



CONSULTANTS IN ENGINEERING,
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE &
PLANNING

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2024-2029

Natura Impact Report

Prepared for:
Laois County Council



Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

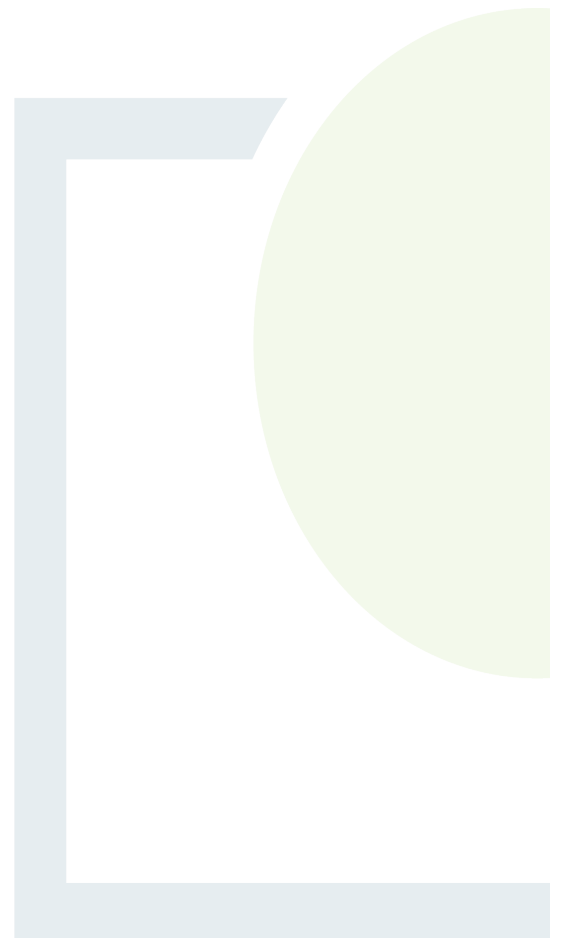
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Natura Impact Report for the Laois County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

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Abstract: Fehily Timoney and Company is pleased to submit this Natura Impact Report for the Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This Natura Impact Report (NIR) was prepared in support of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the “Habitats Directive”).

This report is part of the AA process was undertaken alongside the preparation of the LACAP.

1.2 Post Draft Plan Consultation Modifications

This document is the final NIR which has been produced on Adoption of the LACAP. An earlier draft version of this report has been updated having regard to the consultation submissions made during the Draft Plan consultation period, recommendations made in the Chief Executive (CE) Report on consultation submissions, and the modifications made to the original draft version of the LACAP that was put on display for consultation. The updates made to the report were for the purpose of clarifying certain detail, and where clerical or minor and non-material in nature, and have not changed the parameters of the environmental assessment undertaken or the environmental mitigation defined.

The Plan modifications arising from the consultation process, the CE Report, and the post consultation plan-making process were screened for AA. The AA Screening Report for the post consultation Plan modifications are presented in Appendix 3. All amended actions and additional actions added subsequent to the consultation period are documented, considered and evaluated in the AA Screening Report. Where original actions have been modified after consultation, the text of the actions have been appropriately updated in this NIR. The Plan modifications were determined to be non-material and did not introduce any additional environmental/ecological effects not previously considered and mitigated during the SEA and AA processes.

An AA Conclusion Statement will now be prepared on how the AA process shaped the content of the final plan.

1.3 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the “favourable conservation status” of habitats and species of European Community Interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds) with Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as European sites which form the Natura 2000 Network.

AA is required by the Habitats Directive, as transposed into Irish legislation by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act (as amended). AA is an assessment of the potential for adverse or negative effects of a plan or project, in combination with other plans or projects, on the conservation objectives of a European site. These sites consist of SACs and SPAs and provide for the protection and long-term survival of Europe’s most valuable and threatened species and habitats.



1.4 Approach

The AA is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological and hydrological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and grey literature¹ was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) website including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and in particular sensitive qualifying interests/special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives (including spatial data collected for the most recent Article 17 conservation status reporting cycle, 2019).

In addition to being informed by these reports, the NIR was also informed by the Council's County Development Plan and associated SEA Environmental Report and AA Natura Impact Report.

All of these data sources are likely to be useful for AAs that must be undertaken for lower-tier plans/projects under the Plan.

The ecological desktop study completed for the AA of the LACAP comprised the following elements:

- Identification of European sites within 15km of the LACAP boundary with identification of potential pathways links for specific sites (if relevant) greater than 15km from the LACAP boundary;
- Review of the NPWS site synopsis and conservation objectives for European sites with identification of potential pathways from the LACAP area; and
- Examination of available information on protected species.

There are four main stages in the AA process as follow:

Stage One: Screening

The process that identifies the likely impacts upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment

The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts. If adequate mitigation is proposed to ensure no significant adverse impacts on European sites, then the process may end at this stage. However, if the likelihood of significant impacts remains, then the process must proceed to Stage Three.

Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

The process that examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of the European site.

¹ Various documents where publishing, in journals for example, is not the primary activity of the producing body. Examples include: conference presentations; regulatory data; unpublished trial data; government publications; and dissertations/theses.



Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

An assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures. This approach aims to avoid any effects on European sites by identifying possible effects early in the plan-making process and avoiding such effects. Second, the approach involves the application of mitigation measures, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse effects on the site(s) remain. If potential effects on European sites remain, the approach requires the consideration of alternative solutions. If no alternative solutions are identified and the plan/project is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect(s).

The assessment of potential effects on European sites is conducted following a standard source-pathway-receptor model², where, in order for an effect to be established all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the model is sufficient to conclude that a potential effect is not of any relevance or significance.

In the interest of this report, receptors are the ecological features that are known to be utilised by the qualifying interests or special conservation interests of a European site. A source is any identifiable element of the LACAP provision that is known to interact with ecological processes. The pathways are any connections or links between the source and the receptor. This report provides information on whether direct, indirect and cumulative adverse effects could arise from the LACAP.

The NIR exercise has been prepared taking into account legislation including the aforementioned legislation and guidance including the following:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009;
- “Commission Notice: Managing Natura 2000 sites - The provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC”, European Commission 2018;
- “Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC”, European Commission Environment DG, 2002; and
- “Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC”, European Commission, 2000; and
- Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management; OPR Practice Note PN01; Office of the Public Regulator, 2021.

² Source(s) – e.g. pollutant run-off from proposed works; Pathway(s) – e.g. groundwater connecting to nearby qualifying wetland habitats; and Receptor(s) – qualifying aquatic habitats and species of European Sites



The scope of the AA was informed by the submissions received on the scope of the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment³ (SEA) process being undertaken on the LACAP, including a submission from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht that provided various information and suggestions relevant to the AA.

³ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt it.



2. DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

2.1 Overview

The Laois LACAP 2024-2029 will be prepared over the coming months. The Plan will provide a five-year framework to:

- Actively translate national climate policy to local circumstances with the prioritisation and acceleration of evidence-based measures,
- Assist in the delivery of the climate neutrality objective at local and community levels,
- Identify and deliver a Decarbonising Zone (DZ) within the local authority area to act as a test bed for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures in a specifically defined area. This will be done through the identification of projects and outcomes that will assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective⁴.

The preparation of the LACAP will be informed by a process of public participation and consultation. The LACAP represents an important policy document that will form the foundations to support and facilitate coordinated climate action, which is focused on local, area specific issues.

The Plan will be set within the context of the strategic framework of and be guided by the most recent approved national long term climate action strategy and sectoral adaptation plans as well as the County Development Plan.

Figure 2-1 illustrates the functional area and boundary of Laois County Council.

2.2 Context setting background to Laois' Role and the LACAP

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 provides a statutory underpinning to climate action in Ireland. It specifies the requirement to develop a national Climate Action Plan (CAP) (and update it every year), a National Adaptation Framework (NAF), a National Long Term Climate Action Strategy and Sectoral Adaptation Plans (SAPs). It also specifies a series of carbon budgets and the associated sectoral emission ceilings. It sets out actions that must be taken to ensure delivery of commitments and a target to reduce GHG by 51% by 2030 and to achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2050.

Section 16 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 defines the requirement for Local Authorities to prepare individual LACAPs for their functional area. The purpose of LACAPs will be to deliver effective climate action and mitigation at local authority and community levels. Local Authority County Development Plans must also be aligned with their LACAP.

The LACAPs are statutory plans that must be subject to SEA under the SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC) to determine their effect on the environment, and AA under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) to determine if their implementation is likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.

⁴ This is known as the National 2050 Climate Objective which establishes the national objective of achieving a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.



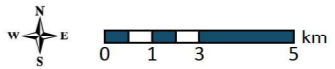
The statutory plan making process, which commenced on February 24th 2023, is 12 months in duration so the LACAPs must be completed on February 23rd, 2024. Another 30-day timeframe is allowed after this for the publication of the LACAP.



Legend

 Local Authority Boundaries

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Local Authority Boundary	
LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL Local Authority Climate Action Plans	
FIGURE NO:	2.1
CLIENT:	LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
DATE: 26/07/2023	SCALE: 1:200,000 @ A3
	





2.3 Laois County Council's Role with regard to Climate Action and the LACAP

Local authorities are key drivers in advancing climate policy at the local level. The LACAP will help Laois County Council to address, in an integrated way, the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change adaptation and strengthen the alignment between national climate policy and the delivery of effective local climate action.

Laois County Council is free to determine their own approach to the style and structure of their climate action plans but all must demonstrate alignment with the key principles of the national Climate Action Plan and subject to compliance with all relevant guidelines ensuring that the local plan is ambitious, action-focused, evidence-based, participative and transparent.

2.4 Purpose and Scope of the LACAP 2024-2029

2.4.1 Need for the Plan

The Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan (2024-2029) will consider specific adaptation and mitigation measures across key themes including Governance and Leadership, Built Environment & Transport, Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure, Communities, Resilience & Transition and Sustainability & Resource Management.

2.4.2 Objectives of the LACAP

The overall objectives of the LACAP are:

- A 50% improvement in the council's energy efficiency by 2030,
- A 51% reduction in the Council's greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 to reach net zero by 2050,
- To make Laois a climate resilient region, by reducing the impacts of future climate change-related events, and
- To actively engage and inform citizens on climate change.

2.4.2.1 *Strategic Goals and Objectives*

Table 2-1: Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goals	Main Objectives
Strategic Goal A: To improve our energy efficiency within the County Council, to reduce GHG emissions and to achieve an overall high standard climate action within Laois County Council.	To reduce overall energy consumption in Laois County Council, by being more efficient in our energy use.
	To reduce to GHG Emissions of the energy used in Laois County Council by 51% by 2030
	To collaborate with others in exploring energy and climate-based solutions.
	To measure and report on the carbon impact of our various activities.



Strategic Goals	Main Objectives
	To consider climate impacts in the development of policies and programmes.
Strategic Goal B: Mobilise the Community, Voluntary, and Business sectors to deliver on Climate Action within their respective areas of influence.	To increase awareness across the community/ voluntary/ business sectors within the county on energy and climate related issues.
	To increase the number of community and voluntary groups actively pursuing climate actions.
	To increase the number of communities actively engaged in climate action in County Laois.
	To actively listen to the voice of communities, including groups representing youth and groups representing older people, so that we can help them deliver on their climate ambitions.
Strategic Goal C: Through our own actions and through our partnerships with others in the Public Sector, and with the Community, Voluntary, and Business sectors, to provide Leadership within the county (and further afield) on the matters related to Climate Change.	To maintain and develop cooperations with other bodies at a local/ regional/ national level.
	To achieve our nationally mandated 2030 targets and make progress towards the 2050 targets.
	To be prepared to trial technologies or other solutions not previously trialled within the county.
	To provide forums for local sharing of knowledge and successes in the areas of climate action.
	To promote opportunities for developments in the low carbon economy.
	To implement green public procurement strategy and procedures across all business areas
	To continually develop expertise and knowledge within the local authority on climate related issues.
Strategic Goal D: Through Active Travel, Environmental Awareness, and other programmes, to enhance opportunities for individuals to choose the better, climate friendly, options.	To make it more attractive or easier for individuals and groups to choose the more climate friendly options.
	To upgrade public infrastructure to allow for more climate friendly options.
	To continue, through a combination of persuasion and active measures, to enforce environmental legislation in the interests of the community as whole.
	To incorporate climate related criteria within our internal assessment procedures.
	To work with communities to develop locally based and community driven behavioural change actions.

