An tÚdarás Inniúil um Thorann Aerárthaí

Aircraft Noise Competent Authority

Amendment of the Noise Abatement Objective relating to Aircraft Noise Management at Dublin Airport

Strategic Environmental Assessment Final Environmental Report

November 2026



Report

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Strategic Environmental Assessment Final Environmental Report

For ANCA

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Non-Technical Summary

Introduction

Related to the Infrastructure Application which is a planning application **(F23A/0781)** currently under review being assessed by Fingal County Council for significant infrastructure upgrades to Dublin Airport which are designed to facilitate future passenger growth and enhance connectivity at the Airport, a noise problem was identified on 22nd January 2026. This triggered the process of aircraft noise regulation through the adoption of the International Civil Aviation (ICAO) Balanced Approach, as implemented by Regulation 598/2014 and the Aircraft Noise (Dublin Airport) Regulation Act 2019 Act. In short, where a noise problem is identified, ANCA is required to define, restate or amend the existing and adopted Noise Abatement Objective (specifically, the NAO published in 2022), before then considering suitable noise mitigation measures.

An NAO sets the level of ambition for a noise management regime that secures both environmental improvement and contributes to the achievement of a sustainable transport network. As an NAO is considered to be a 'plan' in planning policy terms, there is a requirement that it is subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The specific purpose of SEA is to ensure that early consideration is given to environmental aspects when a plan or programme is in development. Following production of an SEA Screening Report, on 12th January 2026, ANCA, in their role as Competent Authority for the SEA, determined that there is the potential for likely significant environmental effects to occur as a result of implementing the proposed amendments to the NAO and as such SEA is required. An SEA Scoping Report was subsequently produced by ANCA that set out the proposed scope of the detailed environmental assessment; this was issued to the appropriate Environmental Authorities on 30th January 2026 to give them the opportunity to comment. ANCA has now prepared this SEA Final Environmental Report (ER) which details the SEA that has been undertaken on the Proposed amendments to the NAO for Dublin Airport. This is the Non-Technical Summary that accompanies the ER.

Separately, but concurrently, to the SEA process, ANCA has also carried out an Appropriate Assessment Screening of the Proposed amendments to the NAO. The AA Screening Report (Logika Consultants, 2026) will be submitted to ANCA, as its role as Competent Authority, at the same time as this Draft Environmental Report, and outlines that no likely significant effects to European sites (Natura 2000 Sites, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) and proposed Special Protection Areas (pSPA)) as a result of implementing the Proposed amendments to the NAO.

Outline of the Plan

As the NAO is to be amended, and the existing plan has, in 2022, already been subject to SEA, this SEA needs only to deal with the specific amendments proposes. These proposed Amendments are set out in the following table.

Table 1 – Proposed Amendments to the NAO

Element	Summary
Part 1: Policy Objective	To limit and reduce the long-term adverse effects of aircraft noise on health and quality of life, particularly at night,
Part 2: Explaining the Objective	The harmful effects of noise from Dublin Airport should be limited and reduced in line with principles of sustainable development, by providing measures which mitigate impacts

Element	Summary
Part 3: Measurable Criteria	The NAO will primarily be measured through the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed.
Part 4: Expected Outcomes	In support of the sustainable development of Dublin Airport, the Proposed amendments to the NAO aim to reduce the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed so that compared to 2023 conditions, the number of people in these categories will reduce by: 20% by 2031; 25% by 2036; and 30% by 2041. The number of dwellings, schools and hospitals exposed to aircraft noise above defined levels will also be tracked.
Part 5: Monitoring	Progress towards the expected outcomes of the NAO will be monitored through annual reporting and noise mapping.

The Amendments were developed in the context of a number of other national and local plans, and/ or objectives for environmental protection. Whilst supporting sustainable growth at Dublin Airport, the plans include environmental protection objectives such as reducing the number of people exposed to noise; reaching 'net zero carbon' by 2050; the need for technological improvements in aircraft and engine design to help combat aviation emissions and improve energy efficiency; and protecting natural landscape features and the climate from impacts associated with airport expansion.

How the Assessment was Undertaken

The impacts of the Proposed amendments to the NAO must be described relative to an identified baseline scenario, which describes how environmental conditions would develop in the absence of the Proposed amendments to the NAO, but in the presence of the existing NAO which would still be in place. For the purposes of this Draft Environmental Report, the 'future baseline' assumes that daa will seek to grow the airport in line with the existing planning policy and that the existing NAO remains in place.

Consideration of reasonable and realistic alternatives, in this case this being alternative amendments, is a key feature of the SEA process and must be considered if there is the potential for alternatives to have differing environmental effects.

Current Statement of the Environment Including Characteristics, Problems and Evolution

The relevant environmental baseline for each of the scoped-in environmental aspects is set out in the table below. Note that the area potentially affected by the Proposed amendments to the NAO relates only to noise-based receptors within the vicinity of Dublin Airport.

Table 2 - Summary of relevant environmental baseline

Aspect	Key policy context / environmental protection objectives	Current state of the environment including characteristics and problems	Likely evolution of the environment without implementation of the Proposed amendments to the NAO
Population and Health	The Healthy Ireland Framework and the NPF note that health and wellbeing (including heart and respiratory diseases, mental health, obesity and other injuries) are affected by spatial planning relating to the physical environment in which people live and work. Nationally, objectives seek a better quality of life for all citizens. At a local level, the Fingal Economic and Community Plan and the FDP aim to promote an inclusive and healthy community, and promote appropriate land use patterns in the vicinity of Dublin Airport, ensuring that proposals do not have a detrimental effect on adjacent residents, whilst allowing for sustainable growth. The Dublin Airport LAP seeks continued communication between the Airport and neighbouring communities to protect amenity and mitigate potential impacts of growth in the interests of long-term sustainability.	The growing population puts increased pressure on infrastructure and the natural environment. Air pollution from transport remains a key pollutant, however recent reporting from 2024 indicates no exceedances of NO_x. Noise can have a significant and disruptive effect on everyday life and it has been identified by the WHO as the second greatest environmental cause of health problems, after air quality. Environmental noise has been linked with negative health outcomes including cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment, sleep disturbance, annoyance and psycho-physiological effects. Noise in the vicinity of Dublin Airport is affecting a large number of people, partly due to an increase in noise, and partly due to residential development delivered in the area surrounding Dublin Airport.	The EPA states that systemic change is needed to reach Ireland's climate goals, with a model shift towards more active travel. Although aircraft have become quieter due to increasingly stringent regulations, noise and other health impacts on the local population could continue to increase as the airport grows and further development occurs around the airport

Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

The Proposed amendments to the NAO commit to the principle of limiting and reducing the adverse and harmful effects of aircraft noise over time. The Amendments result in more stringent noise outcomes which result in a lower overall number of population being highly annoyed and highly sleep disturbed when compared with the current NAO.

By its very nature, implementation of the Proposed amendments to the NAO is to ensure that any growth or other changes as a result of the Infrastructure Application at Dublin Airport is done in a way which manages noise effects. Ultimately, this will mean that there will be a drive toward having both a more efficient aircraft fleet with quieter planes and more efficient operations at Dublin Airport that focus on reducing noise effects. This has the knock-on benefit of improving the air quality situation at Dublin Airport, which also has positive outcomes for Human Health and the Population.

It is therefore highly unlikely that the Amendments would result in adverse effects, with the Amendments aimed at only helping to better the noise situation at Dublin Airport.

Furthermore, as no likely significant effects were identified, no alternative Amendments were needed to be developed.

Measures to Prevent, Reduce, Offset and Monitor Significant Environmental Effects

Overall, the assessment of the NAO revealed that there would be no significant adverse environmental effects. There is therefore no need to put in place any measures to prevent, reduce and / or offset for significant adverse effects with regard the Amendments. By its very nature, the implementation of the Proposed amendments to the NAO is to ensure that any growth or other changes at Dublin Airport that have the potential to affect the noise environment (specifically by causing a noise problem) do so in a managed way and in line with specific limits that have been set.

Next Steps

The Draft Environmental Report was made available for public consultation alongside the proposed amendments to the NAO, NAO Review Report, the Draft Regulatory Decision (DRD), and the DRD Report for a period of 14 weeks., Additionally it was issued to each Environmental Authority for comment. The AA Screening Report was also available for public inspection.

This Final Environmental Report was produced having regard to submissions made during the public consultation (including those from the Environmental Authorities). As part of amending the NAO, a SEA Statement is produced, setting out information on the decision, including how environmental considerations and consultation responses have been integrated into the Amended NAO.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to Aircraft Noise Management at Dublin Airport

Aircraft Noise Regulation

1.1.1 Regulation (EU) 598/2014 (hereinafter referred to as 'Regulation 598') requires Ireland and other EU Member States to appoint a Competent Authority to regulate the noise situation at certain airports. Regulation 598 applies to airports with more than 50,000 civil aircraft movements per calendar year. Dublin Airport is the only airport in Ireland meeting this threshold. Fingal County Council (FCC) have been designated as the Competent Authority for the purposes of aircraft noise regulation at Dublin Airport. FCC have, to fulfil their function with regard noise management, created an independent division, the Aircraft Noise Competent Authority (ANCA), which discharges FCC's functions under Regulation 598 and the Aircraft Noise (Dublin Airport) Regulation Act 2019 (hereinafter referred to as the '2019 Act').

1.1.2 Under Regulation 598, ANCA must ensure that the noise situation at Dublin Airport is assessed in accordance with the Environmental Noise Directive (Directive 2002/49/EC) and by the adoption of the Balanced Approach. Regulation 598 requires ANCA to apply the Balanced Approach at those airports where a noise problem has been identified. The Balanced Approach is a policy of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which has provided detailed guidance in ICAO Doc 9829, Guidance on the Balanced Approach to Aircraft Noise Management. Under Regulation 598, the Balanced Approach is applied where a noise problem at an airport has been identified. According to the ICAO guidance, it involves analysing various measures available to reduce noise which can be classified into four principal elements as follows:

- Noise at Source;
- Land-use Planning Management;
- Noise Abatement Operational Procedures; and
- Operating Restrictions.

1.1.3 In addition to those elements specified in ICAO, Regulation 598 also requires ANCA, in the context of the Balanced Approach, to define a Noise Abatement Objective (NAO) for Dublin Airport, identify the measures available to reduce the noise impact, and evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the noise mitigation measures. Annex II of Regulation 598 also sets out guidance on assessing the cost-effectiveness of operating restrictions. At the end of this process, ANCA must specify the noise mitigation measures and ensure they are implemented.

1.1.4 The 2019 Act gives further effect to Regulation 598 in Ireland. It provides for ANCA to apply the Balanced Approach and discharge its functions under Regulation 598 on its own initiative or in response to any planning application by Dublin Airport Authority (daa) relating to (1) any proposed development that (I) contains a proposal requiring the assessment for the need for a noise-related action, or (II) indicates that a new operating restriction may be required (Section 34B) or (2) the taking of a 'relevant action' (Section 34C), whereby the 'relevant action' consists exclusively of the revocation, amendment or replacement of an operating restriction, with or without the introduction of new noise mitigation measures. ANCA discharges its functions under Regulation 598 and the 2019 Act by, among other things, making a 'regulatory decision' (hereinafter referred to as 'the RD').

1.1.5 In 2022, following consultation, ANCA defined an NAO for Dublin Airport (the 2022 NAO). The 2022 NAO was defined in response to a potential noise problem resulting from Planning Application

F20A/0668, which sought to amend Conditions 3(d) and 5 of the North Runway Planning Permission (F04A/1755).

The Infrastructure Application

1.1.6 At the time of writing, Dublin Airport has submitted an application (the 'Infrastructure Application') to FCC, seeking permission for a suite of significant infrastructure upgrades designed to facilitate future passenger growth and enhance connectivity. The overall aim of the Infrastructure Application is to support the projected growth of passenger numbers through Dublin Airport from 32 million passengers per annum (mppa) to 40 mppa.

