are set out in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) for the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

Theme	Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)	(B_1) Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, regarding its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.
	(B_2) Maintain and where appropriate, enhance the biodiversity value of national and local designated and non-designated ecological and heritage areas, which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets.
Population & Human Health (PHH)	(PHH_1) Provide high quality residential, community, working and recreational environments with access to sustainable transport options.
	(PHH_2) Ensure that existing population and planned growth is linked with the required infrastructure and the services.
	(PHH_3) Protect human health and well-being from environment-related pressures.
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG)	(LSG_1) Safeguard designated and sensitive soil, resources and geological heritage sites against pollution and degradation.
	(LSG_2) Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the county.
Water Quality (W)	(W_1) Protect and where necessary improve and maintain water quality and the management of watercourses and groundwater and coastal waters in compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Marine Strategy Framework Directive objectives and measures.
	(W_2) Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion.
	(W_3) Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals.
Air Quality & Noise (AN)	(AN_1) Avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment resulting from emissions to air, with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture.
	(AN_2) Encourage a modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport to minimise travel-related emissions.

Theme	Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)
	(AN_3) Decrease noise emissions associated with traffic and transport and other noise related industry <i>etc.</i>
Climate Change (CC)	(CC_1) Adopt Climate Change mitigation and adaptation measures.
	(CC_2) Integrate sustainable design solutions into the county's infrastructure (<i>e.g.</i> energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).
	(CC_3) Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets.
	(CC_4) Encourage and promote development which is resilient to the effects of climate change.
	(CC_5) Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport.
Cultural Heritage (CH)	(CH_1) Protect places and features of cultural archaeological heritage from impact as a result of development.
	(CH_2) Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, architectural heritage from impact as a result of development.
Landscape & Visual (LV)	(LV_1) Protect and maintain the special qualities of the landscape character of Fingal, especially with regard to areas of high amenity - coastal zone and islands, river valley areas (Liffey, Delvin, Ward and Tolka) and the Naul Hills area.
	(LV_2) Protect and maintain the special qualities of identified scenic views.
Material Assets (MA)	(MA_1) Make best use of existing infrastructure, promote the sustainable development of new infrastructure to meet population distribution and protect existing assets, to meet the needs of Fingal's population.
	(MA_2) Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies.
	(MA_3) Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development.
	(MA_4) Encourage a reduction in energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to more sustainable modes of transport, including electrification of road and rail transport.

2.6 Draft Plan Consultation

The Draft Plan was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and to Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The SEA Environmental Report included the following key sections:

- **Environmental Baseline** – Including information gathered during consultation with the environmental authorities at the SEA Scoping Stage, was collated and expanded upon. This included a review of the findings of the consultation submissions received during consultation on the pre-draft plan stage. This was used to identify environmental sensitivities and existing environmental problems relevant to the plan area.
- **Policies, Plans & Programmes Review** - A review of relevant international, European, national and regional policies, plans and programmes was undertaken both to identify the key environmental issues and to ensure that the objectives set out in the Plan meet the requirements of all relevant plans and policies.
- **Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)** – A number of SEOs were identified having regard to the above and the issues most relevant and of significance to the Plan area.
- **Environmental Assessment** - Using the strategic environmental objectives (SEOs), the assessment of the potential significant environmental effects of the Plan (objectives, projects and alternatives to the Plan) was undertaken.
- **Mitigation Measures** - Based on this assessment, potential adverse or uncertain environmental impacts were identified and recommendations in relation to mitigation were proposed.
- **Monitoring Programme** – A Programme for Monitoring of the Plan throughout its lifetime was proposed to ensure that any potential adverse environmental impacts, that may be unforeseen at this stage, are identified early, so that remedial action may be taken to prevent any deterioration of the environment.

It is the Plan considered as a whole, which contributes towards environmental protection and management, and towards sustainable development and that complies with the various legislative requirements. This is identified throughout the SEA documentation. The environmental assessment included recommendations for changes to policies and objectives for the mitigation of

potential negative environment effects, and for the inclusion of protective environmental policies and objectives within the Plan. Specifically the Plan included the following in relation to environmental assessments:

The following will apply to all plans:

To ensure that plans, including land use plans, will only be adopted, if they either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on a European Site, or where such a plan is likely or might have such a significant effect (either alone or in combination), the planning authority will, as required by law, carry out an appropriate assessment as per requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC of the 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as transposed into Irish legislation. Only after having ascertained that the plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, will the planning authority adopt the plan, incorporating any necessary mitigation measures. A plan which could adversely affect the integrity of a European site may only be adopted in exceptional circumstances, as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish legislation.

Plans will also be subject to screening for the requirement for environmental assessment, and to environmental assessment if required, in accordance with the provisions of Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the SEA Directive) as transposed into national legislation.

