



**Laois County Council  
Comhairle Chontae Laoise**

**PORTLAOISE LOCAL AREA PLAN**

**2018 – 2024**

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
STATEMENT**

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SEA Statement for review	1 23.10.2018	Ruth Minogue, MA(Econ) MCIEEM

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Laois County Council has prepared a Local Area Plan (the LAP) for Portlaoise for the period 2018-2024. Laois County Council adopted the LAP on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018.

The main purpose of the SEA Statement is to provide information on the decision-making process. To document how environmental considerations, the views of statutory consultees and other submissions and the recommendations of the SEA Environmental Report have been taken into account in the LAP, as well as monitoring arrangements. The Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2018-2024 was also screened for likely significant effects on European Sites listed in the EU Habitats Directive and a final Stage II Appropriate Assessment accompanies this report.

This SEA Statement includes the following information:

- Summary of how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Portlaoise LAP (Section Two);
- Summary of how submissions received during consultation have been taken into account in the LAP (Section Three);
- Reasons for choosing the recommended development scenario, in the light of other reasonable alternatives considered (Section Four);
- Measures that are to be undertaken to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing the LAP (Section Five).

## 2 SUMMARY OF HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND THE SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT HAVE BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE PORTLAOISE LAP

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to present a summary of how environmental considerations and consultation have informed the plan preparation process. Legislation and guidance relating to SEA recommends that the process of plan preparation, SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) should be integrated and prepared in an iterative process to facilitate the ongoing assessment and evaluation of environmental considerations during plan preparation. A multi-disciplinary team worked on the SEA and AA elements of the plan. Key tasks associated with the SEA were as follows:

**Table 1: Stages in SEA**

Stage of SEA	Plan
<b>Stage 1 Screening</b>	Screening is the first stage of SEA to determine if the plan requires full SEA. The SEA Regulations state that SEA is mandatory for certain plans while screening for SEA is required for other plans that fall below the specified thresholds. SEA is mandatory for all SEA is mandatory for Local Area Plans where the population or target population exceeds 5,000 persons. As this is the case for the Portlaoise LAP area, the plan progressed to the next stage of SEA – Scoping.
<b>Stage 2 Scoping</b>	The purpose of the SEA Scoping report is to identify the scope of the SEA and ensure that relevant data and environmental topics are included in the SEA. The Scoping report was issued to the statutory environmental authorities consultees for a four week period in January 2018.
<b>Stage 3 Environmental Report</b>	The Environmental Report tells the story of the draft LAP and how environmental considerations have been addressed and included during the preparation process. The appropriate assessment is also discussed in the Environmental Report. This report was the main consultation document of the SEA process and was on display alongside the plan along with supporting reports. A series of meetings were held with Laois County Council and a number of motions were submitted by elected members. Laois County Council decided a number of these motions were material alterations and these material alterations were also subjected to SEA Screening. The LAP was adopted in October 2018. The SEA process provided a commentary on same and the SEA ER will be updated now the LAP has been adopted.
<b>Stage 4 SEA Statement - Current Stage</b>	This stage is the final output of the SEA process and tells the story of the SEA process. It has been prepared now the Portlaoise LAP is finalised and adopted.

## 2.2 BASELINE DATA, GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM AND ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY MAPPING

The baseline data assists in describing the current state of the environment, facilitating the identification, evaluation and subsequent monitoring of the effects of the plan. It helps identify existing environmental problems in and around the plan area and in turn these can be quantified (for certain environmental parameters) or qualified. This highlights the environmental issues relevant to each SEA parameter and ensures that the plan implementation does not exacerbate such problems. Conversely this information can also be used to promote good environmental practices and opportunities for environmental enhancement, thereby improving environmental quality where possible.

Baseline data was gathered for all parameters. Site visits were undertaken by the SEA team in February 2018. Other data was gathered from the SEA ER of the Laois Development Plan 2017-2023, Irish Water, the EPA, Met Eireann and other sources as appropriate.

The SEA has also used a Geographical Information System (GIS) in the following ways:

- To provide baseline information on a range of environmental parameters;
- To assist in assessment of alternatives;
- To help assess in-combination or cumulative impacts, and
- To provide maps to illustrate environmental parameters in the SEA Environmental Report.