1.1.7 There are eleven projects associated with the Infrastructure Application, which are outlined below:

1) North Apron Expansion – expansion of the northern apron and Pier 1 area to accommodate more aircraft stands and operation.

2) South Apron Expansion - New pier and apron space near Terminal 2 to support long-haul aircraft, enhance U.S. CBP pre-clearance capacity, and improve aircraft parking and taxiways.

3) Terminal 1 Central Search Expansion – relocating and enlarging the security screening area in Terminal 1 to increase capacity and free up space for improved check-in and passenger services.

4) New Apron 7 - Creation of new aircraft stands on the western side of the airport campus to support aircraft parking and operational flexibility.

5) Vehicle Underpass - Construction of an underpass beneath the runway to safely connect the remote West Apron with the main campus — crucial for operational access.

6) Surface Water Management - Major investment in drainage and surface water infrastructure to enhance environmental protection and airfield resilience.

7) Ground Transportation Centre - provide additional bus bays (29no. in total) in a new Drive-In, Reverse-Out (DIRO) arrangement. A dedicated bus only lane; bus only recirculation route; pedestrian waiting area and revisions to pedestrian circulation routes.

8) Terminal 2 Car Park Upgrades - Expansion and enhancement of Terminal 2 multi-storey car park capacity to meet rising demand.

9) Long-term Carpark Red (temporary) - Additional long-term parking spaces east of the airport (temporary until Metro link opens).

10) Staff Carpark North - New staff parking provision in the north of the airport to replace spaces lost to development.

11) Surface Access Infrastructure - Improvements to public transport access, bus facilities, and safer movement routes around the airport, supporting better connectivity and a shift from private car use.

1.1.8 The Infrastructure Application is currently under review by FCC, with the public consultation stages having been complete. FCC as the Planning Authority are currently awaiting direction from ANCA regarding noise impacts.

Decisions made under Section 34B indicate that the proposed development—

(I) contains a proposal requiring the assessment for the need for a noise-related action, or

(II) indicates that a new operating restriction may be required.

1.1.9 Related to the Infrastructure Application, a noise problem was identified on 22nd January 2026. This triggered the process of aircraft noise regulation through the adoption of the International Civil Aviation (ICAO) Balanced Approach, as implemented by Regulation 598/2014 and the 2019 Act. As part of that process, ANCA is required to define, restate or amend the NAO where a noise problem is identified before considering mitigation measures under section 9 of the 2019 Act.

1.1.10 Action 3 of the Noise Action Plan for Dublin Airport 2024-2028 also requires Fingal County Council to review the existing NAO, taking account of the current noise environment and relevant policy context.

1.2 Need for Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.2.1 Directive 2001/42/EC (hereinafter referred to as the 'SEA Directive') requires Member States to ensure that certain plans and programmes are subject to a requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment ('SEA'). Statutory Instrument (S.I.) No. 435/2004 – European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations (2004) (hereinafter referred to as the 'SEA Regulations') transpose this Directive into Irish legislation.

1.2.2 In terms of the requirement to carry out environmental assessment, the SEA Regulations state:

'9. (1) Subject to sub-article (2), an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all plans and programmes (a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications and tourism, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or (b) which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site.

(2) A plan or programme referred to in sub-article (1) which determines the use of a small area at local level or a minor modification to a plan or programme referred to in sub-article (1) shall require an environmental assessment only where the competent authority determines that it is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, for this purpose, the competent authority shall make any necessary determination.

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

1.2.3 A 'development consent' in Irish law includes a planning permission for projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive.

1.2.4 It was determined that the 2022 NAO was considered to be a plan or programme as far as the SEA Regulations are concerned, SEA was deemed to be required. An SEA screening exercise was undertaken whereby it was determined that the Plan or Programme might result in their being Likely Significant Environmental Effects and as such full SEA was undertaken, and an Environmental Report was produced (the '2022 SEA ER').

1.2.5 The specific purpose of SEA is to ensure that early consideration is given to environmental aspects when a plan or programme is in development. However, a plan or programme that determines the use of a small area at local level or a minor modification to a plan or programme only requires SEA if implementation of the plan or programme is considered likely to lead to significant environmental effects. Determining whether significant effects are considered to be likely, and therefore whether

SEA applies, is completed through a process known as Screening. The subject of this Report therefore falls under 'minor modification', since amendments are being proposed to an existing NAO.

1.2.6 ANCA, in its role as Competent Authority, was required to make a Screening Determination on whether SEA applies. On **12th January 2026**, having regard to the information provided in the SEA Screening Report, and submissions and observations provided by the prescribed Environmental Authorities, ANCA determined that there is the potential for likely significant environmental effects to occur as a result of implementing the proposed amendments to the NAO and as such SEA is required. In particular, this was due to the nature of the amendments of the NAO being broadly unspecified at that stage and therefore understanding their potential for likely significant effects was unknown.

1.2.7 With ANCA having determined that the Proposed amendments to the NAO requires SEA, an SEA Scoping Report was subsequently produced to set out the proposed scope of the detailed environmental assessment and to facilitate consultation with the prescribed Environmental Authorities in that regard, with the consultation period for input to Scoping closing on 27th February 2026. The outcomes of the Scoping stage are summarised in Chapter 3, Section 3.3 of the Report.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

1.3.1 This Final Environmental Report is an updated version of the Draft Environmental Report that was made available for consultation from **28th May 2026** until **3rd September 2026**. It has regard to the submissions made during this consultation including those received from the prescribed Environmental Authorities.

1.3.2 Pursuant to the SEA Regulations (Annex I), the SEA Process Checklist (EPA, 2008) / SEA Pack (Updated 2023), and submissions made by the Environmental Authorities at the Scoping stage, this Final Environmental Report includes the following information:

a) an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans or programmes – Chapter 2;

b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme – Chapter 4;

c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected – Chapter 4;

d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to the Birds Directive or the Habitats Directive – Chapter 4;

e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, European Union or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation – Chapter 2;

f) the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors – Chapter 5;

g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme – Chapter 6;

h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information – Chapter 3;

i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring of the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme – Chapter 6;

j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings – beginning of this Report.

1.3.3 Consultation, through the provision of the Draft Environmental Report, has been undertaken with the Environmental Authorities (listed below) and with the public:

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Environment; and
- The Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment.

1.4 Related Environmental Assessments

1.4.1 Statutory Instrument (S.I.) No. 477/2011 - European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (2011), which transposes the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) into Irish law, requires that 'Appropriate Assessment' (AA) be carried out where a plan is likely to have a significant impact on a European site. European sites are commonly referred to as Natura 2000 sites and include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Each of these sites is designated because of their specific biodiversity value: for SPAs this is because of their value for wild birds; for SACs, it is because of the important habitats and species that they support. AA is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. As with SEA, in determining this, a Screening exercise is undertaken to establish whether the potential for such exists.

1.4.2 AA Screening was therefore undertaken broadly concurrently, but separately, to SEA Scoping. The AA Screening Report (Logika Consultants, 2026) was submitted to ANCA, in its role as Competent Authority, at the same time as the-Draft Environmental Report, and outlined that no likely significant effects to European sites will occur as a result of implementing the Proposed amendments to the NAO.

1.5 Consultant Team

1.5.1 This Report has been prepared by Logika Consultants Ltd. ('Logika'), part of the Logika Group. Logika are the Consultant Team engaged to provide expert support to ANCA in the drafting of the Amended NAO. Specifically, Logika are responsible for providing SEA input to the NAO process.

2 Outline of the Plan and Relationship with Other Plans and Objectives

2.1 Dublin Airport

2.1.1 Dublin Airport is the Hub Airport of Ireland with routes to over 200 different destinations, served by nearly 50 airlines. In 2025 a total of 36.4 million passengers used Dublin Airport and its 245,554 Air Traffic Movements (ATMs). Dublin Airport is currently served by two main runways and a further cross runway which is used less frequently. Since the submission of the 2022 SEA ER, the second runway (the North Runway) has commenced operations.

2.1.2 It has two terminals, operates 24 hours a day, and for 364 days a year. As with all major airports, it relies on considerable additional infrastructure including an extensive bus network and car parking facilities.

2.2 Site Location

2.2.1 Dublin Airport is located on the east coast of Ireland, see **Figure 2.1**, in Collinstown, in County Dublin in the administrative area of Fingal County Council. It lies approximately 7km north of Dublin City Centre, and between the City and Dublin Airport lies mostly development. The area north of Dublin Airport is also mainly developed all the way to the conurbation of Swords which lies approximately 3km to the north. In an easterly direction from Dublin Airport is found a mixture of farmland and other open space, with scattered development all the way to the coast and the settlement of Portmarnock which lies approximately 5km from Dublin Airport itself. West of Dublin Airport is characterised by being mainly undeveloped and comprising mostly farmland and other forms of open space.

2.2.2 Dublin Airport is accessed by the M1 motorway, which provides access from Dublin itself and from areas to the north as far as Belfast in Northern Ireland. The M50 Dublin ring road connects with the M1, and from this there are road connections to the rest of Ireland.