The following will apply to all development proposals:

To ensure that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on a European site(s), or where such a development proposal is likely or might have such a significant effect (either alone or in combination), the planning authority will, as required by law, carry out an appropriate assessment as per requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC of the 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as transposed into Irish legislation. Only after having ascertained that the development proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, will the planning authority agree to the development and impose

appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions. A development proposal which could adversely affect the integrity of a European site may only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish legislation.

Development proposals will also be subject to screening for the requirement for environmental impact assessment, and to environmental impact assessment if required, in accordance with the provisions of Directive 2011/52/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive) as transposed into national legislation.

The review and preparation of the Fingal Development Plan commenced in March 2021 with the publication of a Strategic Issues Paper. Following a period of public consultation, a Chief Executive's Report was prepared, based on submissions received. Following consideration of the Chief Executive's Report, the Elected Members gave direction to prepare the Chief Executive's Draft Development Plan which was issued to the Elected Members on the 3rd of December 2021. Following consideration by the members, 917 no. motions were received. These motions were debated by the members in a series of meetings, which took place from the 18 January 2022 to the 10 February 2022. Changes were made to the Chief Executive's Draft Development Plan based on the outcomes of these meetings, which led to the publication of the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029.

In accordance with SEA Regulations, the Draft Plan, together with the SEA Environmental Report, Natura Impact Report (NIR) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) were placed on public display between 24 February 2022 to 12 May 2022 during which written submissions and observations were invited.

A total of 1,937 no. submissions and observations were received. A summary of the submissions and observations in relation to the Environmental Report is provided in the Table 2.3. A report on the submissions / observations was circulated to Councillors on 28 July 2022, and they had an opportunity to submit motions. Thereafter, Special Council meetings were arranged on dates between September and October 2022, and it was resolved to amend the Draft Plan.

Table 2.3: Submissions / Observations on the Environmental Report (ER) on Draft Plan

Submission / Observation	Comments	Response
Office of the Planning Regulator	SEA considered comprehensive and generally consistent with the requirements of the section 28 guidelines.	Noted
Geological Survey of Ireland	Provided information on relevant and publicly available datasets, which are referenced in the ER.	Noted
Department Environment Climate and Communications	Detailed report from the Department relating to Climate Action, Electricity and Gas Infrastructure, Renewable Energy (Off Shore) Offshore Energy, District Heating, Circular Economy, Telecommunications / Digital Connectivity, Geological Survey Ireland.	As recommended references have been updated in the Final SEA Environmental Report.
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA)	Welcomes the preparation of the Draft CDP in tandem with the required environmental process. Notes that the Environmental Report issued with the Draft CDP sets out the iterative process to date including an assessment of the overall environmental effects arising from the provisions of the Draft CDP.	Noted
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Provided information the SEA process, environmental authorities and an inventory and updates for relevant legislation and guidance, which is acknowledged and referenced in the ER as appropriate and in the preparation of this SEA Statement.	Noted
Ian Lennon	Submission relates to revisions / updates to SEA arising from required updates to Wastewater Treatment Plants - Table 5.7. The submission refers to the agglomeration P.E. for Naul and Garristown - Certificate of Authorisation	Table 5.7 has been updated in the Final SEA Environmental Report.

Submission / Observation	Comments	Response
	(COA) applications to the EPA in 2009. The loading for both plants has increased and the figures need to be updated.	
Sabrina Joyce Kemper & Catherine McMahon	Submission referred to omissions from the SEA	References have been updated in the SEA Environmental Report.

2.7 Proposed Material Alterations Consultation

The Draft Plan capturing the proposed material alterations accompanied by the SEA Environmental Report, the NIR and the SFRA was put out on public display with a Proposed Material Alterations report between 11 November 2022 and 9 December 2022.

The SEA Environmental Report had been updated to take account of:

- Submissions received;
- Emerging data and the changes as a result of iterative nature of SEA.
- Screening and assessment of the amendments;
- Updating of interactions with NIR and SFRA; and
- To fully document the assessment which took place for the Plan and the PMA.

Errata to the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 were identified and published as a document '*Errata to the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029.*' This 'Errata Document' was on display during the public consultation period for the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 from 24 November 2022 and accordingly, the final date for submissions on the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 was extended to 22 December 2022.

One hundred and ninety-seven submissions and observations were received on the proposed amendments, the Environmental Report, the Natura Impact Report and the SFRA. The Chief

Executive prepared a report on the submissions received and issued to the Elected Members on 15 January 2023. Following consideration of the CE Report, as well as the material alterations at a number of Special Council Meetings in February 2023, the Elected Members adopted the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 on 22 February 2023.

In accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the adopted Development Plan comes into effect on 5 April 2023.