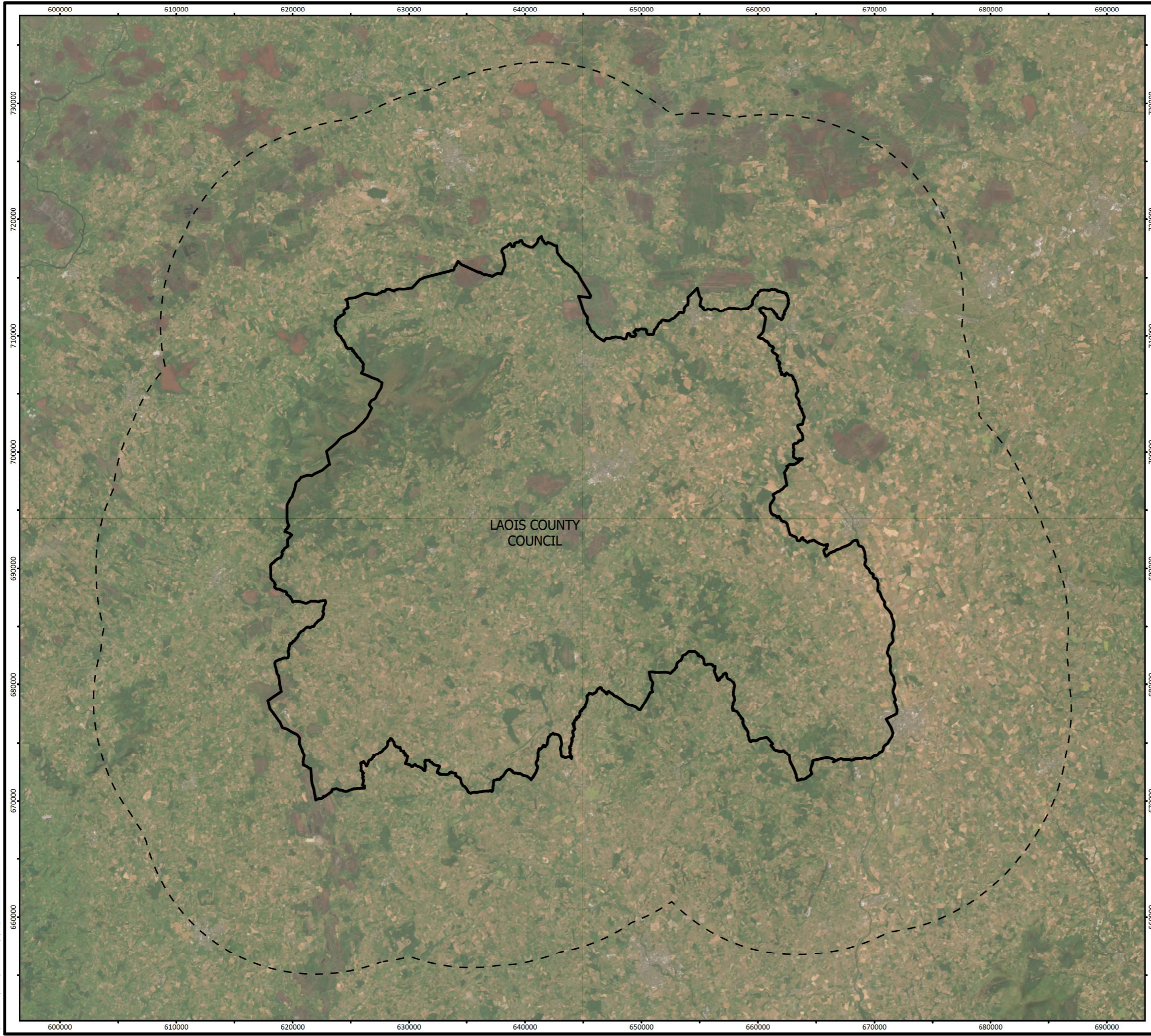


Strategic Goals	Main Objectives
Strategic Goal E: To make the county more resilient through a range of climate adaptation measures.	To continue to implement approved flood protection and drainage measures.
	To consider climate factors in our choices of construction materials and construction options.
	To consider, where appropriate, nature based and nature friendly solutions to infrastructural elements.
	To continually adapt our baseline maintenance requirements in the face of climate driven changes in weather patterns.
	To maintain and improve water quality and biodiversity in our waterways, which will help mitigate the impacts of climate change on those waterways.
Strategic Goal F: Recognising that climate change will not affect all in our community in an equal manner, to apply the principles of “Just Transition” in our operations.	To examine, in conjunction with the broader public sector, alternative employment and training opportunities for those whose jobs are impacted by climate change.
	To continue the process of continuing to retrofit Council housing stock.
	To work with communities to develop locally based and community led solutions for Just Transition.
	To recognise that some communities or sectors of the population may be more impacted by climate change itself or measures introduced to combat climate change
Strategic Goal G: To recognise the opportunities which may arise through mitigation and adaption-whether these are potential business opportunities or improvements in air quality or otherwise in quality of life.	To publicise the positive aspects of mitigation and adaptation measures that are put in place.
	The Local Enterprise Offices, and other supports, to assist businesses to develop and thrive in the lower carbon economy

2.4.3 LACAP Geographic Area

The LACAP area covers Laois County Council's entire boundary, and all actions are set to be completed within the boundary. Where actions require collaborative efforts with neighbouring County Councils, these will be considered; however, these are thought to be captured within the LACAP (and SEA/AA processes) for each of the neighbouring County Councils.

The geographic scope of the LACAP, therefore, is the County Council boundary, and the SEA study area extends to 15km beyond this to consider wider reaching environmental impacts as can be seen in Figure 2-2.



- Legend
- Local Authority Boundaries
 - 15km Buffer

SEA Study Area	
LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL Local Authority Climate Action Plans	
FIGURE NO:	2.2
CLIENT: LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL	
DATE: 28/07/2023	SCALE: 1:322,500 @ A3



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3. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

3.1 Introduction to Screening

This stage of the process identifies any potential significant effects to European sites from a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans.

An important element of the AA process is the identification of the “conservation objectives”, “Qualifying Interests” (QIs) and/ or “Special Conservation Interests” (SCIs) of European sites requiring assessment. QIs are the habitat features and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive for which each European Site has been designated and afforded protection. SCIs are wetland habitats and bird species listed within Annexes I and II of the Birds Directive. It is also vital that the threats to the ecological / environmental conditions that are required to support QIs and SCIs are considered as part of the assessment.

The following NPWS Generic Conservation Objectives have been considered in the screening:

- For SACs, to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected; and
- For SPAs, to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

Where available, Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) designed to define favourable conservation status for a particular habitat⁵ or species⁶ at that site have been considered.

3.2 Identification of Relevant European Sites

The Department of the Environment (2009) Guidance on AA recommends a 15 km buffer zone to be considered. Although sites beyond this buffer zone would be considered if relevant, a review of all sites within this zone has allowed the conclusion to be made that in the absence of significant hydrological links the characteristics of the LACAP will not impose effects beyond the 15 km buffer. The assessment process also considers hydrogeological processes and possible effects to ground water with respect to ground water sensitive habitats and species.

Details of European sites that occur within 15 km of the LACAP boundary are provided in Table 3-1. European sites and EPA Rivers Catchments are also mapped in Figure 3-1 below. Information on QIs, SCIs and site-specific vulnerabilities and sensitivities (see Appendix 1) and background information (such as that within Ireland’s Article 17 Report to the European Commission, site synopses and Natura 2000 standard data forms) have been considered by both the AA screening assessment (provided under this section) and Stage 2 AA (provided under Section 4).

⁵ Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when: its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing; the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

⁶ The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when: population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats; the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.