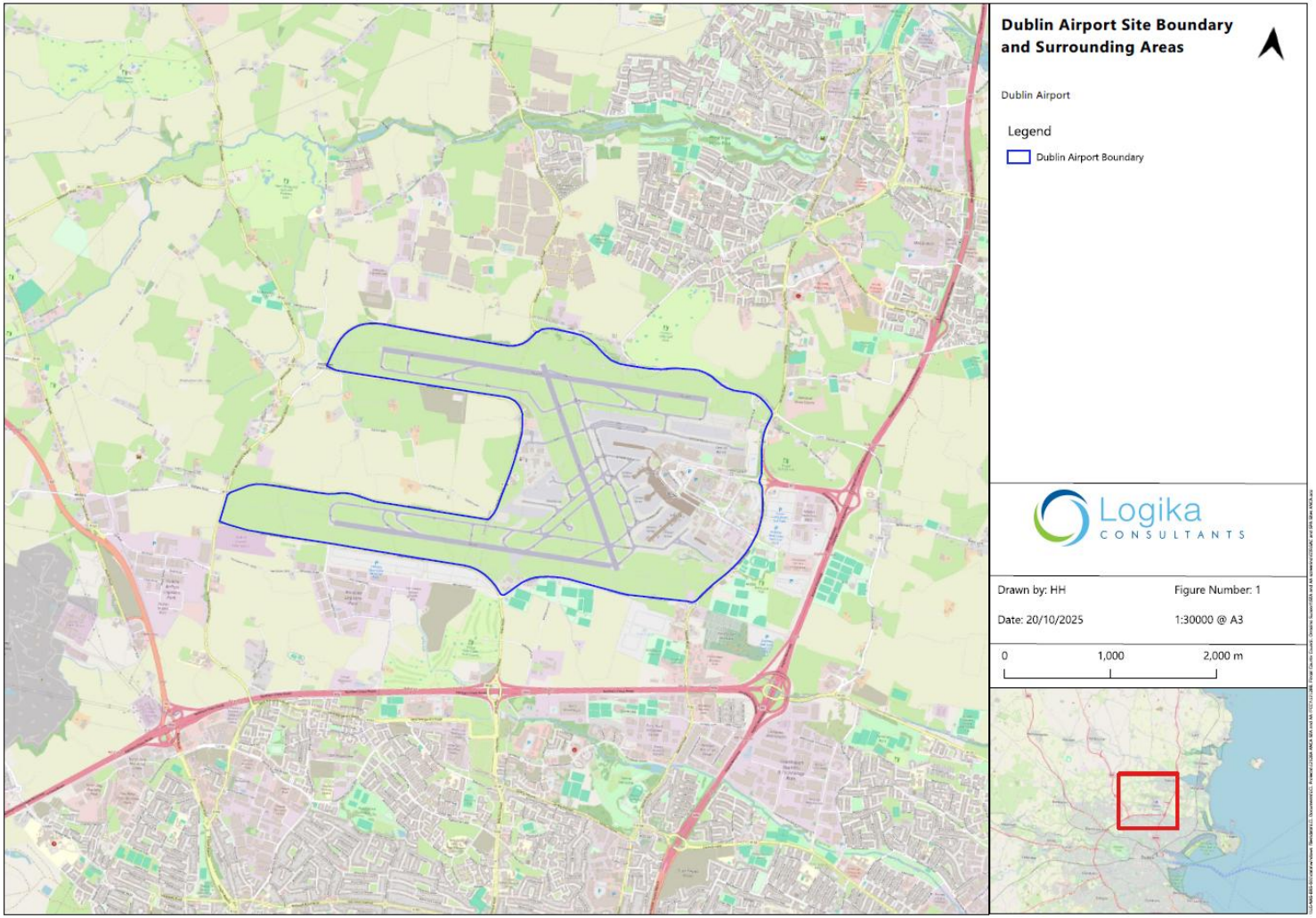


Figure 2-1: Dublin Airport Site Location

2.3 Contents and Main Objectives of the Plan

Overview

2.3.1 As stated in the previous chapter, following assessment of planning application F23A/0781 (the Infrastructure Application) and the information provided by the Applicant as part of that application, a noise problem was identified at Dublin Airport. Under the Aircraft Noise (Dublin Airport) Regulation Act 2019 ('the 2019 Act'), ANCA must apply the Balanced Approach and ensure that the '*noise abatement objective is, as appropriate, defined, restated or amended, taking into account, as appropriate, Article 8 of, and Annex V to, the Environmental Noise Directive*' where a noise problem has been identified. This requires ANCA to have regard for the Noise Action Plan (NAP) to ensure that that noise situation at Dublin Airport has been assessed in accordance with the (Environmental Noise) Regulations (2018) (ENR) and Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC (END). The 'Plan' addressed through this SEA Draft Environmental Report therefore comprises the Proposed amendments to the NAO (focussing on noise outcomes). The subsequent RD which will focus on the noise mitigation measures is subject to a separate SEA process.

Noise Abatement Objective

2.3.2 As set out in the NAO Report (2022), the purpose of an NAO is to set the level of ambition for a noise management regime that secures both environmental improvement and a sustainable transport network. An NAO should also aim to address multiple stakeholder interests, ideally around a common purpose. Different interest groups are however likely to have their own principal expectations for the NAO. These are that it should:

- Provide opportunities for sustainable growth whilst protecting the health of those affected;
- Provide a level of certainty by setting realistic outcomes and expectations of change;
- Ensure the desired outcomes are measurable, and the metrics used are evidence based and credible with stakeholders;
- Recognise the balance between the needs of different stakeholder groups;
- Use clear accessible language.

2.3.3 To meet these expectations, ANCA sought to develop a NAO in manner where which:

- Aligns with wider regional and national noise, sustainability and economic policies;
- Provides flexibility in how the desired outcomes are to be achieved and does not seek to prescribe the approach;
- Is consistent with the requirements of the in Regulation 598/2014 and the 2019 Act;
- Includes measurable and achievable outcomes, having regard for human and environmental health, against which progress can be assessed, and provides expectations and opportunities for all stakeholders. The NAO therefore needs to be 'data-driven' and informed not just by the noise situation today but how the noise climate may evolve into the future;
- incentivises the development and uptake of new technology at Dublin Airport;
- Allows for consistency in undertaking the requirements of the Regulation 598/2014 and
- Noise Action Planning processes, particularly where there are multiple authorities involved;

- Allows for measurable criteria to be used to assess progress.

2.3.4 It is necessary for Dublin Airport to demonstrate compliance with NAO. The noise situation at Dublin Airport must also be subject to review against the NAO, which is the subject of this Report.

2.3.5 The Amendments made to the NAO are described below.

The Amendments to the Noise Abatement Objective

2.3.6 As set out in the NAO Review Report (Noise Consultants, 2026), an NAO is a policy objective for managing the effects of aircraft noise emissions on the surrounding communities and environment at an airport. It is a plan to ensure that any growth at the airport occurs in the most sustainable manner possible, with respect to aircraft noise. An NAO may be used to guide the decisions that are needed to manage the aircraft noise aspects of future aircraft operations at and around an airport.

2.3.7 The review undertaken to review the NAO against the noise situation at Dublin Airport recommended amendments to the existing NAO. In line with the structure of the existing NAO, the key components of the Proposed amendments to the NAO are described in **Table 2-1** below.

Table 2-1: Key components of the Proposed amendments to the NAO

Element	Proposed Amendments	2022 NAO	Explanation and/ or reasoning for changes
Part 1: Policy Objective	"Limit and reduce the long-term adverse effects of aircraft noise on health and quality of life, particularly at night, through measures that mitigate impacts and provide certainty to the communities and the airport operator as part of the sustainable development of Dublin Airport."	"Limit and reduce the long-term adverse effects of aircraft noise on health and quality of life, particularly at night, as part of the sustainable development of Dublin Airport."	The changes provide assurance as to how aircraft noise impacts are managed and how they will be limited and mitigated in line with Dublin Airport's development and growth.
Part 2: Explaining the Objective	The harmful effects of noise from Dublin Airport should be limited and reduced in line with principles of sustainable development. As Dublin Airport grows, the long-term adverse effects on human health and quality of life should be limited and progressively reduced. This should be achieved by providing measures which mitigate impacts, whilst providing assurance to communities as to how aircraft noise impacts are managed, and how they will be limited and mitigated in line with the Airport's development and growth. This is to be achieved by providing clear rules and expectations on measures that will limit, reduce and mitigate impacts. This means limiting changes in the noise situation only to those which are outweighed by the wider economic and consumer benefits of aviation, and prioritising measures which can reduce adverse effects. The Balanced Approach will be used to ensure that the measures adopted to achieve this objective	"Noise from Dublin Airport should be limited and reduced in line with principles of sustainable development. As Dublin Airport grows, the long-term adverse effects on human health and quality of life should progressively reduce over the lifetime of this NAO. The Balanced Approach will be used to ensure that cost-effective, practicable and sustainable measures are implemented to achieve this objective."	The NAO should provide the basis for the development of noise-related measures and mitigation that do not only limit and reduce noise impacts but provide assurance to communities and the airport operator with respect to the amount of aircraft noise experienced, and the mitigation that will be provided in line with how the airport is forecast to grow. This also means limiting change in the noise situation to only what is considered sustainable and identifying appropriate mitigation measures and restrictions in that context.

Element	Proposed Amendments	2022 NAO	Explanation and/ or reasoning for changes
	are cost-effective, practicable and sustainable.		
Part 3: Measurable Criteria	The NAO will primarily be measured through the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed measured in accordance with the approach recommended by the World Health Organisation's Environmental Noise Guidelines 2018 as endorsed by the European Commission through Directive 2020/367 and transposed as the Second Schedule of the European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018 (ENR) (as amended). This measure will take into account noise exposure from 45 dB Lden and 40 dB Lnight. These metrics describe those chronically disturbed by aircraft noise and help articulate the effect of aircraft noise on health and quality of life. The following will also be used to help identify where noise exposure results in the populations experiencing harmful effects. In these areas, noise management interventions are more likely to be detectable. These are: • The number of residential dwellings, schools and hospitals exposed to aircraft noise above: • 65 dB Lden (representing an area where a large proportion of those living around Dublin Airport can be considered highly annoyed); and	"The NAO will be primarily measured through the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed in accordance with the approach recommended by the World Health Organisation's Environmental Noise Guidelines 2018 as endorsed by the European Commission through Directive 2020/367, taking into account noise exposure from 45 dB Lden and 40 dB Lnight. These metrics describe those chronically disturbed by aircraft noise. These metrics help articulate the effect of aircraft noise on health and quality of life. The following will also be used to help identify where noise exposure results in the populations experiencing the harmful effects. These are the number of people exposed to aircraft noise above: • 55 dB Lnight (a level of night-time noise exposure described by the WHO as representing a clear risk to health) • 65 dB Lden (where a large proportion of those living around Dublin Airport can be considered highly annoyed) In order to measure performance, these metrics shall be completed using a noise	The use of the Lden and Lnight metrics and the calculation of the population HA and HSD remains appropriate for the setting of measurable criteria and expected outcomes as part of the NAO and provides for regulatory alignment between the 2019 Act and the ENR. • Consideration of noise exposure above 45 dB L_{den} and 40 dB L_{night} remain appropriate thresholds for the calculation of harmful effects with each representing 10% of the population highly annoyed and highly sleep disturbed respectively. 55 dB L_{night} and 65 dB L_{den} as metrics remains relevant in the context of wider aircraft noise and land use management policies that apply to Dublin Airport. ANCA considers the monitoring of dwellings, schools and hospitals exposed to levels of aircraft noise at and above these levels important in this regard which can be captured through the ENR and Section 21 of the 2019 Act. • 55 dB L_{den} and 50 dB L_{night} metrics are additionally included as part of the NAO to reflect population exposure within these metrics as highlighted by the NAP

Element	Proposed Amendments	2022 NAO	Explanation and/ or reasoning for changes
	• 55 dB Lnight (a level of night-time noise exposure considered increasingly dangerous for public health by the WHO); and • The areas exposed to 55 dB Lden and 50 dB Lnight representing the locations most affected by aircraft noise and where adverse health outcomes are more likely to present.	model prepared in accordance with the methodology described in Directive 2015/996 (European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) Doc.29 4th Edition or as amended). The noise model shall be validated using local noise and track keeping performance data from Dublin Airport's systems. The calculation of the number of people exposed to aircraft noise shall have regard for the most recent population data available and assessed against the population exposed to aircraft noise in 2019".	to identify priorities with respect to noise management and mitigation measures. • Aircraft noise exposure will be measured based on long-term average conditions rather than based on a given year (as per the 2022 NAO which referred to a 10-year modal split), as required under ENR. • ANCA concluded that for the calculation of population highly annoyed and population highly sleep disturbed, the NAO should consider population growth. • In regard to modelling, ANCA has decided to stipulate the standard of modelling and associated evidence that must be provided to ANCA when evaluating the Airport's performance against the NAO and its wider functions.
Part 4: Expected Outcomes	In support of the sustainable development of Dublin Airport, the following outcomes are to be achieved in each relevant year under ENR in line with the methodology described in the NAO Guidance Note. The number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed shall reduce so that:	"In context of its recovery from the global pandemic, noise exposure from Dublin Airport is expected to increase up to 2025. Whilst the resultant health effects are expected to be lower than those which occurred prior to the pandemic and in the years 2018 and 2019, these effects should then reduce over the medium to long-term, to improve the noise situation at Dublin	The reference year has been changed to 2023 to reflect the noise situation as reported in the most recent Noise Action Plan. Additionally, the years within which the outcomes are to be delivered have been offset to align with the relevant years under ENR. Separate reduction rates have also been proposed for population HSD and HA, to