2.8 Mitigation Measures

Article 5 of the SEA Directive requires that mitigation measures be proposed for all significant adverse effects on the environment as a result of the implementation of the Plan. The SEA is an iterative process prepared in tandem with the formulation of policies and objectives of the Plan. While not always possible to achieve, it is the aim of the process to ensure that sensitive environmental receptors are given adequate and appropriate consideration throughout.

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing the development objectives. Mitigation has taken place throughout the plan-making process.

Having regard to the baseline and existing environmental problems relevant to the Plan area, mitigation took place through the consideration of alternatives, as environmental considerations communicated to the plan-making team allowed them to make an informed choice as to which alternative to put before the Members of the Council. Mitigation also took place in the detailed assessment of the policies and objectives of the Plan and the identification, amendment or drafting of policies and / or objectives required to mitigate any uncertain and / or potentially negative aspects. A number of protective objectives were included in the Plan and a full list of protective policies and objectives included in the Plan is provided in Table 2.4 below.

2.9 Monitoring

Monitoring of the Plan and its implications on the environment is paramount to ensure that the environment is not adversely affected through the implementation of the Plan. In accordance with Article 10 of the SEA Directive, and Article 13J of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, monitoring must be carried out of the significant environmental effects directly related to the implementation of the Plan *“in order to, inter alia, identify at an early stage unforeseen*

adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action.” Article 13J also acknowledges that existing monitoring arrangements may be used with a view to avoiding duplication of monitoring.

While considerable environmental data is directly available to the Council, other sources of information will be accessed to provide a comprehensive view of the impact of the implementation of the Plan. In this regard the local authority will work with other agencies with environmental mandates to gather data for the purposes of monitoring the Plan. Therefore, while monitoring specific elements of the environment is not strictly the preserve of the Council, Fingal County Council will continue to liaise and work with the Environmental Protection Agency, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Central Statistics Office and others in the pursuit of environmental conservation and protection through existing environmental monitoring procedures. Monitoring details are set out at Section 4 of this SEA Statement.

Table 2.4: Environmental Protective Policies and Objectives included in the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)	Protective / Mitigation Policy / Objective
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B-1 and B-2)	<p>Chapter 1: Strategic Objective 1.</p> <p>Chapter 9: Policy GINHP4; Policy GINHP5; Policy GINHP7; Policy GINHP11; Policy GINHP12; Policy GINHP13; Policy GINHP14; Policy GINHP17; Policy GINHP21; Policy GINHP22; Policy GINHP32; Objective GINHO32; Objective GINHO37;</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO140; Objective DMSO145; Objective DMSO152; Objective DMSO158; Objective DMSO160.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Measures: GIM14; GIM16; GIM28; GIM30.</p>
Population & Human Health (PHH-1, PHH-2 & PHH-3)	<p>Chapter 1: Strategic Objective 3.</p> <p>Chapter 3: Policy SPQHP1; Policy SPQHP25; Objective SPQHO2; Objective SPQHO23; Objective SPQHO61. Objective SPQHO63.</p> <p>Chapter 4: Policy CIOSP3; Policy CIOSP7; Policy CIOSP9; Objective CIOSO15; Objective CIOSO25.</p> <p>Chapter 6: Policy CMP9.</p> <p>Chapter 11: Objective IUO42.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO4; Objective DMSO254.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Measures: GIM8.</p> <p>In addition the protective / mitigation policies noted under all other environmental factors in this table are of relevance for Population and Human Health.</p>
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG-1 and LSG-2)	<p>Chapter 9: Policy GINHP23; Policy GINHP27; Objective GINHO52; Objective GINHO53; Objective GINHO54; Objective GINHO57; Objective GINHO67.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO161.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Measures: GIM8.</p>
Water Quality (W-1, W-2 and W-3)	<p>Chapter 1: Strategic Objective 10; Strategic Objective 11.</p> <p>Chapter 5: Policy CAP11; Policy CAP29; Policy CAP30.</p>