Conservation objectives that have been considered by the assessment are included in the following National Parks and Wildlife Service documents:

- NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives for River Shannon Callows SAC [IE0000216] Version 1.
- NPWS (2022) Conservation Objectives for Pollardstown Fen SAC [IE0000396] Version 1.
- NPWS (2020) Conservation Objectives for The Loughans SAC [IE0000407] Version 1.
- NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives for Charleville Wood SAC [IE0000571] Version 1.
- NPWS (2016) Conservation Objectives for Clara Bog SAC [IE0000572] Version 1.
- NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives for Raheenmore Bog SAC [IE0000582] Version 1.
- NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives for Sharavogue Bog SAC [IE0000585] Version 1.
- NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives for Slaney River Valley SAC [IE0000781] Version 1.
- NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives for Spahill and Clomantagh Hill SAC [IE0000849] Version 1.
- NPWS (2018) Conservation Objectives for Kilduff, Devilsbit Mountain SAC [IE0000934] Version 1.
- NPWS (2019) Conservation Objectives for Galmoy Fen SAC [IE0001858] Version 1.
- NPWS (2019) Conservation Objectives for Lisduff Fen SAC [IE0002147] Version 1.
- NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives for Lower River Shannon SAC [IE0002165] Version 1.
- NPWS (2018) Conservation Objectives for Island Fen SAC [IE0002236] Version 1.
- NPWS (2019) Conservation Objectives for Lough Derg, North-East Shore SAC [IE0002241] Version 1.
- NPWS (2022) Generic Conservation Objectives for Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA [IE0004058] Version 9.
- NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives for River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA [IE0004077] Version 1.
- NPWS (2022) Generic Conservation Objectives for Middle Shannon Callows SPA [IE0004096] Version 9.
- NPWS (2022) Generic Conservation Objectives for River Nore SPA [IE0004233] Version 9.

The assessment considers available conservation objectives. Since conservation objectives focus on maintaining the favourable conservation condition of the QIs/SCIs of each site, the screening process concentrated on assessing the potential effects of the LACAP against the QIs/SCIs of each site. The conservation objectives for each site were consulted throughout the assessment process.

3.3 Assessment Criteria and Screening

3.3.1 Is the LACAP Necessary to the Management of European Sites?

The overarching objective of the LACAP is not the nature conservation management of the sites, but to provide for coherent and coordinated approach to climate action within the County. Therefore, the LACAP is not considered to be directly connected with or necessary to the management of European sites.



3.3.2 Elements of the LACAP with Potential to Give Rise to Effects

The LACAP provides a framework for the sustainable development of the Council boundary area. There are a number of environmental sensitivities within the area and an assessment of effects indicates the potential effects relate to the following:

- *Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:*
 - *Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European sites and Wildlife Sites) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;*
 - *Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and*
 - *Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species.*
- *Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water and air.*
- *Adverse effects from tourism, amenity and recreation.*
- *Damage to the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource.*
- *Adverse effects upon the status of water bodies arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology.*
- *Increase in the risk of flooding.*
- *Emissions to air including greenhouse gas emissions and other emissions.*

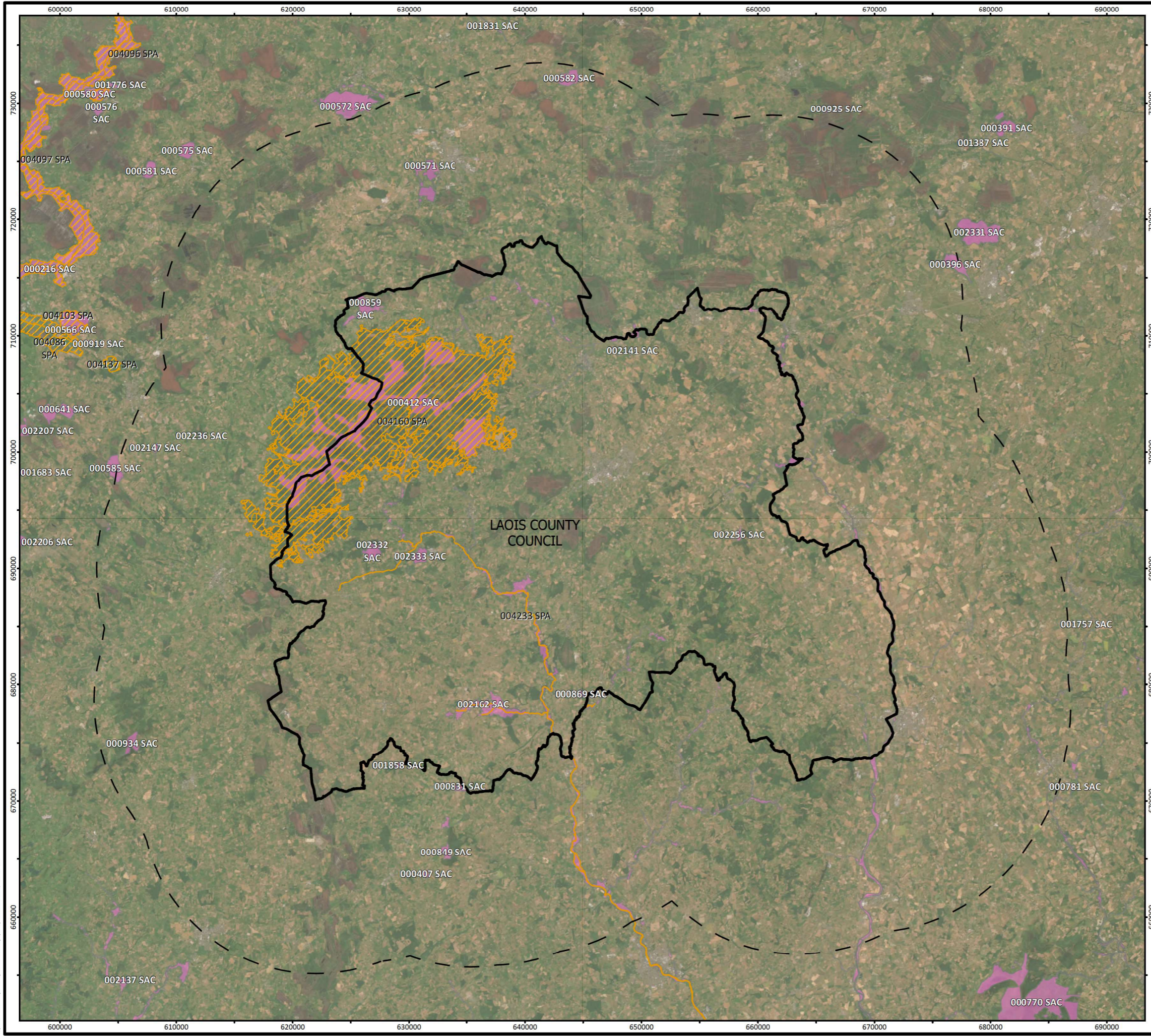
The elements of the LACAP with the highest potential to give rise to the effects indicated above are associated with construction phase elements of the implementation of the LACAP. The operational phase elements of the LACAP are consistent with the existing condition of the area. All policies and objectives are considered in this assessment with respect to the ecological integrity of each of the European sites identified. Considering the sensitivities/vulnerabilities of the QIs and SCIs in relation to all potential sources for effects and potential pathways for such effects. Where sources and pathways for effects are identified potential effects will be assessed in relation to the SSCOs.