Element	Proposed Amendments	2022 NAO	Explanation and/ or reasoning for changes
	• The number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed in 2031 shall reduce by 20% compared to 2023; • The number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed in 2036 shall reduce by 25% compared to 2023; and • The number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed in 2041 shall reduce by 30% compared to 2023. The number of dwellings, schools and hospitals exposed to aircraft noise above 65 dB Lden and/or 55 dB Lnight will be tracked, with the expectation that measures will be used to mitigate and/or limit the number of dwellings, schools and hospitals exposed in each relevant year under ENR. The size of the 55 dB Lden and 50 dB Lnight contours will be tracked with the expectation that these will reduce compared to 2023 in each relevant year under ENR. Noise mitigation measures may also be considered with reference to these contours.	Airport whilst allowing for sustainable growth. ANCA therefore expects the following outcomes to be achieved through this NAO as set against the measures described in Part 3. The number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed shall reduce so that compared to conditions in 2019: • The number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed in 2030 shall reduce by 30% compared to 2019; • The number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed in 2035 shall reduce by 40% compared to 2019; • The number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed in 2040 shall reduce by 50% compared to 2019 and; • The number of people exposed to aircraft noise above 55 dB L_{night} and 65 dB L_{den} shall be reduced compared to 2019."	allow for a higher rate of reduction in population HSD to better reflect the policy objective. Reductions in population HA and population HSD are also proposed, which provide more stringent outcomes. This is illustrated in Figure 2-2 below. To better align the NAO with both airport noise mitigation measures and land use management and development policy the measurable criteria to monitor and track the number of dwellings, schools and hospitals, exposed to aircraft noise above 65 dB Lden and 55 dB Lnight will be compared to 2023 and continued to be tracked.
Part 5: Monitoring	Progress towards the expected outcomes of the NAO will be monitored through annual reports as prepared by ANCA under Section 21 of the Act of 2019, and through the process of strategic noise mapping and noise action planning under ENR.	"Monitoring of the NAO will be informed by annual reports which will be reviewed by ANCA as part of its obligations under the Aircraft Noise (Dublin Airport) Regulation Act 2019."	To better review the performance against the NAO, ANCA will formally request that annual noise exposure data is provided by daa and that this data is used to indicate progress towards the expected outcomes of the NAO and to allow ANCA to report on the effectiveness of noise mitigation measures.

2.3.8 It is important to note that the Proposed amendments to the NAO will continue to set the noise outcomes that need to be achieved, and will not set the level of passengers or ATMs that could use or operate at Dublin Airport. Furthermore, it does not specifically change aircraft routes flown.



Figure 2-2: Comparison of the 2022 NAO outcomes to the proposed Amendments (the Revised NAO). HA = Highly Annoyed, HSD = Highly Sleep Disturbed

Relationship with other Plans and Environmental Protection Objectives

2.3.9 A review of relevant policy has been undertaken in relation to Dublin Airport to establish foreseeable developments, noise related matters, as well as any objectives for environmental protection which may impact future development. The following plans have been reviewed from which the key themes identified are discussed below.

- Zero Pollution Action Plan (European Commission, 2021)
- National Aviation Policy for Ireland (Department of Transport, 2015)
- Ireland's Action Plan for Aviation Emissions Reduction (Department of Transport, 2019, updated 2025)
- Review of Future Capacity Needs at Ireland's State airports (Department of Transport, 2018)
- National Policy Statement on Airport Charges Regulation (Department of Transport, 2019)
- National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040 – First Revision (Government of Ireland, 2025)
- National Development Plan 2018-2027 (Government of Ireland, 2018)
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031 (Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly, 2019)
- Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035 (National Transport Authority, 2016)
- South Fingal Transport Study (FCC, 2019)
- Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 (FCC, 2023)
- Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (Meath County Council, 2021)
- Dublin Airport Carbon Reduction Strategy (2022)
- Dublin Airport Local Area Plan 2020 -2025 (Extended to 2030 in March 2025) (FCC, 2020)
- Dublin Airport Central Masterplan (FCC, 2016)
- Dublin Airport Capital Investment Programme 2020+ (Dublin Airport, 2019)
- Noise Action Plan for Dublin Airport 2024-2028 (FCC, 2024)
- Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2024 (EPA, 2024)

Environmental Objectives

2.3.10 Whilst also supporting growth at Dublin Airport, the above-mentioned plans highlight the need for environmental performance. In the context of noise, the plans highlight:

- Need for effective land-use planning;
- Consideration of impacts on local residents;
- Need for technological and operational measures to reduce environmental impacts; and
- Anticipation of population exposure due to aviation growth.

2.3.11 In the case of the European Commission's Zero Pollution Action Plan (2021), this overarching EU policy sets clear targets with respect to reducing the number of people chronically disturbed by transport noise.

2.3.12 As part of this Action Plan, Target 2 states that:

"By 2030 the EU should reduce by 30% the share of people chronically disturbed by transport noise [from a 2017 baseline]."

2.3.13 However, the EPA State of the Environment Report (2024) highlights that these targets surrounding exposure to transport noise are a major challenge.

2.3.14 The other plans also have regard to other environmental considerations in relation to Dublin Airport, namely carbon and emissions. The plans state that:

- the Carbon Reduction Strategy states that the airport should become 'carbon neutral' by 2020 and 'net zero carbon' by 2050;
- The Action Plan for Aviation Emissions Reduction states that the need for technology improvements in aircraft and engine design to help combat aviation emissions and improve energy efficiency;
- The Dublin Airport Local Area Plan puts a focus on protection of natural landscape features, such as rivers, and the climate from impacts associated with airport expansion.

2.3.15 Furthermore, the State of the Environment Report identified five key priorities which are relevant for delivering Ireland's long-term sustainable development and environmental protection goals. These are as follows:

- Delivering a national policy position on the environment;
- Driving policy implementation;
- Transforming our systems;
- Scaling up investment in infrastructure; and
- Protecting the environment to protect our health.

How the Proposed amendments to the NAO relate to these plans and environmental objectives

2.3.16 The plans listed above outline the policies that promote growth and/ or changes in the operations at Dublin Airport, whilst environmental objectives are also set out in many of them. The amendments to the NAO ensure that whatever growth occurs is carried out in a sustainable manner, specifically in terms of guiding noise management and measures needed in order to reduce noise and associated health impacts. The Proposed amendments to the NAO must therefore be complementary to and in accordance with the existing plans, and not in any way additional, other than providing more detail on aircraft noise reduction than the other plans. **Figure 2-3** shows the links and key inter-relationships of the Proposed amendments to the NAO with other key relevant national, regional and sectoral and environmental plans.



Figure 2-3: Relationship between the Proposed amendments to the NAO and other Plans

3 Methodology for the Assessment and Assessment of Alternatives

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 This chapter provides more detail on the SEA process, including the scope of the SEA and how Scoping consultation responses have been taken into account; the alternative delivery options considered for the amendments to the NAO; and the methodology for undertaking the environmental assessment of the NAO Amendments, including the alternatives. The methodology includes the future baseline and assessment case (i.e. what is being assessed); the SEA objectives, indicators and targets (the assessment framework), and the significance criteria used.

3.1.2 As set out in Section 1.2, a Scoping Report was produced and submitted to the Environmental Authorities to confirm the scope of the SEA. On **23rd March 2026** ANCA adopted a CE Order confirming that the SEA Scoping Report takes account of the SEA Process Checklist (EPA, 2008) recommendations and they are satisfied with the scope of the SEA.

3.2 Consultation

Statutory Responses

3.2.1 The scope of the assessment and level of detail included in this Final Environmental Report also takes account of the results of consultation with the relevant prescribed bodies.

3.2.2 The Scoping Report included the following information:

- Details of the geographical area involved including a referenced and scaled map of the area;
- An outline description of the proposed amendments to the NAO including;
- The likely scale, nature and extent of the area affected by the proposed amendments to the NAO during the lifespan of the proposed amendments to the NAO (in broad terms);
- Details of the legislation and planning policy that applies;
- Alternatives that have been or will be considered, potentially including reference to the options also detailed;
- The predicted 'scoped in' significant effects of the proposed amendments to the NAO and those that are proposed to be 'scoped out' with justification for why they are scoped out;
- An overview of the approach that will be taken to assemble further baseline data to support the SEA and the methodology that will be used to assess significance.

3.2.3 The EPA provided a consultation submission to the Scoping Report on **27th February 2026** (Appendix A1). In it they highlighted a series of considerations for the SEA Draft Environmental Report stage, outlined under the following headings:

- Governance and Implementation;
- Synergies with Key National Plans;
- Integration of the SEA and the Plan;

- Ireland's State of the Environmental Report 2024;
- Environmental Authorities;
- Scope of the SEA;
- Data & Knowledge Gaps;
- Range of Effects;
- Consultation;
- Transboundary Consultation;
- Monitoring, Implementation and Reporting;
- SEA Statement;
- Integration with other Key Plans and Programmes; and
- Available Guidance & Resources
  - EPA guidance notes;
  - Noise related guidance;
  - EPA SEA GIS Search and Reporting Webtool; and
  - EPA Appropriate Assessment GeoTool.

3.2.4 The key points from the EPA Scoping submission are summarised **Table 3-1**, below, along with a note on how this Final Environmental Report accounts for the responses.

Table 3-1: Key points from the EPA scoping consultation response

Point raised	How point is accounted for
The Plan should clearly set out the scope, remit and implementation related elements of the Plan, including measures that will be implemented directly or by other plans.	ANCA's remit and the scope of the proposed amendments to the NAO have been clearly explained in Section 3.2. The measures that will be directly implemented, as imposed by the RD are subject to a separate SEA process.
Interrelationships between various topics.	The interrelationships between various topics (aspects) are described in Section 6.3 of this Report.
The Plan should identify any significant data and knowledge gaps and include commitments to address these.	This is described in Section 3.7 of this Report.
The SEA Environmental Report should refer to a full range of effects as well as short, medium and long-term, cumulative and synergistic effects of the Plan.	The results of the assessment of likely significant effects are described in Section 6 of this Report.
Consultation should be undertaken with the prescribed environmental authorities.	Consultation with the prescribed authorities was undertaken at the Scoping Stage of the SEA. Further consultation with the same authorities occurred as

Point raised	How point is accounted for
	part of the consultation on the Draft Environmental Report. Responses from this consultation have been considered in this Final version of the Environmental Report and are also presented within the Consultation Report (ANCA, 2026).
Transboundary consultation should be undertaken with environmental authorities in Northern Ireland where the potential for likely significant transboundary effects have been identified.	There is no potential for transboundary effects as the effects relate to Dublin Airport and the surrounding areas only.
The Plan should include a commitment to implement the environmental monitoring programme and associated reporting.	Chapter 7 of the NAO Review Report deals with monitoring of noise measures and associated health effects.
The SEA Environmental Report should specify monitoring frequency and responsibilities and include provisions for reporting on the monitoring.	Environmental monitoring measures and procedures are described in Chapter 6 of this Report.
The Plan and SEA Environmental Report should include schematics to show the links and key inter-relationships with other key relevant national, regional, sectoral and environmental plans.	A schematic is provided in Figure 2-3. Links with other key relevant national, regional, sectoral and environmental plans are described in Chapter 2 of the NAO Review Report and Section 2.3 of this Report.
SEA guidance and resources are available via EPA's website.	Guidance has been referred to where appropriate in this Report, particularly Chapter 3, whilst resources and spatial data have been used for the SEA baseline in Chapter 4.

3.2.5 The EPA also provided a consultation submission to the SEA Draft Environmental Report on **3rd September 2026** (Appendix A2). In it they highlighted two environmental issues for ANCA's consideration within the SEA and Final Environmental Report. These matters are summarised in the table below, along with how this Final Environmental Report accounts for the responses.

Table 3-2: Key points from the EPA Draft Environmental Report consultation response

Point raised	How point is accounted for
Assessment of Environmental Effects & SEA Monitoring The EPA notes the exclusion of noise from the scope of the assessment in Table 3-2 of the two associated SEA ERs1&2[1]. The SEA ERs should assess and document the full range of likely significant environmental effects of implementing the NAO and draft RD, including positive effects. Therefore, in the context of population and human health, noise should	Further clarity on the scope relating to Noise has been included within Table 3-3. Monitoring of the Plan is covered in Section 6 of this Report.