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)	Protective / Mitigation Policy / Objective
	<p>Chapter 7: Objective EEO77.</p> <p>Chapter 8: Policy DAP7; Policy DAP10.</p> <p>Chapter 9: Objective GINHO77.</p> <p>Chapter 11: Policy IUP2; Policy IUP3; Policy IUP10; Policy IUP12; Policy IUP13; Policy IUP14; Policy IUP15; Policy IUP17; Policy IUP18; Objective IUO14; Objective IUO15; Objective IUO17; Objective IUO18; Objective IUO19; Objective IUO21; Objective IUO25.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO160; Objective DMSO164; Objective DMSO205; Objective DMSO212; Objective DMSO215.</p>
<p>Air Quality & Noise (AN-1, AN-2 and AN-3)</p>	<p>Chapter 3: Objective SPQH O82; Objective SPQH O83.</p> <p>Chapter 4: Objective CIOO7; Objective CIOO33.</p> <p>Chapter 7: Objective EEO34.</p> <p>Chapter 8: Policy DAP5; Objective DAO11; Objective DAO12; Objective DAO13; Objective DAO14; Objective DAO15; Objective DAO24; Objective DAO25.</p> <p>Chapter 11: Objective IUO7.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO33; Objective DMSO43; Objective DMSO45; Objective DMSO46; Objective DMSO098; Objective DMSO102; Objective DMSO105; Objective DMSO106; Objective DMSO108; Objective DMSO199; Objective DMSO242; Objective DMSO243; Objective DMSO244; Objective DMSO245; Objective DMSO246.</p>
<p>Climate Change (CC-1, CC-2, CC-3, CC-4 and CC-5)</p>	<p>Chapter 1: Strategic Objective 11.</p> <p>Chapter 5: Policy CAP1; Policy CAP2; Policy CAP3; Policy CAP4; Policy CAP5; Policy CAP6; Policy CAP7; Policy CAP8; Policy CAP9; Policy CAP10; Policy CAP11; Policy CAP12; Policy CAP13; Policy CAP15; Policy CAP16; Policy CAP17; Policy CAP18; Policy CAP19; Policy CAP20; Policy CAP21; Policy CAP22; Policy CAP23; Policy CAP24; Policy CAP25; Policy CAP26; Policy CAP27; Policy CAP28; Policy CAP29; Policy CAP30; Policy CAP31; Policy CAP32; Policy CAP33; Policy CAP35; Objective CAO1; Objective CAO2.</p> <p>Chapter 6: Policy CMP1.</p>

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)	Protective / Mitigation Policy / Objective
	<p>Chapter 7: Objective EEO77.</p> <p>Chapter 8: Policy DAP2; Policy DAP4; Objective DAO4;</p> <p>Chapter 9: Policy GINHP23; Objective GINHO19; Objective GINHO72.</p> <p>Chapter 10: Policy HCAP29; Objective HCAO5; Objective HCAO6; Objective HCAO12; Objective HCAO21; Objective HCAO50.</p> <p>Chapter 11: Policy IUP1; Policy IUP10; Policy IUP12; Objective IUO19.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO163; Objective DMSO166; Objective DMSO169; Objective DMSO214; Objective DMSO258; Objective DMSO261.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Measures: GIM28; GIM30.</p>
Cultural Heritage (CH-1 and CH-2)	<p>Chapter 1: Strategic Objective 12.</p> <p>Chapter 3: Objective SPQHO43; Objective SPQHO59; Objective SPQHO88.</p> <p>Chapter 5: Policy CAP6; Policy CAP7; Policy CAP27.</p> <p>Chapter 7: Objective EEO48.</p> <p>Chapter 9: Policy GINHP4; Policy GINHP5; Policy GINHP8; Policy GINHP12; Policy GINHP22; Policy GINHP23; Policy GINHP27; Policy GINHP30; Policy GINHP32; Objective GINHO2; Objective GINHO8; Objective GINHO17; Objective GINHO18; Objective GINHO28; Objective GINHO33; Objective GINHO52; Objective GINHO57; Objective GINHO67; Objective GINHO78; Objective GINHO80.</p> <p>Chapter 10: Policy HCAP1; Policy HAO5; Policy HCAP6; Policy HCAP7; Policy HCAP8; Policy HCAP9; Policy HCAP21; Policy HCAP22; Policy HCAP23; Policy HCAP27; Policy HCAP28; Policy HCAP29; Policy HCAP30; Policy HCAP31; Policy HCAP32; Policy HCAP35; Objective HCAO3; Objective HCAO4; Objective HCAO7; Objective HCAO11; Objective HCAO15; Objective HCAO18; Objective HCAO23; Objective HCAO25; Objective HCAO28; Objective HCAO32; Objective HCAO33; Objective HCAO35; Objective HCAO42; Objective HCAO44; Objective HCAO45; Objective HCAO46; Objective HCAO49; Objective HCAO50; Objective HCAO51; Objective HCAO52; Objective HCAO53; Objective HCAO54; Objective HCAO55; Objective HCAO57; Objective HCAO66; Objective HCAO70.</p>