3.3.3 Screening of Sites

Table 3.1 examines whether there is potential for effects on European sites considering information provided above, including Appendix 1. Sites are screened out based on one or a combination of the following criteria:

- The existence of potential for pathways for significant effects, such as hydrological links, LACAP proposals and the site to be screened;
- The distance of the relevant site from the LACAP boundary; and
- The existence of a link between identified threats or vulnerabilities at a site to potential impacts that may arise from the LACAP.



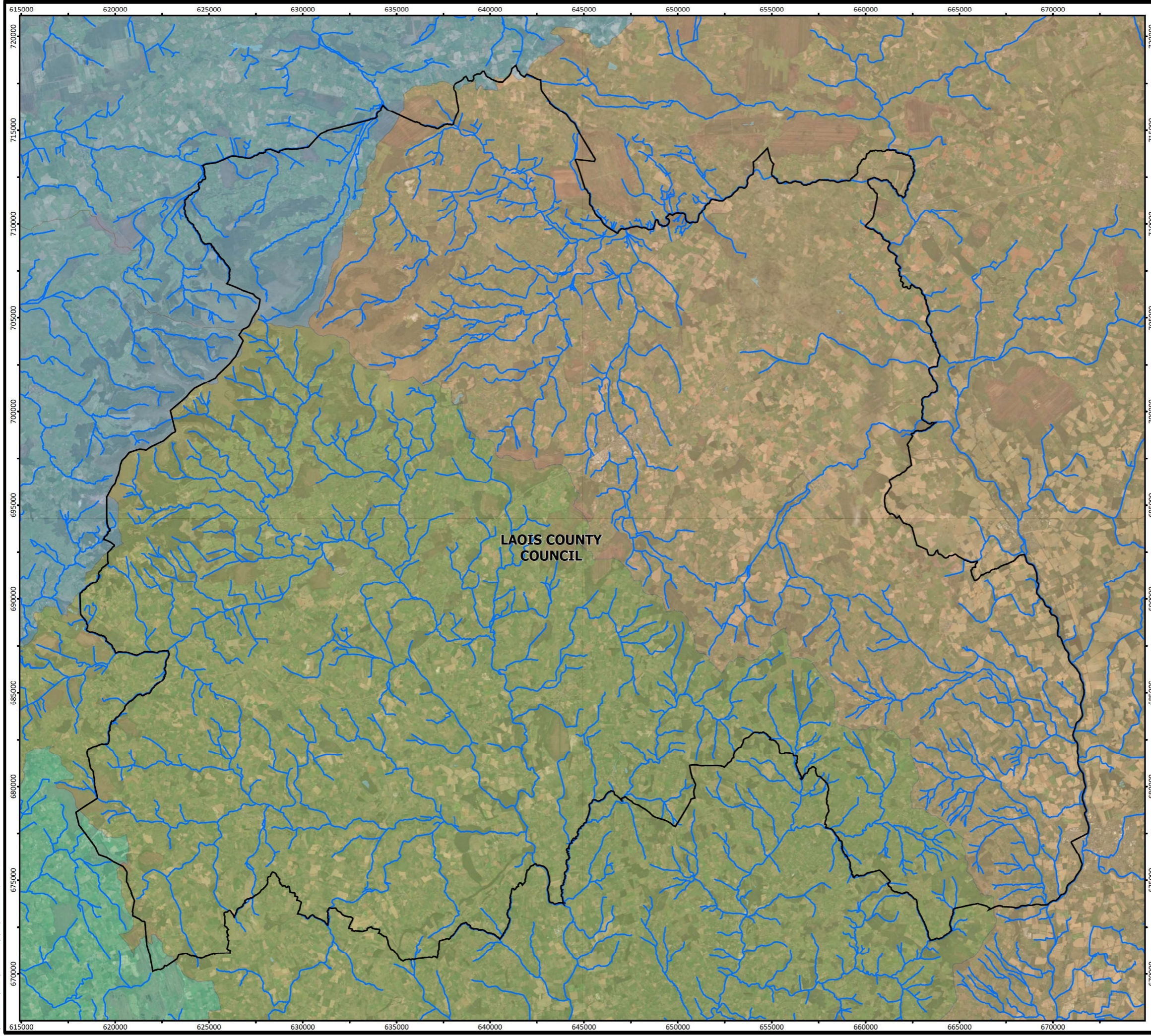
- Legend**
- Local Authority Boundaries
 - Local Authority Boundary - 15km Buffer
 - Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protected Areas	
LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL Local Authority Climate Action Plans	
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Legend

- Local Authority Boundaries
- Rivers
- WFD Catchments
- Catchment Name
 - Barrow
 - Lower Shannon
 - Nore
 - Suir

Hydrology	
LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL Local Authority Climate Action Plans	
FIGURE NO:	3.2
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Table 3-1: Screening of European sites which have ecological pathways for potential effects