[1]SEA ERs1&2 refers respectively to the Environmental Reports prepared for the proposed amendments to the NAO and the RD.

be considered in the scope of the assessment. Additionally, the SEA monitoring programme should include details of proposed monitoring to measure both positive and negative effects and the related targets of the NAO and draft RD. If the monitoring identifies that the targets are not being achieved during the implementation of the Plan, ANCA should include a commitment in the NAO to identify and implement additional suitable and effective remedial action.	
Broader Considerations The EEA Environmental Noise in Europe 2025 report identified transport noise among the top three environmental health threats, just behind air pollution and temperature related factors. The EPA notes that there is a target under the Zero Pollution Action Plan (ZPAP) to reduce, by 30%, the share of people chronically disturbed by noise from transport against 2017 levels. The EPA recommends that the EEA report and ZPAP target should be referenced in the finalising of the NAO and RD.	The ZPAP targets are referenced in relation to the Plan's relationship to other Plans and Environmental Protection Objectives, at **paragraph 2.3.12 of this Report**. The proposed amendments to the NAO provide better alignment between ANCA's functions and the development and delivery of the Noise Action Plan for Dublin Airport. The EEA Environmental Noise in Europe report is referenced in paragraph 4.2.8 of this Report. It is not the concern of the SEA to report on how other Plans and Environmental objectives influence the finalising of the Amended NAO. This detail is covered in the documentation detailing the development of the Amended NAO.

Public Responses

3.2.6 Responses from the public and other non-statutory bodies have been taken into account by ANCA, and changes made to this Final Environmental Report, where such was considered to be necessary. However, direct responses to each submission and where they have been addressed are not provided in this Report. The Consultation Report (ANCA, 2026), Section 3.4 explains how submissions in relation to the SEA have been taken into account by ANCA during the preparation of the Amended NAO. Logika has been involved in the preparation of the responses to those submissions in the Consultation Report, agrees with them and adopts them for the purposes of this Final Environmental Report.

3.3 Scope of the SEA

3.3.1 The Dublin Airport LAP aims support the continued sustainable growth of Dublin Airport, however highlights the infrastructural constraints to this growth. The aforementioned Infrastructure Application has been developed to deal with a number of these constraints. While the proposed amendments to the NAO will provide for a noise management regime that will allow the airport to grow, it is neutral on whether that growth actually occurs. Therefore, the proposed amendments to the NAO does not constrain the planning authority or An Coimisiún Pleanála in any way in making whatever decision they consider appropriate on any application for further development necessary to deliver growth (i.e. the Infrastructure Application or any future applications). Consequently, any such development (e.g. relating to a new terminal or road/rail development) will have to be subject to EIA and AA (or screening for EIA and AA) and planning scrutiny on its own terms and its impacts will be fully assessed and considered at that stage.

3.3.2 Given the above, and that ANCA's remit is confined to aircraft noise (as noted in Chapters 1 and 2), this SEA Final Environmental Report deals only with the direct and indirect impacts relating to the management of aircraft noise.

3.3.3 Of the environmental factors listed in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, **Table 3-3** below notes which have been scoped out and which have been scoped in to undergo Environmental Assessment, with reasons provided. The scope, as detailed within the Scoping Report (Logika Consultants, 2026) remains unchanged based on the consultation responses.

Table 3-3: Scoping in/out of environmental factors

Environmental aspect (factor)	Scope	Reason for scoping in/ out
Air Quality	Out	Air Quality is unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport which would ultimately effect air pollution or generation of emissions.
Biodiversity (Flora and Fauna)	Out	Biodiversity is unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport and consequently result in changes to overflying of designated sites or other sensitive receptors.
Carbon and Climate Change	Out	Carbon and Climate Change is unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport and consequently result in changes to the amount of fuel burnt and therefore the level of carbon emissions.
Cultural Heritage and Archaeological Heritage	Out	Cultural Heritage and Archaeological Heritage is unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport and consequently result in changes to the amount of fuel burnt and therefore the setting of heritage assets or directly impact any heritage assets or archaeological resource.
Geology, Soils and Land Use	Out	Geology, Soils and Land Use is unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport and consequently result in impacts to Geology, Soils and Land Use.
Landscape and Visual (Landscape)	Out	The Landscape is unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration

Environmental aspect (factor)	Scope	Reason for scoping in/ out
		to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport and consequently result in changes to the landscape character or tranquillity.
Material Assets	Out	Material Assets are unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport and consequently result in impacts to Material Assets.
Noise and Vibration	Out	Noise and Vibration is unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport and consequently result in impacts to Noise and Vibration. The overarching aim of the proposed amendments to the NAO is to manage, reduce and mitigate the impacts of aircraft noise. The EPA, in their response to the consultation on the draft Environmental Report, raised the exclusion of noise from the assessment undertaken (EPA, 2026) on the basis that there could be significant positive effects. The Amended NAO is a policy objective for managing the effects of aircraft noise emissions, that makes targeted changes to the existing NAO, including measurable criteria and expected outcomes. Those constitute environmental targets rather than environmental effects. Those targets and the noise and human health effects that would arise from achieving them have been described comprehensively in the NAO Review Report, following best practice guidance. The Amended NAO does not specify how the overarching policy objective and expected outcomes should be met. The Amended NAO will be implemented through the application of the Balanced Approach in accordance with relevant law and guidance and in response to specific noise problems identified at the airport. The measures available under the Balanced Approach vary significantly and include Reduction of Noise at Source, Land Use Planning and Management, Noise Abatement Operational Procedures and as a last resort, Operating Restrictions. Any assessment of the effects of the Amended NAO on noise not already described in the measurable criteria and expected outcomes can only be speculative until a specific

Environmental aspect (factor)	Scope	Reason for scoping in/ out
		noise problem is identified and relevant measures selected. That may be in the context of the environmental impact assessment of a proposed development at the airport or the strategic environmental assessment of a plan (eg development plan or local area plan) at a different level in the hierarchy. In accordance with Article 5(2) of the SEA Directive, ANCA therefore considers that these impacts (including any positive impacts of the Amended NAO on noise and vibration) are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process to avoid duplication of the assessment. Therefore, insofar as there are positive noise and vibration impacts associated with the, ANCA considers it is appropriate that these remain scoped out of the SEA assessment.
Population	In	There is the potential for positive effects on the Population including reducing the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed.
Human Health	In	There is the potential for positive effects on Human Health including reducing the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed.
Water and Hydrology	Out	Water and Hydrology are unlikely to be affected by the changes to the number of people highly sleep disturbed and highly annoyed as a result of the amendments to the NAO. There will be no alteration to the operating procedures at Dublin Airport and consequently result in impacts to Water and Hydrology.
Interrelationships between the above factors	In	The interrelationship between the effects of the scoped in aspects will be considered later in this report.

3.4 Consideration of Alternatives

3.4.1 Consideration of reasonable alternatives, in particular to avoid the potential for, or reduce the level, likely significant effects, is a key feature of the SEA process as defined by the SEA Directive and the SEA Regulations. These have been considered by means of a three-step process, as set out in the Guidance on Alternatives in SEA (EPA, 2015):

1) Alternatives identification and development;

2) Alternatives assessment and comparison; and

3) Alternatives selection and documentation.

3.4.2 Realistic alternative mechanisms for delivering the objectives of the proposed amendments to the NAO are identified, and an assessment of the impacts of each of these options, or a combination of options, against the SEA objectives.

3.5 Future Baseline and Assessment case

3.5.1 The impacts of the proposed amendments to the NAO must be described relative to an identified baseline scenario, which describes how matters would develop in the absence of the proposed amendments to the NAO. For the purposes of this Final Environmental Report, the future baseline assumes that daa will seek to grow the airport in line with the existing policy and that the existing NAO remains in place. It is the assumption that the previously mentioned Infrastructure Application is consented and the proposals are carried forward. As set out in various adopted and Government-approved plans listed in Section 2.3, the national, regional and local policy direction for the future of Dublin Airport is to increase passenger numbers to approximately 40 mppa in 2030, and approximately 54 mppa from 2050, through further terminal development and infrastructure. As stated in Section 1.1 the Infrastructure Application concerns the development of infrastructure to support growth up to 40 mppa, meaning this level of growth is likely to occur. As such, this Final Environmental Report adopts a baseline that assumes that growth occurs in line with existing policy.

3.5.2 It is not just passenger numbers (and associated ATMs) that are relevant to compare between the future baseline and the assessment case. The modernisation and improvement of aircraft, e.g. in terms of updated engine technology is also relevant, as this will occur (with associated improvements in noise, air pollution and carbon emissions) even without the proposed amendments to the NAO in place. Such considerations are therefore accounted for within the future baseline to ensure a realistic assessment of the impact of the proposed amendments to the NAO.

3.6 The Assessment Framework

3.6.1 The EPA SEA guidance document (EPA, updated 2018) states that objectives, targets and indicators must be established in order to clearly assess environmental impacts of a proposed plan or programme (including selected alternatives). The guidance further states:

"Objectives and targets set aims and thresholds which should be taken into consideration to effectively assess the impact of proposed plans on the environment. Indicators are used to illustrate and communicate this environmental impact in a simple and effective manner."

3.6.2 The SEA objectives, targets and indicators have been developed for each scoped-in environmental aspect using the SEA baseline (including current problems and relevant environmental objectives as set out in existing policy) presented in Chapter 4. These are set out in **Table 3-4**, below.

Table 3-4: SEA Objectives, Targets and Indicators

Environmental Aspect	Objectives	Targets	Indicators
Population	Protect amenity of local residents from effects of traffic, parking, or loss of privacy	No significant adverse effect on amenity and population trends	Maintained (*or improved**) population amenity and population trends
Human Health	Protect human health	Compliance with air quality legislation. Compliance with WHO guidelines on noise.	Identified breaches of air quality limits (*or improved air quality**). Population level exposed (*whether fewer or more*) to aircraft noise with reference to WHO noise guidelines and associated health endpoints.
*given the nature of the Amendments to the NAO, improvements are anticipated which would align with the objectives for each environmental aspect. For this reason, the indicators have been reviewed.			

3.6.3 Based on the above objectives, targets and indicators, the methodology for assessing the likely impact of the proposed amendments to the NAO on each of the environmental aspect/ SEA objectives is given in **Table 3-5**. The assessment outcomes are presented in Chapter 5.

Table 3-5: Methodology for Assessment Impacts of the proposed amendments to the NAO

Environmental Aspect	Methodology
Population	Review of the likelihood of significant effects on population amenity and trends (whether adverse or positive)
Human Health	Review of the likelihood of air quality legislation and WHO air quality and noise guidelines being breached and therefore there being likely significant effects or alternatively positive effects

3.6.4 Where significant effects are predicted through the assessment, measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate the effects have been proposed; these are set out in Chapter 6, alongside recommendations made for measures that will need to be developed in more detail at later planning stages.

3.7 Assumptions and Difficulties Encountered in Compiling the Required Information

3.7.1 The SEA Regulations require that limitations, assumptions and uncertainties that have impacted on the assessment should be described. In addition, Guidance on Alternatives in SEA (EPA, 2015) suggest that any significant constraints to generating alternatives, and any data gaps and technical limitations/ deficiencies affecting the development and assessment of alternatives, be reported.

3.7.2 No assumptions or difficulties were encountered.

4 Current State of the Environment Including Characteristics, Problems and Evolution

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Schedule 2 of the 2004 Regulations specifies that an Environmental Report must contain the following information in respect of baseline conditions:

"*(b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.*

(c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.

(d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to the Birds Directive or the Habitats Directive."