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)	Protective / Mitigation Policy / Objective
	<p>Chapter 11: Objective IUO23.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO6; Objective DMSO8; Objective DMSO29; Objective DMSO87; Objective DMSO103; Objective DMSO148; Objective DMSO169; Objective DMSO173; Objective DMSO174; Objective DMSO184; Objective DMSO190; Objective DMSO191; Objective DMSO192; Objective DMSO193; Objective DMSO229.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Measures: GIM2; GIM4; GIM9; GIM10.</p>
<p>Landscape & Visual (LV-1 and LV-2)</p>	<p>Chapter 1: Strategic Objective 11.</p> <p>Chapter 2: Objective CSO54; Objective CSO57; Objective CSO74.</p> <p>Chapter 3: Policy SPQHP41; Policy SPQHP54; Objective SPQHO5; Objective SPQHO51; Objective SPQHO84; Objective SPQHO85; Objective SPQHO88.</p> <p>Chapter 7: Policy EEP24; Objective EEO16; Objective EEO51; Objective EEO52; Objective EEO63; Objective EEO66; Objective EEO70; Objective EEO72; Objective EEO74; Objective EEO75.</p> <p>Chapter 9: Policy GINHP4; Policy GINHP5; Policy GINHP8; Policy GINHP9; Policy GINHP21; Policy GINHP24; Policy GINHP25; Policy GINHP27; Policy GINHP30; Policy GINHP32; Objective GINHO17; Objective GINHO56; Objective GINHO57; Objective GINHO59; Objective GINHO60; Objective GINHO61; Objective GINHO74; Objective GINHO80.</p> <p>Chapter 10: Policy HCAP8; Policy HCAP17; Policy HCAP18; Policy HCAP19; Policy HCAP20; Objective HCAO3; Objective HCAO9; Objective HCAO25; Objective HCAO29; Objective HCAO32; Objective HCAO33.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO12; Objective DMSO41; Objective DMSO42; Objective DMSO43; Objective DMSO47; Objective DMSO58; Objective DMSO72; Objective DMSO92; Objective DMSO103; Objective DMSO140; Objective DMSO162; Objective DMSO171; Objective DMSO189; Objective DMSO223; Objective DMSO224; Objective DMSO229; Objective DMSO232.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Measures: GIM8; GIM12; GIM13; GIM14; GIM15; GIM16; GIM28.</p>
<p>Material Assets (MA-1, MA-2, MA-3 and MA-4)</p>	<p>Chapter 1: Strategic Objective 2; Strategic Objective 10.</p> <p>Chapter 2: Policy CSP4; Policy CSP11; Policy CSP31; Objective CSO51.</p>

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)	Protective / Mitigation Policy / Objective
	<p>Chapter 3: Objective SPQHO5; Objective SPQHO58; Objective SPQHO97.</p> <p>Chapter 6: Policy CMP2; CMP8; CMP19; CMP24.</p> <p>Chapter 7: Policy EEP13; Objective EEO58; Objective EEO73.</p> <p>Chapter 11: Policy IUP1; Policy IUP3; Policy IUP4; Policy IUP8; Policy IUP9; Objective IUO3; Objective IUO4; Objective IUO5.</p> <p>Chapter 14: Objective DMSO18; Objective DMSO123; Objective DMSO196; Objective DMSO197; Objective DMSO198; Objective DMSO199; Objective DMSO200; Objective DMSO201; Objective DMSO224; Objective DMSO225; Objective DMSO231; Objective DMSO233.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Measures: GIM8.</p>

3 Consideration of Alternative Scenarios for the Development Plan

3.1 Introduction

One of the critical roles of the SEA was to facilitate an evaluation of the likely environmental consequences of a range of alternative scenarios for accommodating future growth in Fingal as a result of the Plan. Article 5 of the SEA Directive requires the consideration of reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme and the significant environmental effects of the alternatives proposed.

In accordance with SEA guidelines the alternatives put forward should be reasonable, realistic and capable of implementation. They should also be in line with the appropriate strategic level at which the plan will be implemented within the national planning hierarchy.

The Strategic Vision for Fingal has been developed in line with International, National and Regional policy provisions alongside the Fingal County Council (FCC) corporate plan mission:

“Fingal will embrace healthy place-making and economic prosperity through building cohesive and sustainable communities, where our cultural, natural and built environment is protected.

Fingal will continue to be a County of distinctive environmental, historical and cultural assets and local communities, with sustainable development fostering a high-quality of life for those who live, work and visit here. A sustainable future for the County will be based on the interdependence of the themes of economic growth, social progress and environmental quality with the aim of increasing the County's self-reliance and resilience.

This Plan will ensure the continued growth of the County in a sustainable way and ensure the County continues to develop as a series of well-serviced, well-connected towns, villages and communities and a low carbon economy. In working to deliver all of this, we are committed to engaging with stakeholders, including local communities and residents to develop better solutions to the complex challenges we face and provide an improved quality of life for all.”

In line with the policy provisions the strategic vision has been prepared having regard to the National Strategic Outcomes of the National Planning Framework, the Regional Strategic Outcomes of the

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Fingal Corporate Plan 2019–2024 and the aspirations of the people and stakeholders in Fingal.