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
000412	Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC	0	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0], Blanket bogs * if active bog [7130], Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]	The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites. Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.	Yes	Yes
000831	Cullahill Mountain SAC	0	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) * important orchid sites [6210]	The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites. Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interest as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.	Yes	Yes
000859	Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog SAC	0	Geyer`s whorl snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>) [1013], Alkaline fens [7230]	The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.		
000869	Lisbigney Bog SAC	0	Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the Caricion <i>davallianae</i> [7210], Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) [1016]	<p>The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
002141	Mountmellick SAC	0	Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) [1016]	<p>The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interest as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
002162	River Barrow and River Nore SAC	0	Nore Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i>) [1990], Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220], Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0], European dry heaths [4030], Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1096],	<p>The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc.</p>	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
			Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410], Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) [1016], Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029], Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355], Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430], Twaite shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>) [1103], Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330], Estuaries [1130], Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0], White-clawed crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) [1092], Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106], Reefs [1170], Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Killarney fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>) [1421], Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1095], <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1099]	Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites. Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.		
002256	Ballyprior Grassland SAC	0	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) * important orchid sites [6210]	The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc.	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				<p>Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interest as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>		
002332	Coolrain Bog SAC	0	Active raised bogs [7110], Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]	<p>The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
002333	Knockacoller Bog SAC	0	Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120], Active raised bogs [7110]	<p>The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
004160	Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA	0	Hen harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082]	<p>The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Special Conservation Interest as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
004233	River Nore SPA	0	Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>) [A229]	<p>The European Site is within the Laois County LACAP area. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>Thus, there is the potential for significant effects to this European Site and its Special Conservation Interest as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
001858	Galmoy Fen SAC	0.27	Alkaline fens [7230]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 270 m between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a potential groundwater connection is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p>	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interest of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.		
000849	Spahill and Clomantagh Hill SAC	2.55	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) * important orchid sites [6210]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 2.55 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>At this distance, there are no pathways for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interest as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	No	No
000571	Charleville Wood SAC	5.57	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0], Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) [1016]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 5.57 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a hydrological connection of 6.86 km (instream distance) is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
000407	The Loughans SAC	7.53	Turloughs [3180]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 7.53 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a potential groundwater connection is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interest of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
002236	Island Fen SAC	8.86	Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130], Alkaline fens [7230]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 8.86 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a potential groundwater connection is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	10.71	Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330], Estuaries [1130], Harbour seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>) [1365], River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1099], Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0], Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260], Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355], Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1095], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410], Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1096], Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106], Twaite shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>) [1103], Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, <i>Alnus incana</i> , <i>Salix alba</i>) [91E0], Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 10.71 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and no hydrological connection is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>At this distance, there are no pathways for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	No	No
000934	Kilduff, Devilsbit Mountain SAC	11.53	Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas - and submountain areas in Continental Europe [6230], European dry heaths [4030]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 11.53 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p>	No	No



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				At this distance, there are no pathways for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.		
002147	Lisduff Fen SAC	12.06	Alkaline fens [7230], Geyer`s whorl snail (Vertigo geyeri) [1013], Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 12.06 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a potential groundwater connection is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
000582	Raheenmore Bog SAC	13.08	Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120], Active raised bogs [7110]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 13.08 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>At this distance, there are no pathways for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	No	No



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC	13.56	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220], Desmoulin's whorl snail (Vertigo moulinsiana) [1016], Alkaline fens [7230], Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210], Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (Vertigo angustior) [1014], Geyer's whorl snail (Vertigo geyeri) [1013]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 13.56 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a potential groundwater connection is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
000585	Sharavogue Bog SAC	14.09	Active raised bogs [7110], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120], Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 14.09 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>At this distance, there are no pathways for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	No	No
000572	Clara Bog SAC	14.77	Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150], Bog woodland [91D0], Active raised bogs [7110], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120], Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. 14.77 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc.</p>	No	No



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
			on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) * important orchid sites [6210]	Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites. At this distance, there are no pathways for significant effects to this European Site and its Qualifying Interests as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.		
000216	River Shannon Callows SAC	22.00	Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410], Alkaline fens [7230], Limestone pavements [8240], Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0], Otter (Lutra lutra) [1355], Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) [6510]	There is a separation distance of ca. 22.00 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a hydrological connection of 38.06 km (instream distance) is present. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites. There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.	Yes	Yes
004096	Middle Shannon Callows SPA	22.00	Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) [A142], Corncrake (Crex crex) [A122], Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140], Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa) [A156], Wigeon (Anas penelope) [A050], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Whooper Swan (Cygnus cygnus) [A038], Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) [A179]	There is a separation distance of ca. XXX km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a hydrological connection of 38.04 km (instream distance) is present. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.		
002241	Lough Derg, North-East Shore SAC	30.06	Limestone pavements [8240], Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130], Alkaline fens [7230], Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210], Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0], Taxus baccata woods of the British Isles [91J0]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. XXX km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a hydrological connection of 64.71 km (instream distance) is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes
004058	Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	30.67	Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) [A017], Common tern (Sterna hirundo) [A193], Tufted Duck (Aythya fuligula) [A061], Goldeneye (Bucephala clangula) [A067]	<p>There is a separation distance of ca. XXX km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a hydrological connection of 64.74 km (instream distance) is present.</p> <p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	32.07	Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1096], Coastal lagoons [1150], Bottlenose dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>) [1349], River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1099], Reefs [1170], Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts [1230], Subtidal sandbanks (Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time) [1110], Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260], Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Atlantic salt meadows (Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>)) [1330], Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355], Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1095], Large shallow inlets and bays [1160], <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>) [6410], Estuaries [1130], <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand [1310], Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029]	There is a separation distance of ca. 32.07 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a hydrological connection of 105.24 km (instream distance) is present. The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites. There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.	Yes	Yes
004077	River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	64.39	Ringed plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137], Eurasian oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130], Mew gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182], Whooper swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038], Bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157], Eurasian curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160], Greylag goose	There is a separation distance of ca. 64.39 km between this European Site and the area of Laois County LACAP and a hydrological connection of 134.99 km (instream distance) is present.	Yes	Yes



Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature (Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests)	Potential Effects	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
			(Anser anser) [A043], Northern pintail (Anas acuta) [A054], Greylag goose (Anser anser) [A043], Eurasian teal (Anas crecca) [A052], Common shelduck (Tadorna tadorna) [A048], Great crested grebe (Podiceps cristatus) [A005], Common greenshank (Tringa nebularia) [A164], Northern shoveler (Anas clypeata) [A056], Grey plover (Pluvialis squatarola) [A141], Greater scaup (Aythya marila) [A062], Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos) [A053], Eurasian wigeon (Anas penelope) [A050], Red knot (Calidris canutus) [A143], Red-breasted merganser (Mergus serrator) [A069], Black-headed gull (Larus ridibundus) [A179], Common redshank (Tringa totanus) [A162], European golden plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140], Great cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) [A017], Ruddy turnstone (Arenaria interpres) [A169], Northern lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) [A142]	<p>The LACAP provides for actions which may result in land use change and infrastructure development etc. Therefore, there is potential for effects such as hydrological interactions, land take, disturbance etc. Which could affect European Sites.</p> <p>There is the potential for significant effects to the Qualifying Interests of this European site as a result of activities proposed under the LACAP.</p>		



3.4 In-combination effects with Other Plans and Programmes

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combination with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely affect European sites. Appendix 2 outlines a selection of plans or projects that may interact with the Plan to cause in-combination effects to European sites. These plans, programmes, strategies etc. were considered throughout the assessment.

The LACAP sits within a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use planning, infrastructure, sustainable development, recreation, environmental protection and environmental management, which have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant. The Plan must comply with relevant higher-level strategic actions and will, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction for the next 20 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSE for the Eastern and Midland Region sets out objectives for land use planning, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been subject to environmental assessment and must be implemented through the LACAP. Section 18, Part 3 of the Climate Acts 2015-2021 and Section 10 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) require that local authorities take account of their LACAPs when preparing a County Development Plan. Local authorities must be cognisant of this provision and forge a strong link between spatial planning and positive climate action ensuring that land-use planning and development integrates considerations of adaptation and mitigation.