4.1.2 For each of the scoped-in environmental aspects listed in Table 3-3, this chapter describes the relevant environmental baseline. As revealed in Chapters 1 and 2, ANCA's remit is focussed on aircraft noise and the purpose of the proposed amendments to the NAO is to set policy objectives surrounding noise management. The area potentially affected by the proposed amendments to the NAO therefore relates only to noise based receptors surrounding Dublin Airport. For each environmental aspect, a Zone of Influence (ZoI) has been identified which relates to the potential extent of impacts, and baseline data gathered relates to that ZoI.

4.1.3 Information for this chapter has been obtained from online sources, including but not limited to the Fingal Development Plan (2023) and the Ireland State of the Environment Report (2024). All references are provided in text and at the back of this document in full.

4.2 Population and Health

Key Policy Context

4.2.1 The Healthy Ireland Framework 2013 – 2025 (2019, updated 2026) sets out a vision to create "A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility". It notes that health and wellbeing are affected by all aspects of a person's life: economic status, education, housing, and the physical environment in which people live and work. The latter "includes not only the study of the direct pathological effects of various chemical, physical, and biological agents, but also the effects on health of the broad physical and social environment, which includes housing, urban development, land use and transportation, industry, and agriculture."

4.2.2 Also at a national level, Chapter 6 of the National Planning Framework (2025) deals with 'People, Homes and Communities', and notes how specific health risks, such as heart disease, respiratory disease, mental health, obesity and other injuries, can be influenced by spatial planning. Relevant objectives include NPO 36 which supports the delivery of the Healthy Ireland Framework and the National Physical Activity Plan, and NPO 38 which seeks "*a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.*"

4.2.3 At a local level, the FCC's Local Economic and Community Plan 2023 – 2028 (2024) has a vision that "Fingal will be a vibrant, sustainable, progressive and climate resilient county, underpinned by inclusive, healthy, empowered communities and a dynamic economy.", whilst the FDP (2024) seeks to "put healthy place-making at its heart" and embrace "inclusiveness and a high-quality of life for all". In relation to Dublin Airport, a safety Objective DAO18 seeks to "Promote appropriate land use patterns in the vicinity of the flight paths serving the Airport, having regard to the precautionary principle, based on existing and anticipated environmental and safety impacts of aircraft movements."

4.2.4 In addition, Objective CIOSO7 seeks to "Ensure that proposals do not have a detrimental effect on local amenity by way of traffic, parking, noise or loss of privacy of adjacent residents" and Objective DAO4 seeks to ensure "that the required infrastructure and facilities are provided at Dublin Airport so that the aviation sector can develop further and operate to its maximum sustainable potential, whilst taking into account the impact on local residential areas, and any negative impact such proposed developments may have on the sustainability of similar existing developments in the surrounding area, and the impact on the environment, including the climate."

4.2.5 The Dublin Airport LAP (2020) contains a number of strategic aims and objectives, many of which are relevant to population and health. For example, it aims to *"Support the growth of the Airport as a major economic driver for the region"* (including through Objective ED01). At the same time, it seeks to *"Support continued communication between the Airport and neighbouring communities to protect community amenity and mitigate potential impact from airport growth in the interests of long-term sustainability"* (e.g. through Objective CS01).

Current Baseline Conditions

4.2.6 The EPA (2024) report states that a growing population puts increased pressure on infrastructure and the natural environment. The report notes that protecting the environment is key to protecting population health, allowing people to engage with nature. It goes on to state that addressing environmental risks such as air pollution, noise and water pollution, restoring ecosystems and mitigating climate impacts can lead to a healthier population that can live longer.

4.2.7 Air pollution from transport is dominated by NO_X emissions. Of these, NO_2 is particularly impactful from a health perspective. The EPA Air Quality in Ireland Report 2024 (2024) notes that, as of 2024 there were no exceedances in the measured pollutants, with all levels complying with the EU limit values. It is however noted that PM and NO_2 are the most significant pollutants in Ireland, with both having detrimental effects to human health. Poor air quality in general is linked to incidence of chronic lung disease (chronic bronchitis or emphysema) and heart conditions and asthma levels of among children and young people.

4.2.8 Noise can have a significant and disruptive effect on everyday life and it has been identified by the WHO as the second greatest environmental cause of health problems (after air quality), with the EEA (2025) also reporting that transport noise is among the top 3 health threats, just behind air quality and temperature (climatic) related factors. Environmental noise (including aircraft noise) has been linked with negative health outcomes including cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment, sleep disturbance, annoyance and psycho-physiological effects (impacts on quality of life, wellbeing and mental health). In terms of night-time noise levels, the number of people exposed to undesirable night-time noise exposure levels above 55 dB(A) L_{night} from Dublin Airport was 305 in 2021 and 4,465 in 2023, showing a vast increase. The number of people exposed to night-time noise levels above 50 dB(A) L_{night} also substantially rose from 2021 to 2023 from 3,572 to 22,737, over 6 times the 2021 figure. Data from 2006 to 2023 shows a dip in 2021, which can be attributed to travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that population exposure in 2023 was higher than any other period. Noise in the vicinity of Dublin Airport is therefore affecting a larger number of people than in previous years, partly

due to an increase in noise, and partly due to residential development delivered in the area surrounding Dublin Airport.

4.2.9 Meanwhile, the Dublin Airport Economic Impact Study (2023) reports the substantial contribution that Dublin Airport makes to the national economy. The key findings are that direct employment supported by ongoing operations at Dublin Airport amounts to 19,900 jobs (from 2022 data) - adjusting for part-time and seasonal employment, this equates to 17,800 Full-Time Equivalent jobs (FTEs). The total direct Gross Value Added (GVA) generated by Dublin Airport is estimated to be over €1.8 billion. Adding in multiplier impacts (indirect and induced), the total employment supported by activities at Dublin Airport is estimated to be 44,900 jobs (equating to 39,900 FTEs), earning a total of €2.0 billion and generating €3.9 billion in GVA. The total economic impact of Dublin Airport therefore amounts to 116,100 jobs in Ireland, equivalent to 102,800 full-time jobs, earning a total of almost €4.9 billion, representing 2.3% of the national economy.

Likely Future Trends with the existing NAO and without the proposed amendments

4.2.10 The EPA (2024) states that to achieve Ireland's climate goals, systemic change is needed, and that such change requires deep integration of spatial, transport and transition planning to implement measures that deliver compact development and to expand the active and public transport infrastructure to achieve the modal shift towards more active travel.

4.2.11 Through increasing stringency on aircraft noise emissions as implemented by ICAO, aircraft have become quieter. However, as Dublin Airport grows and the surrounding area becomes more developed, it is possible that noise and other health impacts on the local population could continue to increase. At the same time, it is likely that the local area will see population growth and job creation.

5 How Public Consultation Submissions Have Been Taken into Account

5.1.1 The Draft Environmental Report was presented for public consultation over the period of 14 weeks from **28th May** to **3rd September 2026**, at the same time the DRD, and a report underlying the DRD, and the proposed amendments to the NAO, and a report underlying the NAO. Consultation on the Draft Environmental Report was also undertaken with the Environmental Authorities. The purpose of the consultation was to give the public and the Environmental Authorities an opportunity to provide submissions and observations on the draft NAO and draft RD, and the findings of the Draft Environmental Report, in accordance with the SEA Regulations. In line with the SEA Directive and Regulations, ANCA must "take account of" the Environmental Report and of any opinions which are expressed upon it as it prepares the NAO and RD for adoption. Therefore, comments received from the Environmental Authorities, members of the public and other stakeholders during the consultation process must be considered and addressed, including if appropriate, changes being made to the final NAO and RD. Responses from the EPA are detailed above in Section 3.2 with details on how they were accounted for in the SEA.

5.1.2 ANCA received a total of **1,129** submissions during the consultation period. Comments were received from an Environmental Authority (the EPA), various NGOs and a large number of private individuals and community groups, and business organisations. ANCA subsequently produced a Consultation Report which sets out the key themes that emerged through the consultation and how these were addressed in the adopted NAO. The majority of the responses received by ANCA related to the following:

- Expected outcomes;
- Measurable criteria;
- Monitoring and reporting;
- Metrics;
- NAO process, compliance and supporting evidence;
- Effectiveness of the amendments to the proposed NAO; and
- Health Impacts.

5.1.3 Some of the submissions received by ANCA specifically addressed the SEA or AA, whilst others contained elements relating to the environment more generally.

5.1.4 Since the completion of the public consultation exercise, ANCA has determined no changes were required to be made to the proposed amendments to the NAO as a result of points made of submissions. Nor were any material changes required to the contents of the Final Environmental Report as a result of the review of the consultation responses. Further explanation was provided to address the EPA's comment regarding the assessment of the positive impacts on noise, but this did not result in noise being scoped in and therefore did not change the conclusions of the Environmental Report. Logika has reviewed and agrees with the response to the issues in relation to SEA in the consultation report. The conclusions of the SEA therefore remain the same.

6 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 As stated in Section 3.5 of this Final Environmental Report, the future baseline for the SEA must take into account national, regional and local policy ambitions to increase passenger numbers. The assessment of the proposed amendments to the NAO in this section is therefore against the 'future baseline'.

6.1.2 The proposed amendments to the NAO will not dictate growth at Dublin Airport in either ATM or passenger terms, or specify a particular fleet mix that operates. Rather it mandates that operations occur within defined noise limits. It is up to Dublin Airport to identify a specific approach that allows growth to occur whilst meeting these defined noise limits. For this reason, the assessment undertaken is necessarily high level. It makes the assumption that adherence to the proposed amendments to the NAO will require Dublin Airport to operate a newer and therefore more efficient aircraft fleet and operate in a more efficient manner in order to ensure that the prescribed noise limits are met. Furthermore, the assumption is made that such efficiency to meet noise limits set will have the benefit on other environmental aspects as outlined in this Final Environmental Report.

6.2 Assessment of the Proposed Amendments to the NAO

6.2.1 The predicted impacts of the proposed amendments to the NAO (as described in Table 6-1) on each scoped-in environmental aspect is described in detail below in Table 6-1. This assessment is based on the assessment case compared to the future baseline.

Table 6-1: Assessment of the proposed amendments to the NAO on the scoped-in Environmental Aspects

Aspect	Assessment of Likely Significant Effects
Population Amenity	The proposed amendments to the NAO commit to the principle of limiting and reducing the adverse and harmful effects of aircraft noise over time. As detailed above, the Amendments result in more stringent outcomes which result in a lower overall number of population highly annoyed and highly sleep disturbed than the outcomes currently set against 2019. As per the Scoping exercise in Table 3-2 and considering that the targeted changes to the NAO, including to the measurable criteria and expected outcomes, do not, in their own right, specify actions that would result in reduced noise, the effects of the proposed amendments to the NAO are not considered to constitute a significant positive effect in SEA terms. . Respectively, the reductions in population highly annoyed and population highly sleep disturbed compared against the 2019 baseline are 31.8% and 38.4% for the 2023 baseline. These forecasts indicate that by 2027, the population highly annoyed and population highly sleep disturbed could be reduced by 50% compared to 2019 and as such Dublin Airport would be on track to comfortably meet the 30% reduction outcome set by the 2022 NAO for 2030. As indicated in the NAO Review Report, most of this occurred over the period 2019 to 2023 due to the opening of the North Runway, changes in associated flight paths and fleet modernisation. As described above, and by its very nature, implementation of the proposed amendments to the NAO is to ensure that any growth or other changes as a result of the Infrastructure Application at Dublin Airport that have the potential to affect the noise environment (specifically by causing
Human Health	

Aspect	Assessment of Likely Significant Effects
	a noise problem) do so in a managed way and in line with specific limits that have been set. Ultimately, as mentioned already, this will mean that there will likely be a drive toward having both a most efficient fleet and efficient operations at Dublin Airport. This will in turn better the air quality situation at Dublin Airport, which has positive outcomes for Human Health, as the fleet become more efficient in respect of emissions and fuel use. These effects are not likely to be significant in SEA terms despite providing mitigation proportionate to the noise problem arising from the proposed development. As stated previously, considering the above, whilst the likelihood of LSE cannot be ruled out, it is highly unlikely that the Amendments would result in adverse LSE, and will only help it bettering the noise situation at Dublin Airport. The proposed amendments to the NAO is a policy objective for managing the effects of aircraft noise emissions, that makes targeted changes to the existing NAO, including measurable criteria and expected outcomes. Those constitute environmental targets rather than environmental effects. Those targets and the noise and human health effects that would arise from achieving them have been described comprehensively in the NAO Review Report, following best practice guidance.
Interrelationships	No likely significant effects have been identified, therefore there is no potential for interrelationship effects between human health and population.