The Plan is underpinned by four key cross cutting themes:

- Climate action;
- Healthy place-making;
- Sustainable Development;
- Social inclusion; and
- High-quality design.

3.1.1 Limitations in Available Alternatives

The Plan is required to be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), which specifies various types of objectives that must be provided for by the Plan and in accordance with higher-level national, regional and statutory planning provisions. Therefore, alternatives available for the Plan are significantly limited by the requirements of plans such as the National Planning Framework (NPF), Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region, the Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP), NTA Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042, and Statutory Planning Guidelines.

3.2 Alternative Development Scenarios

Alternative scenarios have been formulated so that they achieve the broad objectives of the NPF and RSES, having regard to the strategic development goals and key issues of capacity around infrastructure, environmental constraints and potential impacts.

Alternative 1: Promote new development evenly for all appropriately zoned and serviced lands.

Alternative 2: Utilise a phased approach to a promotion of new development towards targeted areas of appropriately zoned and serviced lands.

Both focus on alternative means of achieving the aims of the plan and can be considered to be in accordance with the objectives of the higher level plans.

The selection of Alternatives for the new Plan is significantly constrained by the requirement to comply with the policies and objectives of the National Planning Framework, RSES and other national guidelines, all of which have been subject to SEA.

The following considerations are also relevant to the assessment:

- Population and Housing growth forms a central part of the Core Strategy complying with National and Regional Planning Policy. Monitoring is set at a strategic level which examines the function of each settlement.
- Residential development is directed to lands already zoned for residential use in the current plan – no appreciable new residential zoning is proposed.
- Having zoned and serviced land available for the sustainable growth of the county is key requirement and asset but also requires significant capital expenditure in terms of provision of infrastructure and servicing. Therefore, it is important that such lands are developed in a timely manner as envisaged in the Draft Plan to deliver on national growth demands and to provide a return on national investments.
- For monitoring at a settlement and neighbourhood scale, the policy is to examine each settlement with options to transfer a portion of the allocated units from one neighbourhood area to another, subject to demonstration that the necessary social and physical infrastructure is in place or can be provided. This enables for flexibility in terms of locating new housing while complying with the overall core strategy.
- The Council will continue to monitor the housing and employment output in areas, especially as part of the 2022 Census which supports the Development Plan, and the 2026 Census as part of the review of the 2028 Plan.

3.3 Assessment of Alternatives

This section provides a comparative evaluation / assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing available alternatives in Table 3.1. Through the consideration of the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs), the assessment queries and responds to the following questions:

- sufficient homes, of appropriate types, in appropriate locations, at the appropriate times;
- reduce the need to travel through more sustainable patterns of land-use and development;
- encourages modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel;
- enables key transport infrastructure improvements;
- protects and enhances natural habitats, wildlife, biodiversity and geodiversity where possible;

- protects the integrity of European sites and other designated nature conservation sites;
- encourages the creation of new habitats and features for wildlife;
- conserves soil resources where possible and avoid waste of same;
- promotes brownfield development over greenfield;
- protects and enhances archaeology and heritage assets, and areas of sensitive landscape character;
- minimises and reduces the potential for exposure of people to noise, air and light pollution;
- responds to the likelihood of predicted climate change events;
- provides adequate infrastructure to ensure the sustainable supply of water and disposal of sewerage; and
- maximises opportunities for recycling and minimising waste.

3.3.1 Preferred Option

The preferred strategic alternative for the approach to the Plan is **Alternative 1: Promote new development evenly in all appropriately zoned and serviced lands**. This is based on:

- consistency with the requirements of the NPF and RSES;
- maintaining and enhancing existing settlements, within a connected neighbourhood context;
- maximising potential for delivery of required growth within the Plan period;
- maximising opportunity for return on capital expenditure towards infrastructure and services for zoned lands, and
- continuing promotion of smarter travel policies, reduction in commuting, with increased walking and cycling.

Table 3.1: Assessment Matrix of Alternative Scenarios against Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)

Alternative Considered	Positive	Negative	Uncertain	Neutral
<p><u>Alternative 1: Promote new development evenly for all appropriately zoned and serviced lands.</u></p> <p>An even promotion of sustainable development on appropriately zoned lands provides for a greater likelihood of achieving the required growth and thereby return on capital investment for infrastructure and servicing of zoned lands within the Plan period.</p> <p>The alternative retains many of the uncertain environmental impacts associated with all development and which will require appropriate consideration and mitigation in the formulation of the policies and objectives in the Plan.</p>	PHH_1; PHH_2; MA_1;		B_1; B_2; W_1; W_3; AN_1; AN_3; CC_2; CC_3; CC_4; CC_5; CH_1; CH_2; LV_1; LV_2; MA_2; MA_3; MA_4	PHH_3; LSG_1; LSG_2; W_2; AN_2; CC_1;