## 2.3 MITIGATION

Mitigation involves ameliorating significant negative effects. Where the environmental assessment identifies significant adverse effects, consideration is given in the first instance to preventing such impacts or where this is not possible, to lessening or offsetting those effects. Mitigation measures can be generally divided into those that:

- Avoid effects;
- Reduce the magnitude or extent, probability and/or severity of effect;
- Repair effects after they have occurred, and
- Compensate for effects, by balancing out negative impacts with positive ones.

The iterative process of the LAP preparation has facilitated the integration of environmental considerations into the layout and text of the plan. In addition, potential positive effects of implementing the plan have been and will be maximised and potential adverse effects have been and will be avoided, reduced or offset.

Many impacts will be more adequately identified and mitigated at project and EIA level. In general terms, all proposals for development will be required to have due regard to environmental considerations outlined in this Environmental Report and associated assessments including the Stage II Appropriate Assessment. Proposals for development which are deemed contrary to the environmental objectives contained in the LAP will not

normally be permitted, and if permitted, not without the appropriate site and development specific mitigation measures.

There were also a number of proposals associated with the draft LAP that were identified as potentially generating significant adverse impacts on the environment, and suggested rewording of these proposals were put forward for consideration and recommended for inclusion in the draft LAP.

The LAP has been prepared having regard to the policies and objectives outlined within the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. The environmental protection measures for the CDP 2017-2023 are included in the SEA ER. Specific measures developed for the LAP are set out below, the SEA ER has the full list of mitigation measures.

### 2.3.1 REWORDED MITIGATION MEASURES

The following table presents some of the mitigation measures recommended for the LAP through rewording or additional text. Where new text is proposed it is presented in **blue, bold** font. The column demonstrates whether this was included in the Portlaoise LAP as adopted.

**Table 2: Mitigation Measures – Amendment of Text**

LAP	Mitigation Measure	Included in LAP Yes/No
Key Plan Objectives – Additional objective	<b>7. To require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications in the plan area to have regard to the information, data and requirements of the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report, SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report that accompany this LAP.</b>	Yes
Opportunity Site 1: Lyster Square	Public realm improvements would be beneficial/ <b>should be consistent with the Guiding Principles for Lyster Square as outlined in 2040 and Beyond: A Vision for Portlaoise A Strategy For A Better Town. Landscaping proposals including tree planting and ‘greening’ of the area.</b>	Yes
Opportunity Site 2 Fitzmaurice Place	<b>Interventions for this area, as described under ‘Fort Protector a Heritage Quarter ‘and ‘The Convent, CBS and Parish Lands’ in the 2040 and Beyond: A Vision for Portlaoise, should be considered and reflected in development proposals.</b>	Yes
Site 3 Centre Point	Public realm improvements would be beneficial <b>and should seek to maximise green and blue infrastructure through landscape design.</b>	Yes
Site 4 Mountmellick Road	Public realm improvements would be beneficial <b>and should seek to maximise green and blue infrastructure through landscape design.</b>	

<b>KI 09</b>	Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in accordance with <del>the South Eastern River Basin District River Basin Management Plan</del> <b>National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 (DHPLG) and associated Programme of Measures.</b>	Yes
<b>KI 011</b>	Facilitate, promote and encourage the expansion and improvement of telecommunications, broadband, electricity and gas networks infrastructure <b>subject to proper planning and sustainable development.</b>	Yes
<b>KI 08</b>	Co-operate with and facilitate the work of national telecommunications, broadband, electricity and gas network providers in the improvement, expansion and provision of energy and communication infrastructure <b>subject to proper planning and sustainable development.</b>	Yes
<b>KIP 05</b>	Assess all applications in the context of available and sufficient public infrastructural facilities, the protection of Surface Water and Groundwater Resources <b>and their associated habitats and species<sup>1</sup>.</b>	
<b>NH 05</b>	Carry out and require the planting of <b>native</b> trees, hedgerows and vegetation in all new developments.	Yes
<b>NH 06</b>	Open up visual and physical access via the River Triogue from People's Park as a continuous pedestrian and cycle link through the town centre, and potentially through the Convent Lands <b>having regard to ecological considerations including protected species and habitats.</b>	Yes
<b>NH 010</b>	Protect environmental quality and implement <b>site appropriate</b> mitigation measures with respect to air quality, greenhouse gases, climate change, light pollution, noise pollution and waste management.	Yes

<sup>1</sup> On foot of EPA Scoping submission



### **3 SUMMARY OF HOW CONSULTATIONS WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the preparation of the LAP and the SEA ER, consultation was undertaken at key points in the process.