In order to be realised, projects included in the LACAP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

All projects within the LACAP area and receiving environment will be considered in combination with any and all lower tier projects that may arise due to the implementation of the LACAP. Given the uncertainties that exist with regard to the scale and location of developments facilitated by the LACAP, it is recognised that the identification of in-combination effects is limited and that the assessment of in-combination effects will need to be undertaken in a more comprehensive manner at the project-level.

Additional information on the in-combination effects relationship with other plans and programmes is provided at Appendix 2.

3.5 AA Screening Conclusion

The effects that could arise from the LACAP have been examined in the context of several factors that could potentially affect the integrity of any European site. On the basis of the findings of this Screening for AA, it is concluded that the LACAP:

- Is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site; and
- May, if unmitigated, have significant adverse effects on 23 (no.) European sites.



Therefore, a Stage 2 AA is required for the LACAP (see Section 4 of this report). An AA Screening Determination undertaken by the planning authority accompanies this report and the LACAP.



4. STAGE 2 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction

The Stage 2 AA assesses whether the LACAP alone, or in-combination with other plans, programmes, and/or projects, would result in adverse effects on the integrity of the 23 European sites brought forward from screening (those considered on Table 3-1 for which there is “Potential Pathway for Significant Effects” and/or “Potential for In-Combination Effects”), with respect to site structure, function and/or conservation objectives.

4.2 Characterisation of European sites Potentially Affected

The AA Screening identified 23 European sites with pathway receptors for potential effects arising from the implementation of the LACAP. Appendix 1 characterises each of the qualifying features of the ALL European sites brought forward from Stage 1 in context of each of the sites’ vulnerabilities. Each of these site characterisations were taken from the NPWS website⁷.

4.3 Identifying and Characterising Potential Significant Effects

The following parameters can be used when characterising impacts⁸:

- Direct and Indirect Impacts - An impact can be caused either as a direct or as an indirect consequence of a Plan/Project.
- Magnitude - Magnitude measures the size of an impact, which is described as high, medium, low, very low or negligible.
- Extent - The area over that the impact occurs – this should be predicted in a quantified manner.
- Duration - The time that the effect is expected to last prior to recovery or replacement of the resource or feature.
 - Temporary: Up to 1 Year;
 - Short Term: The effects would take 1-7 years to be mitigated;
 - Medium Term: The effects would take 7-15 years to be mitigated;
 - Long Term: The effects would take 15-60 years to be mitigated; and
 - Permanent: The effects would take 60+ years to be mitigated.
- Likelihood – The probability of the effect occurring taking into account all available information.
 - Certain/Near Certain: >95% chance of occurring as predicted;
 - Probable: 50-95% chance as occurring as predicted;
 - Unlikely: 5-50% chance as occurring as predicted; and
 - Extremely Unlikely: <5% chance as occurring as predicted.

⁷ Last accessed 17th July 2023; <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>

⁸ These descriptions are informed by publications including: Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2016) “Guidelines for ecological impact assessment”; Environmental Protection Agency (2002) “Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements”; and National Roads Authority (2009) “Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Roads Schemes”.



- Ecologically Significant Impact - An impact (negative or positive) on the integrity of a defined site or ecosystem and/or the conservation status of habitats or species within a given geographic area.
- Integrity of a Site - The coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, which enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.

The Habitats Directive requires the focus of the assessment at this stage to be on the integrity of the site as indicated by its Conservation Objectives. It is an aim of NPWS to draw up conservation management plans for all areas designated for nature conservation. These plans will, among other things, set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest within a site.

Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) have been prepared for a number of European sites. These detailed SSCO aim to define favourable conservation condition for the qualifying habitats and species at that site by setting targets for appropriate attributes that define the character habitat. The maintenance of the favourable condition for these habitats and species at the site level will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a species can be described as being achieved when: 'population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself, and the natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.'

Favourable conservation status of a habitat can be described as being achieved when: 'its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing, and the ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable'.

Generic Conservation Objective for SACs:

To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species that the SAC has been selected.

One generic Conservation Objective for SPAs:

To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.



4.3.1 Types of Potential Effects

Assessment of potential effects on European sites is conducted utilising a standard source-pathway model (see approach referred to under Sections 1.3 and 3). The 2001 European Commission AA guidance outlines the following potential changes that may occur at a designated site, which may result in effects on the integrity and function of that site: loss/reduction of habitat area; habitat or species fragmentation; disturbance to key species; reduction in species density; changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.); and climate change. Each of these potential changes are considered below and in Table 4-1 with reference to the QIs/SCIs of all of the European sites brought forward from Stage 1 of the AA process (see Section 3).

4.3.1.1 *Loss/Reduction of Habitat Area*

The LACAP provides for action related to climate action and generally seeks to reduce CO₂ emissions through coordination, advocacy, awareness etc. Many of the actions also relate to land use change or the provision of infrastructure developments such as green energy and active travel projects. The exact spatial location of these projects is not fully developed within the plan. The development of all infrastructural have associated construction phase effects which include land take, habitat destruction, disturbance effects, light pollution, dust, hydrological interactions, airborne pollution, excessive noise etc. Therefore, mitigation measures are required to ensure that there are no significant adverse effects due to construction on the ecological integrity of any European site.

As identified above LACAP boundary has several European sites within it; therefore, there is potential for effects to European sites through urbanisation and direct habitat loss on foot of the implementation of the LACAP; however, several mitigation measures have been integrated into the LACAP to ensure that its implementation will not result in the loss of any habitat necessary for the ecological integrity of any European site; namely list of actions to avoid habitat loss 70⁹, 76¹⁰, 2.2¹¹ and 2.9¹².

Additionally, the environmental governance section of the LACAP sets out a number of measures which will ensure the protection of biodiversity throughout the implementation of the plan such as:

- Support the National Climate Action Plan (which itself supports international climate obligations) in a manner which will assist in addressing the causes of climate change the impacts of which affect humans, flora, fauna, habitats, heritage and the broader environment.
- Support the National Climate Action Plan (which itself supports international climate obligations) in addressing the local impacts of climate change which has the potential to impact humans, flora, fauna, habitats, heritage and the broader environment.
- Within the context of the range of Plans, Strategies and similar documents produced by the Council, to further provide for environmentally positive measures within the actions undertaken pursuant to this plan.

⁹ Laois County Council will develop a Tree Strategy to provide the vision and direction for long-term planning, planting, protection and maintenance of trees, hedgerows and woodlands within County Laois whilst taking measures to promote the use of native species over non-natives and having due regard for water quality and soil stability issues whilst undertaking the planning process.

¹⁰ Laois County Council will develop and implement a good practice document for the reduction in use of chemical pesticides and herbicides lands and areas managed by the Council. Laois County Council will adopt defined good practice guide in the use of such products to reduce the risk of unintended adverse effects on the receiving environment.