6.3 Alternatives Assessment and Comparison

6.3.1 The Guidance on Alternatives in SEA (EPA, 2015) recognises that it is not for the SEA to decide on the options to be considered. Instead, the SEA should focus on the alternative delivery options actually considered in the preparation of the proposed amendments to the NAO. These should be identified by ANCA as the body responsible for drafting the proposed amendments to the NAO. Furthermore, the SEA should focus only on the realistic and reasonable alternatives that emerge during the drafting of the proposed amendments to the NAO, and should explain why other alternatives are not considered to be 'realistic' or 'reasonable' and are not, therefore, subjected to assessment and consultation[2].

6.3.2 During the review of the NAO (Noise Consultants, 2026), and to establish the required amendments, a series of considerations were taken into account whereby alternative noise metrics and thresholds criteria which would form different measurable outcomes for the NAO were explored. However, in most instances, those explored were discounted on the basis that they did not achieve the ambitions of the NAO. Consequently, no credible alternatives for the SEA have been considered. However, as no likely significant environmental effects as a result of the proposed amendments to the NAO have been identified, there is also no need to consider alternatives any further.

Inter-relationships and Cumulative Effects

6.3.3 Cumulative effects result from a combination of two or more individual effects on a receptor (or in this case, environmental aspect). The Guidance on Cumulative Effects Assessment in SEA (EPA, 2020)

[2] In the context of the Guidance on Alternatives in SEA (EPA, 2015) a 'realistic' alternative is capable of achieving the plan/programme objectives, whilst a 'reasonable' alternative takes account of the environmental and socioeconomic baseline and trends, as well as legal requirements including those of the Habitats Directive

states that such effects can occur as a result of plans, programmes, projects and other actions in the past, present and the reasonably foreseeable future. However, as stated in Section 2.3 of this report, the proposed amendments to the NAO is complementary to and in accordance with existing plans, listed in Section 2.3, and not in any way additional, other than providing more detail on aircraft noise reduction measures than the other plans. For this reason, there is no need for this SEA to consider cumulative effects with actioned contained within other plans, programmes, projects and actions.

6.3.4 Interrelationships are described above in **Table 6-1**.

7 Measures to Prevent, Reduce, Offset and Monitor Significant Environmental Effects

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 The assessment of the proposed amendments to the NAO indicated that there would be no likely significant adverse environmental effects as a result of its implementation. There is therefore no need to put in place any measures to prevent, reduce and / or offset for significant adverse effects with regard the Amendments. For the same reason, monitoring is not required.

7.1.2 As stated in **Section 6,** by its very nature, the implementation of the proposed amendments to the NAO is to ensure that any growth or other changes at Dublin Airport that have the potential to affect the noise environment (specifically by causing a noise problem) do so in a managed way and in line with specific limits that have been set. By its very nature, this will mean that there will be a drive toward having both a most efficient fleet and efficient operations at Dublin Airport, which will have positive and beneficial outcomes for Population Amenity and Human Health.

7.1.3 There are though, monitoring requirements for the proposed amendments to the NAO which are set out in the NAO Review Report and area as follows:

"Progress towards the expected outcomes of the NAO will be monitored through annual reports as prepared by ANCA under Section 21 of the Act of 2019, and through the process of strategic noise mapping and noise action planning under ENR. This will require airport noise to be modelled and reported having regard for the guidance set out in the NAO Guidance Note."

8 Next Steps

8.1.1 The final stage of the SEA process, as prescribed in the SEA Process Checklist (EPA, 2008)/ SEA Pack (Updated 2023), will now be undertaken to ensure that the requirements of the relevant legislation have been met. Following amendment of the NAO, an SEA Statement will therefore be produced to provide information on the decision, specifically:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Amended NAO;
- How the Environmental Report, submissions and observations made to ANCA by the Environmental Authorities and the public, and any consultation under article 14, have been taken into account during the preparation of the Amended NAO.
- The reasons for choosing the Amended NAO in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
- The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Amended NAO.

9 References

ANCA (2026) Consultation Report

Dublin Airport Authority (2023) Dublin Airport Economic Impact Study

Department of Transport (2015) National Aviation Policy for Ireland

Department of Transport (2018) Review of Future Capacity Needs at Ireland's State airports

Department of Transport (2019) Ireland's Action Plan for Aviation Emissions Reduction

Department of Transport (2019) National Policy Statement on Airport Charges Regulation

Dublin Airport Authority (2019) Dublin Airport Capital Investment Programme 2020+

Dublin Airport Authority (2022) Dublin Airport Carbon Reduction Strategy

Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly (2019) Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031

European Environment Agency (EEA) (2025) Environmental noise in Europe 2025

European Protection Agency (EPA) (2024) Ireland's State of the Environment Report

EPA (2008, updated 2018) SEA Process Checklist

EPA (2015) Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment

EPA (2020) Guidance on Cumulative Effects Assessment in Strategic Environmental Assessment

European Commission (2021) Zero Pollution Action Plan

Fingal County Council (FCC) (2024) Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029

FCC (2024) Fingal County Council Local Economic and Community Plan 2023 – 2028

FCC (2023) Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 Written Statement

FCC (2020) Dublin Airport Local Area Plan

FCC (2019) South Fingal Transport Study

FCC (2016) Dublin Airport Central Masterplan

Government of Ireland (2025) National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040 – First Revision

Government of Ireland (2019, updated 2026) Healthy Ireland Framework

Government of Ireland (2018) National Development Plan 2018-2027

Logika Consultants (2026) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for the Amended NAO

Meath County Council (2021) Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

National Transport Authority (2016) Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035

Noise Consultants (2026) A Review of the Noise Abatement Objective for Dublin Airport

A1 EPA Scoping Consultation Response

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27th February 2026 Our Ref: SCP260201.1

Re. SEA Scoping for Noise Abatement Objective relating to Aircraft Noise Management at Dublin Airport

Dear Ms Felten,

We acknowledge your notice, dated 30th January 2026, in relation to the Noise Abatement Objective relating to Aircraft Noise Management at Dublin Airport (the 'Plan').

In our role as an SEA environmental authority under the SEA Regulations, we focus on promoting the full and transparent integration of the findings of the Environmental Assessment into the Plan and advocating that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are addressed as relevant and appropriate to the Plan. Our functions do not include approving or enforcing SEAs or plans.

Additionally, the EPA is the national authority for overseeing the implementation of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2018[1], as amended. This includes supervisory and advisory functions in relation to strategic noise mapping and noise action planning (every 5 years) for major roads, major rail, major airports, and for large agglomerations (Dublin, Cork & Limerick). The EPA does not have an enforcement role in relation to noise emissions arising from the operation of Dublin Airport.

Where we provide specific comments on plans and programmes, our comments will focus on the EPA's remit and areas of expertise (in particular water, air, climate change, waste, resource efficiency, noise, radon and the inter-relationships between these and other relevant topics e.g. biodiversity), as appropriate and relevant to the particular plan or programme.

[1] Environmental Noise Regulations 2018, as amended

This submission highlights a number of key environmental issues to consider in preparing the Plan and SEA. S*pecific comments on the SEA Scoping Report are provided in Appendix I*.

Governance and implementation

Regarding governance and implementation considerations, the Plan should clearly set out the implementation arrangements and governance structures, including lines of responsibility for implementation and delivery as well as provisions for interim review and progress reporting. The relationship between the Plan, the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy should be clarified. Implications of the Plan in the context of existing Local Authority Plans/Programmes should also be clarified (e.g. will these be required to be varied and updated?).

Synergies with key national plans

It will be important that the Plan documents the synergies between it and other key national plans. The relevant actions of the Climate Action Plan 2024 and the objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region should be aligned with and considered, as appropriate.

The EPA will provide additional comments on the SEA Environmental Report and the Plan at the next stage of the SEA process.

Integration of the SEA and the Plan

The integration of the SEA process into the Plan should reflect the overall objective of the SEA Directive "to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes".

All recommendations from the SEA and AA processes, including mitigation measures and monitoring proposals, should be integrated into the Plan. We recommend that the Plan includes summary tables outlining the key findings of the SEA and linking the significant environmental effects identified to the proposed mitigation measures, monitoring programme and Plan policies/measures.

Fully integrating the findings and recommendations of the SEA into the Plan will be key to strengthening its overall positive commitments while ensuring that any potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan are mitigated.

The SEA Environmental Report and the Plan should include a chapter outlining how the recommendations and mitigation measures from the SEA have been incorporated into the Plan. We recommend that the SEA Environmental Report includes summary tables outlining the key findings of the SEA and linking the significant environmental effects identified to the proposed mitigation measures, monitoring programme and, where relevant, Plan policies/measures.

Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2024
In 2024, the EPA published the latest iteration of our 4-yearly State of the Environment Report. This report should be considered, and relevant aspects integrated as appropriate, in implementing the Plan outputs/ recommendations. It is available at: https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/state-of-environment-report-/.

Environmental Authorities
Under the SEA Regulations, you should consult with:

- Environmental Protection Agency;
- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment; and,
- Minister for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine.

If you have any queries or need further information in relation to this submission, please contact me directly. I would be grateful if you could send an email confirming receipt of this submission to: sea@epa.ie.

Yours Sincerely,

Deirdre French
Scientific Officer
Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring

Appendix I – Specific Comments on the SEA Scoping Report

Scope of the SEA

The Plan should clearly set out the scope, remit and implementation related elements of the Plan. These will have implications for the SEA, in terms of guiding the level of assessment applicable at the appropriate level for the Plan. Where it is envisaged that measures proposed in the Plan will be implemented via other plans, which themselves have been or will be subject to SEA, this should be explained in the Environmental Report and taken into account in the assessment.

Where specific measures will be implemented directly, further detail should be provided in the Environmental Report and Plan on the relevant environmental assessments to be carried out at the project stage and relevant mitigation measures to be applied, as appropriate. There may be merit in exploring this issue further with the relevant Environmental Authorities during the Plan preparation and SEA processes.

There would be merit in including a matrix in the SEA environmental report to show the interrelationships between the various topics. This should be accompanied by relevant explanatory text.

Data & Knowledge Gaps

The Plan should identify any significant data and knowledge gaps, including commitments to address these on a priority basis and where relevant, in association with other government departments/ organisations, during the implementation phase of the Plan. This is with a view to strengthening the evidence base for future reviews and iterations of the Plan.

Range of Effects

The SEA Environmental Report should refer to the full range of effects and of the area likely to be affected. This assessment should consider the duration and frequency of effects as well as short, medium and long-term, cumulative and synergistic effects of the Plan. The EPA's *Good Practice Guidance on Cumulative Effects Assessment in Strategic Environmental Assessment* (EPA, 2020).

Consultation

There is merit also in pointing to Article 13 of the SEA regulations (S.I. 435 of 2004, as amended) which relates to the consultations. The SEA regulations require that the draft Plan is sent to the statutory environmental authorities inviting written submissions.