Further information is available in the following SEA Reports:

- SEA Scoping report issued January 2018
- SEA Environmental Report - issued March 2018 for 6 weeks
- SEA advice on public submissions and Chief Executive Officers recommendation
- SEA Screening of Material Amendments – Annex to the SEA ER.
- SEA commentary on CEOs recommendations.

The following section summarises key points and how they were addressed in the SEA and the Local Area Plan.

#### **3.2 CONSULTATION ON SEA- SCOPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT**

The purpose of the SEA Scoping report is to identify the scope of the SEA and ensure that relevant data and environmental topics are included in the SEA. The SEA ER accompanied the Portlaoise LAP display period that took place over a six week period in March 2018. The table below summarises key points raised during the SEA Scoping Stage, and the SEA ER stage.

Table 3: Environmental Consultation

Consultee & Key Issue Raised	SEA Response
<b>Scientific Officer, SEA Section, Office of Evidence and Assessment. Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork</b>	
<b>Plan Area Boundary Map:</b> There is merit in including a map showing the extent of the Plan area, particularly in the context of assessing and identifying relevant environmental sensitivities to be considered in the SEA.	Agreed, see Figure 1
<b>Key Environmental Resources:</b> We welcome in Section 3 Key Environmental Resources, that the EPA’s Ireland’s Environment 2016- An Assessment (EPA 2016), is a key environmental resource in informing the LAP process. The challenges and emerging issues described within this report should be integrated as appropriate in the Plan.	Noted
<b>Water Framework Directive:</b> The Plan should include a commitment to integrate the relevant recommendations of the Draft National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 (DHPLG) and associated Programme of Measures which will be adopted during lifetime of the Plan. The Plan should also provide for the protection of high and good quality surface waters and groundwater resources and also protect relevant areas listed on the WFD Register of Protected Areas.	Noted, reference made in policies to same. Noted, this is provided in the LAP.
<b>Designated Sites:</b> Among the conservation areas included in / within 15km of the Plan area are Clonrehan Bog (NHA), Ridge of Portlaoise (pNHA) and the Great Heath of Portlaoise (pNHA). The SEA should consider the potential effects occurring for all designated sites and protected species within and adjacent to the Plan area and associated ecological corridors. In particular consideration should be given to the potential for cumulative effects associated with existing, and proposed, development associated with the Plan implementation.	Noted, these sites are described in Chapter 4 and potential cumulative effects are discussed in Chapter 7 of this SEA ER.
<b>The protection of and possible enhancement of Undesignated Biodiversity:</b> Wider consideration of biodiversity outside of designated areas, such as ecological corridors/linkages, hedgerows and wetlands should be identified and measures put in place to ensure protection/replacement where appropriate. It may also be useful to consider reviewing and updating, as appropriate, existing habitat mapping to inform the development of the Plan area over the lifetime of the Plan. Where wetland sites are involved, consideration should be given to assessing the potential impact on water quality and the hydrological/ hydrogeological regime which maintains these sites.	Noted- consideration of these within the plan area are described in Chapter 4.  Noted.
<b>Provision of Adequate and Appropriate Critical Infrastructure:</b> We note section 3.6 Material Assets in the Scoping Report and in particular, the various drinking water upgrades included under the joint Portlaoise and Mountmellick Water Supply Scheme, currently awaiting departmental approval. The Plan should include a	Noted, Ch 4 and 7 of this SEA ER amends this.