Alternative Considered	Positive	Negative	Uncertain	Neutral
<p><u>Alternative 2: Utilise a phased approach to a promotion of new development towards targeted areas of appropriately zoned and serviced lands.</u></p> <p>A targeted promotion of sustainable development on appropriately zoned lands results in greater likelihood of failing to achieve the required growth and thereby losing out on potential return on capital</p>		PHH_1; PHH_2; CC_4; CC_5; MA_1;	B_1; B_2; W_1; W_3; AN_1; AN_3; CC_2; CC_3; CH_1; CH_2; LV_1; LV_2; MA_2; MA_3; MA_4	PHH_3; LSG_1; LSG_2; W_2; AN_2; CC_1;

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Alternative Considered	Positive	Negative	Uncertain	Neutral
<p>investment for infrastructure and servicing of zoned lands within the Plan period.</p> <p>The alternative retains many of the uncertain environmental impacts associated with all development and which will require appropriate consideration and mitigation in the formulation of the policies and objectives in the Draft Plan.</p>				

4 Monitoring Measures and Reporting

4.1 Introduction

In accordance with Article 10 of the SEA Directive, monitoring must be carried out of the significant environmental effects directly related to the implementation of the Plan “in order to, inter alia, identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action.” Departmental Guidelines on SEA² recommends that monitoring does not necessarily require new research activity, but that existing sources of information can be used and the task of data collection can be shared.

Monitoring enables, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action. In addition to this, monitoring can also play an important role in assessing whether the Plan is achieving its environmental objectives and targets - measures which the Plan can help work towards - whether these need to be re-examined and whether the proposed mitigation measures are being implemented.

4.2 Monitoring Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around indicators which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEO) identified in the SEA Environmental Report and used in the assessment. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the target(s) which were identified with regard to the relevant strategic actions.

Table 4.1 sets out the targets which have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated. The monitoring programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues - including unforeseen effects - as they arise. Such issues may be identified by Fingal County Council or identified to Fingal County Council by other agencies.

4.3 Sources and Frequency

Measurements for indicators generally come from existing monitoring sources. Existing monitoring sources include those maintained by Fingal County Council and the relevant authorities e.g. Government Departments, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Parks and

² Section 8.3 of Strategic Environmental Assessment - Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities, 2022. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Wildlife Services (NPWS) and the Central Statistics Office (CSO). It is anticipated that monitoring will be undertaken on a biannual basis, to correspond with, initially, the two-year review of the Plan.

4.4 Reporting and Remedial Action

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

Table 4.1: Environmental Monitoring Programme

Theme	Targets	Indicators	Data Sources and Responsibility
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)	Maintain or enhance status of European Sites	Condition of European Sites	Consultation with the NPWS / DoHLGH
	Improve / update knowledge on features / sites of biodiversity value within the county	Number and nature of baseline studies / surveys commissioned / completed for biodiversity	FCC Departments
	All local level land use plans to include an ecosystem services approach and green / blue infrastructure provisions and as a minimum, to have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species	Number of spatial plans that have incorporated ecosystem services content, mapping and policy to protect / promote ecosystem services when their relevant plans are either drafted or revised	Internal monitoring of preparation of local land use plans – multiple FCC Departments
	Screen for and undertake SEA and AA as relevant for plans and projects arising from Development	Number of new plans subject to SEA and / or AA	Internal monitoring of preparation of local land use plans – multiple FCC Departments
	Complete and implement Fingal Biodiversity Action Plan 2018-2023	Performance on achieving actions in adopted Biodiversity Action Plan	FCC Departments
	Develop and Implement Green Infrastructure Strategy / Roll out of Ecosystem Services approach for the County	Progress on: - No. of projects commenced - SuDS projects/ retrofitting - River restoration - other flagship projects	Internal monitoring – multiple FCC Departments

Theme	Targets	Indicators	Data Sources and Responsibility
	Managing Invasive Species in the County	Implementing/ Achieving actions/ targets of the Invasive Species Plan	FCC Departments
Population & Human Health (PHH)	Improving the Attractiveness / Viability of and pedestrian activity in major town centres	Pedestrian Footfall Counts in major town centres	FCC Departments
	Deliver / Sustain Economic Growth and Development	Population, labour force participation and unemployment data	FCC Departments
	Healthy Placemaking	Increase in the proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures	FCC Departments
		Land use plans to include specific reference / measures in relation to human health (e.g. measures for reduction in fossil fuel use in homes and transport, improve access to and provision of sports and recreation and amenity facilities, etc.)s	Internal monitoring – multiple FCC Departments
		HIQA Health Data	HIQA
	Growth of Population in Areas Targeted for Growth & Development (Core Strategy)	Population growth data for county EDs	Central Statistics Office
Soils & Geology (SG)	To achieve 50% growth in built-up area	Increase proportion of development of brownfield county/ suburban lands	FCC Departments