Additionally, the Aircraft Noise Competent Authority is required to publish a newspaper notice inviting submissions/observations from the public on both the Plan and the SEA environmental report. The SEA regulations refer to a public consultation period of not less than 4 weeks, however, given that the Plan is a key regional/national policy, consideration should be given to providing for a more appropriate consultation period, in the order of 6-8 or 8 -10 weeks. Submissions and observations received should be taken into consideration in finalising the Plan.

Transboundary consultation
Transboundary consultation should be undertaken with environmental authorities in Northern Ireland where the potential for likely significant transboundary effects have been identified. In this regard, the relevant requirements of the SEA protocol[2] under the ESPOO Convention should be considered, for any possible transboundary consultations with non-EU Member States.

Monitoring, Implementation & Reporting
Article 10 of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) requires that the significant environmental effects of implementing a plan/programme (the Plan in this instance) are monitored in order, *inter alia*, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action. The SEA environmental report should include a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring. The Plan should include a commitment to implement SEA related environmental monitoring requirements and the associated reporting.

The Plan should include a commitment to implement the SEA environmental monitoring programme and associated reporting. We suggest including a separate section on '*Monitoring, Implementation and Reporting*' in the Plan, setting out the provisions for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Plan. There may be merits in aligning the periodic reviews of the Plan with existing cyclical reporting e.g. *Ireland's Environment*, *National Planning Framework*, *Water Framework Directive,* etc.

I refer you to the *EPA guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring (EPA, 2023)*, and would draw your attention to the high-level monitoring indicators proposed in Table 1 on page 23, that may be useful to you to consider.

The SEA-related monitoring should address positive, negative and cumulative effects where they are likely to occur and should include provision for on-going review to facilitate an early response to any unforeseen environmental issues that may arise. The SEA Environmental Report should specify the monitoring frequency and responsibilities and include provisions for reporting on the monitoring.

To avoid duplication in data collection, the same indicators should be used for the plan-related and SEA-related monitoring aspects where possible.

Establishing an Environmental Working Subgroup would provide for oversight of the environmental monitoring and reporting and could be considered. The arrangements in place previously for the implementation stages of plans such as the Grid 25 Implementation Plan, Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP),Wild

[2] UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context.

Atlantic Way Operational Programme and Food Vision 2030 may be worth considering, as appropriate.

SEA Statement

Following the completion of the public consultation on the SEA environmental report and the Plan, the final stages of the SEA process will be to integrate the environmental considerations of the SEA environmental report into the Plan, as appropriate. In accordance with article 16 of the SEA Regulations the Aircraft Noise Competent Authority is required to publish a SEA Statement alongside the adopted Plan, summarising:

- how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;
- how the environmental report and consultation comments on it have been taken into account;
- the reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with (in the Environmental Report and the associated consultation);
- the measures decided concerning monitoring.

The EPA has published *Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring* (EPA, 2023), which should be considered in the preparation of the SEA statement.

Integration with other key Plans and Programmes

We recommend including schematics in the Plan and SEA Environmental Report, showing the links and key inter-relationships with other key relevant national, regional, sectoral and environmental plans.

Available Guidance & Resources

SEA related guidance/resources

The EPA has published guidance notes that may be of assistance in preparing the SEA environmental report.

Guidance on the SEA Scoping Process is included in the Development of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Methodologies for Plans and Programmes in Ireland (EPA, 2003). You can access these SEA process guidance and topic and sector specific guidance documents along with other resources listed below at:

Our website contains various SEA resources and guidance, including:

- SEA process guidance and checklists;
- Inventory of spatial datasets relevant to SEA;
- Topic and sector specific SEA guidance (including *SEA and Integration Guidance* (EPA, 2025), *Good practice note on Cumulative Effects Assessment* (EPA, 2020), *Developing and Assessing Alternatives in SEA* (EPA, 2015), and *Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2012)).

Noise related guidance/resources

The 2025 EEA Environmental noise in Europe 2025 report identified transport noise among the top three environmental health threats, just behind air pollution and temperature related factors. The report draws on information submitted by European Union (EU) Member States and other EEA countries under the 2022 reporting round of the Environmental Noise Directive (END).

The European Commission Zero Pollution Action Plan (ZPAP) aims to reduce, by 30%, the share of people chronically disturbed by noise from transport against 2017 levels. A recent EEA assessment indicates that it is likely that the target will not be met (optimistic scenario results in a cut of 19%, conservative scenario results in an increase of 3%). Major changes would be needed to meet the Zero Pollution Action target, including better urban and transport planning, measures specific to transport noise reductions (such as quieter surfaces, barriers, etc) and significant reductions in road traffic. The environmental assessment should reflect the obligations under the ZPAP.

Information on noise mapping and action plans is available on the EPA website: Noise mapping and action plans | Environmental Protection Agency

The Round 4 Strategic Noise Maps are available on EPA Maps. Airport maps are also available on the DAA website. The Round 4 noise maps are based on 2021 data, as required by the legislation and guidance from the European Environment Agency, and therefore do not include the new airport runway, which commenced operations in August 2022.

The Noise Action Plan for Dublin Airport 2024 -2028 | Fingal County Council was published in 2024 and the 2025 progress report is due by the end of February 2026. Consideration should be given to the actions and monitoring requirements set out in this action plan in the development of the SEA Environmental Report.

The Round 5 noise map for the airport is due to be published at the end of 2027 (using 2026 data). This should be considered during any future reviews and/or monitoring of the plan.

EPA SEA GIS Search and Reporting Webtool

Our SEA WebGIS Tool has been updated recently and is now available at https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/SEA. It allows an indicative report on key aspects of the environment in a specific geographic area to be produced. It is intended to assist public authorities in SEA screening and scoping exercises.

EPA Appropriate Assessment GeoTool

Our AA GeoTool application has been developed in partnership with the NPWS. It allows users to a select a location, specify a search area and gather available information for each European Site within the area.

A2 EPA Draft Environmental Report Consultation Response

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Ms Ethna Felten,
Director of Services
Aircraft Noise Competent Authority
Fingal County Council
County Hall,
Swords,
Co. Dublin

2nd September 2026 Our Ref: SCP260201.2

Re. Draft Regulatory Decision and Amended Noise Abatement Objective for Dublin Airport and SEA Environmental Reports

Dear Ms Felten,

We acknowledge your notice, dated 28th May 2026, in relation to the Draft Regulatory Decision (RD) and Amended Noise Abatement Objective (NAO) for Dublin Airport and Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Reports (SEA ER).

The EPA as a SEA Environmental Authority promotes the integration of environmental commitments, including mitigation and monitoring measures identified as part of the SEA process, into final Plans and Programmes. This submission highlights two environmental issues for further consideration in finalising the RD, NAO and SEA. These are: (a) Assessment of Environmental Effects & SEA Monitoring and (b) Broader Considerations. Appendix I provides additional detailed comments on the amended NAO and draft RD and Appendix II provides additional comments on the SEA ERs.

Assessment of Environmental Effects & SEA Monitoring

The EPA notes the exclusion of noise from the scope of the assessment in Table 3-2 of the two associated SEA ERs[1&2]. The SEA ERs should assess and document the full range of likely significant environmental effects of implementing the NAO and draft RD, including positive effects. Therefore, in the context of population and human health, noise should be considered in the scope of the assessment. Additionally, the SEA monitoring programme should include details of proposed monitoring to measure both positive and negative effects and the related targets of the NAO and draft RD. If the monitoring identifies that the targets are not being achieved during the implementation of the Plan,

[1] https://www.fingal.ie/sites/default/files/2026-05/16-drd-sea-draft-environmental-report.pdf
[2] https://www.fingal.ie/sites/default/files/2026-05/15-nao-sea-draft-environmental-report.pdf

ANCA should include a commitment in the NAO to identify and implement additional suitable and effective remedial action.

Broader Considerations

The EEA Environmental Noise in Europe 2025[3] report identifies transport noise among the top three environmental health threats, just behind air pollution and temperature related factors. The EPA notes that there is a target under the Zero Pollution Action Plan (ZPAP)[4] to reduce, by 30%, the share of people chronically disturbed by noise from transport against 2017 levels. The EPA recommends that the EEA report and ZPAP target should be referenced in the finalising the NAO and RD.

Information on strategic noise mapping, technical mapping guidance, and noise action plans are available on the EPA website[5]. Round 5 of strategic noise mapping under the Environmental Noise Directive is due to be published at the end of 2027 (using 2026 data for the noise model). The EPA recommends that this information should be considered during any future reviews and/or monitoring of the measures, decision or objective.

If you have any queries or need further information in relation to this submission, please contact me directly. I would be grateful if you could send an email confirming receipt of this submission to: sea@epa.ie.

Yours Sincerely,

Andy Fanning
Programme Manager
Environment & Health Programme
Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring

[3] Environmental noise in Europe 2025 | Publications | European Environment Agency (EEA)
[4] Zero Pollution Action Plan - Environment - European Commission
[5] Noise mapping and action plans | Environmental Protection Agency

Appendix I – Comments on the amended NAO and draft RD

ANCA should ensure that the Plan aligns with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes and is consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework First Revision and the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

Explaining Noise Figures

The draft Noise Abatement Objective lists various dB noise figures including for example 40 dB L_{night}, 45 dB L_{den}, 55 dB L_{den}, 55 dB L_{night}, and 65 dB L_{den}. These are all mentioned in the amended NAO either as background or as metrics that will be measured and tracked for different purposes. As part of the draft RD there is also a 60 dB L_{den} contour figure for the proposed sound insulation grant scheme for residential dwellings. The EPA suggests that in the final documents an explanatory section/graphic explaining all the noise figures referred to and referenced in the documents would be helpful. It could, for example, cover an explanation on its meaning, where the figure originated from, it's relevance in the context of noise management at the airport, and why it was chosen or used in the specific instances as referred to in the NAO and/or RD.

The amended NAO refers to additional metrics that will be used to monitor aircraft noise output using two priority noise contours. Clarification should be provided in the NAO to define the 'two priority noise contours'. The EPA notes that maps (Map 1 and Map 2) have been provided in the draft RD Sound Insulation Grant Scheme[6] information, which may be the contours referred to.

Appendix II – Comments on the SEA

The SEA Regulations set out the information to be contained in an Environmental Report.

The EPA note that two separate SEA ERs were completed as part of the process; one for the amended NAO and the other for the draft RD. The EPA recommends that each SEA ER should inform the final NAO and RD.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region is currently under review following the adoption of a revision to the National Planning Framework. Depending on the timing of the finalisation f the NAO and RD, the revised RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region should be considered in completing the SEA and NAO/RD.

Monitoring

[6] Draft Regulatory Decision Sound Insulation Grant Scheme

The monitoring programme, for both positive and negative effects should set out the relevant data sources (information to be used to inform the monitoring), monitoring frequencies and who will be responsible for carrying out the monitoring. Moreover, the monitoring programme should be flexible to take account of specific environmental issues and unforeseen adverse impacts should they arise including the possibility of cumulative effects. If the monitoring identifies adverse impacts during the implementation of the Plan, ANCA should ensure that suitable and effective remedial action is taken.

Guidance on SEA-related monitoring is available on the EPA website at https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/guidance-on-sea-statements-and-monitoring.php

Future Amendments to the Plan
You should screen any future amendments to the Plan for likely significant effects.

SEA Statement – "Information on the Decision"
Once the Plan is adopted, you should prepare an SEA Statement. that summarises:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;
- How the Environmental Report, submissions, observations and consultations have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan;
- The reasons for choosing the Plan adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and,
- The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan.

You should send a copy of the SEA Statement with the above information to any environmental authority consulted during the SEA process.

Guidance on preparing SEA Statements is available at
https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/guidance-on-sea-statements-and-monitoring.php

Environmental Authorities
Under the SEA Regulations, you should also consult with:

- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment; and,
- Minister for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine.



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