<p>commitment to collaborate with Irish Water in seeking to resolve any critical water infrastructure issues and to ensuring the provision of adequate and appropriate critical water infrastructure to cater for future sustainable development in the Plan area.</p>	
<p><b>Climate Change Adaptation:</b> The Plan should promote commitments for the development and promotion of appropriate climate change adaptation and mitigation measures that can be implemented through relevant land use plans and/or specific plans e.g. Flood Risk Management Plans etc. Climate change adaptation and mitigation measures should be included in the Plan as appropriate and the Plan should be consistent with the National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development, the National Mitigation Plan and the National Adaptation Framework (when available), as well as relevant sectoral, regional and local adaptation plans. The Agency has published SEA guidance on “Integrating Climate Change into SEA” which may be useful in this regard. This guidance (and other SEA related guidance) is available at: <a href="http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea">http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea</a>.</p>	<p>Noted, a specific policy addresses this in the LAP.</p>
<p><b>Flood Risk Assessment and Management:</b> We note that the Plan area has a history of flood events. The Plan should reflect the need for flood risk to be taken into consideration for both existing and proposed new zoning, and associated development, within the Plan area. UoM14 CFRAMS should help inform appropriate zoning/re-zoning considerations within the Plan area. The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DAHLG 2009) should also be integrated, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Noted, and agreed. Noted, this is provided in the LAP.</p>
<p><b>Groundwater Vulnerability:</b> The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) has identified areas within and adjacent to the Plan area as having high levels of groundwater vulnerability. In this context, the Plan should include a commitment to the protection of groundwater resources and associated habitats and species.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p>
<p><b>Core Strategy:</b> We note Table 3 Core Strategy in the Scoping Report. The Plan should ensure that it remains consistent with the National Planning Framework, when adopted, and promote the need for sustainable development. A commitment should also be made to remain consistent with the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) upon adoption.</p>	<p>Noted. The Ethos of the NPF has informed the plan preparation. The LAP complies with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines currently in place. Policies relating to Town Centre consolidation have been integrated to the LAP.</p>

<p><b>Brownfield Lands:</b> Where any brownfield lands are proposed for reuse/ regeneration in the context of Plan development, these should be appropriately remediated to avoid or minimise any potential significant environmental impacts or human health impacts that may arise. A commitment should be given that any assessment of these sites should consider and provide information on aspects such as contaminated soil removal / remediation, noise and air quality, waste management, possible service infrastructure provision issues, possible presence of invasive species and ensuring appropriate management/ control, implications for biodiversity etc.</p>	Noted.
<p><b>Radiological Protection:</b> The EPA’s Office has identified areas in the Plan as having radon levels between 10% and 20% above reference level. The Plan should consider the significant concentrations of radon, which may occur within the Plan area. Radon Maps are now provided by the EPA at <a href="http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap/">http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap/</a> and should be consulted with regard to assessing the risk of radon, which should be taken into account as appropriate into the Plan.</p>	Noted, will be described in Chapter Four of this SEA ER.
<p><b>Development arising from the Plan:</b> The Plan should include a specific commitment that any proposed residential, industrial, infrastructural or tourism related development arising from the Plan will take into account any other associated plans/programmes/strategies and the requirements of the SEA, Habitats, WFD and Floods Directives, as relevant and appropriate.</p>	Noted and agreed, specific policy in Chapter One provides for this.
<p><b>Potential for Cumulative Effects:</b> In preparing the SEA, you should consider assessing the potential for cumulative effects on the environment as a result of implementing the Plan. A review of relevant adjacent Local Area Plans and relevant Plans/ Programmes and significant projects should also be undertaken and the potential for cumulative environmental effects considered.</p>	Noted, see Chapter 7 for assessment of cumulative effects.
<p><b>Alternatives:</b> In considering and assessing alternatives, the alternatives proposed should be reasonable and realistic and should be set at the appropriate strategic level at which the Plan will be implemented operating within the national planning hierarchy. They should be assessed against the relevant environmental objectives established for the key environmental aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected. Clear justification should be provided for the selection of the preferred alternative/ combination of alternatives. Where relevant, the development of alternatives should be clearly described. In addition, the methodology applied in the assessment of alternatives along with any assumptions made should be described. The Agency has published an EPA Guidance document Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment - Good Practice Guidance (EPA, 2015), which should be considered.</p>	Noted, and agreed. Chapter 6 Consideration of Alternatives addresses these comments.
<p><b>SEA Mitigation Measures:</b> The Plan should include appropriate mitigation measures to address the potential for significant negative</p>	Noted, see Chapter 8 for mitigation