Theme	Targets	Indicators	Data Sources and Responsibility
	Dispose of contaminated material in compliance with EPA guidance and waste management requirements	No. of incidences of non-compliant contamination breaches	FCC Department – Waste Management Division
	Proactively manage and prevent soil sealing / permeability	No. of SuDS retrofitting projects / initiatives Introduction of SuDS in new development areas.	Internal monitoring – multiple FCC Departments
Water Quality and Flooding (WQ&F)	Maintain / improve the status of surface water bodies in accordance with WFD requirements	Change of status of water bodies. Findings of reporting on the monitoring programme for the WFD Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the River Basin Management Plan by 2021 (and objectives as relevant) Water quality monitoring to enable WFD water body status classification Completion of river catchment projects Reduction in wastewater emissions per person per annum Changes in water quality before and after implementation of river catchment projects	FCC Departments – Water Services Division
	To Manage Fingal's Flood Risk through Provision and Upgrading of Flood Alleviation Assets	Progress on implementation of listed flood projects	FCC Departments - Flood Projects and WFD Division

Theme	Targets	Indicators	Data Sources and Responsibility
	Minimise/ manage developments in areas at risk of flooding	Planning application compliance with the requirements of the Development Plan SFRA Preparation of SWMPs Number of incidences of flooding of existing and new development	FCC Departments - Flood Projects and WFD Division
Air Quality (AQ) and Climate (CC)	Improvement in Air Quality	Preparation of the Air Quality Management Plan for Dublin Agglomeration (2021+) No. apps referred to Air Quality Monitoring and Noise Control Unit re: compliance with noise/ air quality policy Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels. Changes in NOx, SOx, PM10 and PM2.5 as part of Ambient Air Quality Monitoring	FCC Departments - Air Quality Monitoring and Noise Control - Environment EPA
	Maintain/ Improve Acoustic Quality in the County	Preparation of Noise Maps in compliance with the EU Environmental Noise Directive (2021+) No. apps referred to Air Quality Monitoring and Noise Control Unit re: compliance with noise/ air quality policy	FCC Departments - Air Quality Monitoring and Noise Control - Environment

Theme	Targets	Indicators	Data Sources and Responsibility
	Compliance with CO2 emission reduction targets	Number of applications submitted with Climate Action Energy Statements	FCC Departments - Environment
		Number of applications for District Heating Enabled Development	
		Number of Decarbonisation Zones established	
		Number of EV charging points installed	
	Implement FCC Climate Action Plan	Positive process on specified actions	
Cultural Heritage (CH)	Protecting Built Heritage	No's additions/ deletions/ amendments to RPS No. ACA's adopted No's of Buildings at Risk files opened / closed	FCC Departments - Heritage
	Protection/ Promotion of Culture	Implementation of Fingal's Culture and Creativity Strategy / public engagement	FCC Departments - Culture
Landscape & Visual (LV)	Improvement in the public realm and visual quality of the county.	Number of public realm improvement projects New Tree Planting, including Street tree planting	FCC Departments - Parks
	Protection of County's Landscapes	Park / Open Space Enhancement Projects Historic Landscape Enhancement Restoration Projects (e.g. historic squares)	FCC Departments – Parks / Heritage

Theme	Targets	Indicators	Data Sources and Responsibility
Material Assets (MA)	Protect and Provide for our Critical Infrastructure	No. of critical infrastructure projects No. of incidences of loss / poor service / impact on assets (potable water, wastewater management, flooding monitoring)	Multiple FCC Departments / External Service Managers / Providers / Irish Water
	Increase in provision of public reuse and recycling facilities	Pilot Projects – composting / waste management Percentage increase in number of registered FCC facilities	FCC Departments - Waste Management Division
	Reduce pressure on waste water system in the county	FCC SuDS projects Enhancement projects (e.g. addressing combined sewers) Drainage Action Plans	FCC Departments – Drainage Services / Irish Water
	Sustainable Transport	Modal shifts to more sustainable modes New public transport infrastructure Cycle infrastructure	FCC Departments - Transportation NTA
	Increase provision of parks and green links	New parks / upgraded parks New green route cycle paths	FCC Departments – Parks / Infrastructure NTA
	Integration of new designated development areas with critical infrastructure	Infrastructure upgrades as part of LAPs/ Masterplans / Framework Plans / Urban Plans	Multiple / FCC Department Planning / Infrastructure

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