environmental effects, where these have been identified.	measures.
<b>SEA Related Monitoring:</b> In relation to monitoring related aspects required under the SEA Directive, the SEA should include information on the nature and frequency of monitoring to be carried out and organisations responsible for carrying out the monitoring. Linking SEA and Plan related monitoring will ensure that any unforeseen negative effects are identified early and appropriate mitigation measures provided.	Noted, please see Chapter 9 of this SEA ER.

### 3.3 ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

During the plan preparation process and when material alterations were considered the SEA and AA provided a commentary on same (See Annex C of the SEA ER and appendix of the Natura Impact Report for further details). The SEA and AA also provided commentary on the Chief Executive's Report on Material Alterations (September 2018) and supported all the CEO recommendations. In one instance the Elected Members chose to proceed with a Material Alterations against the CEO's advice, this relates to a change of zoning from Strategic Reserve to Residential 1 which is not in compliance with Section 20 (3)(q) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and is not supported in terms of the Core Strategy.

## 4 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the critical roles of the SEA is to facilitate an evaluation of the likely environmental consequences of a range of alternative development scenarios, in this case the Portlaoise LAP 2018-2024.

These alternative development scenarios should meet the following considerations:

- Take into account the geographical scope, hierarchy and objectives of the plan – be realistic;
- Be based on socio-economic and environmental evidence – be reasonable;
- Be capable of being delivered within the plan timeframe and resources – be implementable;
- Be technically and institutionally feasible – be viable.

In developing, refining and assessing the alternatives for the LAP, the toolkit included in Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment Good Practice Guidance (EPA 2015) was utilised.

In addition to the above, the LAP will function within the policy hierarchy established by national, regional and county strategic plans, as well as relevant legislation.

### 4.2 ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS FOR PORTLAOISE LAP

In the case of the Portlaoise LAP, possible alternatives include different land uses and scales of development were examined.

1. **Continuation of Existing LAP landuse zonings and policies/objectives (The Do-Nothing Scenario).** Continues with the existing LAP in its current context.
2. **Town centre consolidation:** This approach would be to focus explicitly on the densification of the town centre with intensification of land uses and focus on employee intensive sectors.
3. **Town centre consolidation and designation of future development lands in a tiered structure:** Promotion of development lands within the town centre for development and the designation of secondary and edge of centre areas where this type of development is considered appropriate in certain circumstances. It would also promote the development of neighbourhood centers to provide a level of retail services locally.

In considering these alternatives, regard was had to the Preferred Alternative (Scenario 3 Balanced Growth, Strong Plans) identified for the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. Within this scenario, the main population centers for prioritized development would remain to be Portlaoise, Portarlinton, Mountmellick and Graiguecullen, this is where

development both residential and commercial is most likely to happen in a controlled manner. This fulfils the objectives of the current NSS, the RPGS and the new National Planning Framework in terms of achieving balanced regional growth which is of benefit to both the county and the region as a whole.

### 4.3 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

From the evaluation of the above scenarios, Alternative 3 provides for the most positive effects when assessed against the SEOS. This alternative provides for the promotion of development lands within the town centre for development and the designation of sequential areas where this type of development is considered appropriate in certain circumstances. It would also promote the development of neighbourhood centres to provide a level of retail services locally.

It acknowledges the need to consolidate Portlaoise through the town centre revitalisation whilst helping to meet the key objectives of the LAP. A key positive of this Alternative is that it allows for provision of employment land uses which is a key challenge facing the town due to its proximity to Dublin and unsustainable commuting patterns.

Therefore, the preferred alternative was developed by the planning team and others having regard to the key requirements of:

- Environmental effects identified through the SEA consideration of alternatives;
- Objectives of the Portlaoise LAP including social and economic effects of the development, and
- National Policy documents.

By complying with appropriate mitigation measures - including those which have been integrated into the LAP - potential adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing this scenario would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.

## 5 MONITORING

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

It is proposed, in accordance with Article 10 of the SEA Directive, to base monitoring on a series of indicators which measure changes in the environment, especially changes which are critical in terms of environmental quality, for example water pollution levels. Monitoring will focus on the aspects of the environment that are likely to be significantly impacted upon by the implementation of the LAP.

The targets and indicators are derived from the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) discussed in Chapter Five of the SEA ER. The target underpins the objective whilst the indicators are used to track the progress of the objective and targets in terms of monitoring of impacts.

The monitoring programme will consist of an assessment of the relevant indicators and targets against the data relating to each environmental component. Similarly, monitoring will be carried out frequently to ensure that any changes to the environment can be identified.

### 5.2 FREQUENCY OF MONITORING AND REPORTING

Should new data or the following occur, additional monitoring will be required:

- Pollution events associated with construction;
- Boil notices on drinking water;
- Fish kills;
- Court cases taken by the DEHLG regarding impacts upon archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places; and,
- Complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts resulting from development which is granted permission under the LAP.


In turn the list below is subject to review at each reporting stage to reflect new data. Laois County Council are responsible for the implementation of the SEA Monitoring Programme including:

- Monitoring specific indicators and identifying any significant effects, including cumulative effects;
- Collating the Environmental Reports (such as Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, Natura Impact Reports etc.) submitted by developers in the LAP area;
- Reviewing the effectiveness of monitoring/mitigation measures during the lifetime of the LAP; and,
- Identifying any cumulative effects.



It is recommended that the monitoring report be made available to the public upon its completion.






Table 4: SEA Monitoring


SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
<b>Biodiversity Flora and Fauna</b>	<b>B1:</b> To ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species.	<b>B1:</b> Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.	<b>B1:</b> Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under National and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the plan.	-Internal monitoring of likely significant effects; -Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive -as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years); -Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs's National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years); -Consultations with the NPWS.
	<b>B2:</b> To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of features of the landscape which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as	<b>B2:</b> Percentage loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from development provided for by the Plan.	<b>B2:</b> No significant ecological networks or parts thereof which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation resulting from development provided for by the Plan.	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant); -CORINE mapping resurvey (every c. 5 years); -Review of Council Ecological Network Mapping.



SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	stepping stones (designated or not), are of major importance for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.			
	<b>B3:</b> To avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 with regard to the protection of listed species.	<p><b>B3i:</b> Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan.</p> <p><b>B3ii:</b> Number of significant impacts on the protection of listed species.</p>	<p><b>B3i:</b> Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in designated sites including Wildlife Sites resulting from development provided for by the Plan.</p> <p><b>B3ii:</b> No significant impacts on the protection of listed species.</p>	<p>-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant);</p> <p>-Consultations with the NPWS</p>
<b>Population and human health</b>	<b>PHH1:</b> To protect populations and	<b>PHH1:</b> Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated	<b>PHH1:</b> No spatial concentrations of health	-Consultations with EPA and Health Service Executive.

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
<p><b>Noise</b></p> 	<p>human health from exposure to incompatible landuses <b>including adverse noise and air quality impacts.</b></p>	<p>deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors resulting from development provided for by the Plan, as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency.</p>	<p>problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan.</p>	
<p><b>Water</b></p> 	<p><b>W1:</b> To maintain and improve, where possible, the quality and status of surface waters.</p>	<p><b>W1:</b> Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009).</p>	<p><b>W1:</b> Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve ‘good status’ by 2015.</p>	<p>-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant); -Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual).</p>
	<p><b>W2:</b> To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water.</p>	<p><b>W2:</b> Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC.</p>	<p><b>W2:</b> Not to affect the ability of groundwaters to comply with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC.</p>	<p>-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant); -Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (multi-annual).</p>
	<p><b>W3:</b> To comply as appropriate with the provisions of the Planning System and Flood Risk</p>	<p><b>W3:</b> Number of incompatible developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood</p>	<p><b>W3:</b> Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk in</p>	<p>-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).</p>

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009).	risk.	compliance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.	
<b>Soil and Geology</b>	<b>S1:</b> To avoid damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource.	<b>S1:</b> Soil extent and hydraulic connectivity.	<b>S1:</b> To minimise reductions in soil extent and hydraulic connectivity.	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
	<b>S2:</b> To maximise the sustainable re- use of brownfield lands, and the existing built environment, rather than developing greenfield lands.	<b>S2:</b> Permission granted on Opportunity Sites <b>% Occupancy of buildings in town centre</b>	<b>S2:</b> Number of Opportunity Sites developed over lifetime of the plan	-Grant by grant
<b>Material Assets</b>	<b>M1:</b> To serve new development with adequate and appropriate wastewater treatment.	<b>M1:</b> Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan.	<b>M1:</b> All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan.	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	<b>M2:</b> To serve new development with adequate drinking water that is both wholesome and clean.	<b>M2:</b> Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan.	<b>M2:</b> No non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan.	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
	<b>M3:</b> To reduce waste volumes, minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling and reuse.	<b>M3i:</b> Total collected and brought household waste. <b>M3ii:</b> Packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers.	<b>M3i:</b> Minimise increases in and, where possible, reduce household waste generation. <b>M3ii:</b> Maximise increases in packaging recovered (t) by self-complying packagers.	-EPA National Waste reports
<b>Climate Change, Air Quality and Noise</b>	<b>C1:</b> To reduce travel related emissions to air and to encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport.	<b>C1:</b> Percentage of population travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means.	<b>C1:</b> An increase in the percentage of the population travelling to work, school or college by public transport or non-mechanical means.	-CSO Population Data
	<b>C2:</b> Ensure that the LAP proposals are adaptive to	<b>C2:</b> Number of SUDs measures included and developed as part of planning applications.	<b>C2:</b> An increase in extent of Blue and Green infrastructure linkages in	-Grants of permission

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	<i>expected climate change patterns in line with Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines (EPA) as appropriate.</i>	<i>Number/extent of additional tree planting as part of planning applications.</i>	<i>plan area.</i>	
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>CH1:</b> To protect archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context.	<b>CH1:</b> Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Areas of Archaeological Potential and Significance (and the context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) - protected from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan.	<b>CH1:</b> Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Areas of Archaeological Potential and Significance (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan.	-Grants of permission
	<b>CH2:</b> To protect architectural heritage including entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural	<b>CH2:</b> Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from new development	<b>CH2:</b> Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant); -Consultation with Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicator	Selected Target	Source (Frequency)
	Conservation Areas and their context.	granted permission under the Plan.	permission under the Plan.	
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>L1:</b> To minimise significant adverse visual impacts within and adjacent to the County.	<b>L1:</b> Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan.	<b>L1:</b> No developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan.	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
	<b>L2:</b> To protect and enhance landscape character and quality within and adjacent to the LAP area.	<b>L2:</b> Number of Opportunity Sites and interventions from 2040 And Beyond A vision for Portlaoise A Strategy For A Better Town Centre implemented over lifetime of plan.	<b>L2:</b> Adherence to all principles in 2040 And Beyond.	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
<b>Interrelationships</b>	<b>Maintain and improve the health of people, ecosystems and natural processes.</b>	<b>Blue and Green Infrastructure measures implemented over lifetime of plan.</b>	<b>Increased network of blue and green infrastructure achieved over lifetime of the plan.</b>	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).
	<b>Actively seek to integrate opportunities for environmental enhancement.</b>	<b>As above.</b>	<b>As above.</b>	-Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant).

## 6 CONCLUSION

This SEA Statement summarises how environmental parameters have been addressed in the preparation process of the Portlaoise LAP 2018-2024. Consultation has been undertaken through all stages of the plan preparation and SEA process.

The SEA and Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken in line with the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 to 2011 (as amended). **Subject to the full and proper implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in this SEA Environmental Report, the Natura Impact report and the Portlaoise LAP including detailed design at planning application stage, it is considered that significant adverse impacts on the environment will be avoided.**