¹¹ Implement tree management strategies to maximize canopy cover in the area with a focus on promoting native trees; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites and biodiversity.

¹² Provide support to other organizations working on biodiversity enhancement programs.



- Promote climate action projects that support habitats such as protected trees, hedgerows wetlands, flood zones which contribute to green infrastructure.
- Support opportunities to improve and restore ecological connectivity of non-designated habitats and sites (including watercourse connectivity) to improve overall ecosystem resilience and functioning while supporting climate action within the county.
- Support opportunities to promote peatland restoration (such as Abbeyleix Bog Project), rehabilitation and maintenance inclusive of biodiversity enhancement while achieving climate targets through the implementation of the climate actions within the plan. Within the context of European, National and Regional policy instruments (such as the Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management and similar) to seek to have co-benefits with such instruments within the actions arising from this plan.
- Within areas such as biodiversity protection and enhancement; improved air, water or soil quality; or enhanced recreation, amenity and cultural heritage value to seek to have co-benefits with such areas within the actions arising from this plan.
- That developments by the Council and their partners continue to have regard to the potential for potential environmental impacts and environmental protection requirements.

Ensure local authority projects supported by plan actions have taken the necessary precautions to identify and manage invasive species, particularly with regard to Schedule III species. No local authority climate action related development project that is likely to cause the spread of invasive species listed in Schedule III shall be supported. All supported projects shall align with the goal of appropriately protecting, restoring and enhancing terrestrial and aquatic habitat and conditions to support the promotion of native species).

These policies ensure that there will be no loss of habitat or supporting habitat for species that are necessary to maintain the ecological integrity of European sites throughout the lifetime of the plan.

4.3.1.2 *Habitat or species Fragmentation*

As previously stated, the LACAP provides for infrastructure developments which have associated effects. These effects could result in the fragmentation of habitat and or species through light pollution, habitat loss, removal of stepping stone habitats etc. This is particularly relevant for linear projects such as active travel schemes. Therefore, mitigation measures are required to ensure that there are no significant adverse effects in relation to fragmentation on the ecological integrity of any European site.



The LACAP recognises the role of non-designated sites for the maintenance and enhancement of European sites due to the connectivity and accessibility of ecological resources. The LACAP provides actions to minimise potential fragmentation and to facilitate the enhancement of ecological corridors such as hedgerows; mitigation measures such as 70⁹ (see full list of measures reproduced at Section 5 of this report). Lighting is a particular issue for biodiversity - particularly with regard to linear projects, therefore the following action was required to ensure there would be no significant impacts in this regard: 34¹³, 46¹⁴ and 4.10¹⁵.

Further to these provisions there are actions related to specific ecological resources and/or habitats such as waterways, wetlands and peatlands etc. These actions apply to all plans, programmes and/or projects that may arise due to the implementation of the LACAP and will ensure that habitat or species fragmentation will not occur in relation to the connectivity of the ecological resources necessary to maintain the ecological integrity of European sites throughout the lifetime of the LACAP.

4.3.1.3 *Disturbance to Key Species*

Disturbance effects are caused by any activity that has potential to alter the movement patterns/distribution of species. Disturbance effects can relate to direct disturbance through human activity/movement or noise pollution. This is particularly relevant in relation to tourism and recreation in general, which could be influenced by the LACAP due to the provision of active travel schemes and other green initiatives within the LACAP; from the perspective that many of the tourism destinations or attractions in the area are in or adjacent to European sites.

¹³ By the year 2030, Laois County Council aims to transition 94% of its public lighting inventory to lower energy lighting sources having due regard to environmental sensitivities and bringing the overall percentage of its public lighting stock using higher efficiency lighting sources to 94%.

¹⁴ Building on the experience of solar powered public lighting at Ballyfin, Laois County Council will pilot LED PV solar street lights at two further locations; while ensuring the lumen levels and spectral range are maintained or reduced/controlled to avoid effects to biodiversity.

¹⁵ Upgrade all public lighting to energy-efficient LED technology; Having due regard to environmental sensitivities.



The LACAP accounts for noise pollution effects through its policies and objectives affording protection to European sites by ensuring any projects that arise from the implementation of the LACAP avoid or minimise noise in compliance with the Environmental Noise Directive and associated National Regulations through the Laois County Council Noise Action Plan 2019 - 2022 Actions to ensure the protection of habitat quality with respect to disturbance effects from noise and other sources have been built into the LACAP; namely 33¹⁶, 51¹⁷, 52¹⁸, 53¹⁹, 54²⁰, 55²¹, 58²², 59²³, 63²⁴ and 69²⁵ etc. (further details see Section 5).

These measures are robust to ensure that any sensitive habitat features or species will be identified and only compliant applications will be granted. All of the policies related to positive effects for Biodiversity are detailed in Section 5.

¹⁶ Laois County Council will work with the National Transport Authority (NTA) to establish a new bus route for Portlaoise Town within the lifetime of this Plan.

¹⁷ Laois County Council will roll out Bike Share scheme in the larger urban areas over population of 5,000.

¹⁸ Laois County Council will appoint a Cycling Officer to lead on promoting active travel

¹⁹ Laois County Council will support piloting a Bike library.

²⁰ Laois County Council will continue to make E bikes available for their staff to attend meetings

²¹ Laois County Council will pilot a Transport Mobility Hub at Portlaoise train station, evaluating its success, and conducting a feasibility assessment for potential expansion to other train stations in the County. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.

²² Laois County Council will work with other agencies to assist the installation of designated bus cages, where bus pull in bays are unattainable; priority bus corridors in main towns where viable; bus hubs in main towns where feasible to allow for driver rest/comfort stops. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.

²³ Laois County Council will continued engagement with, and support roll out of the Safe Routes to School Programme in conjunction with An Taisce - Active travel developments will continue to be carried out in a manner that has due regard to environmental sensitivities (such as local human receptors, Biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology, existing traffic and transport conditions and amenity value).

²⁴ Laois County Council will formulate a Fleet Decarbonation Roadmap, to provide a "roadmap" to the sustainable decarbonisation of the fleet.

²⁵ Laois County Council will collaborate with neighbouring local authorities to develop a comprehensive Electric Vehicle (EV) charging strategy, ensuring a seamless and regionally integrated charging infrastructure to support the widespread adoption of electric vehicles, having due regard to environmental sensitivities (such as material assets, the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, and cultural heritage).



4.3.1.4 Reduction in species density

Species densities are reliant on species distributions, habitat condition, connectivity of ecological resources and availability of resources such as prey/food. The LACAP introduces potential sources for effects to affect these four determinant factors for species densities in the form of construction phase effects such as habitat destruction, visitor movements/access, hydrological interaction or operational effects such as disturbance effects, habitat encroachment, trampling etc. However, the LACAP contains provisions to enhance biodiversity, landscape and the environment within Council boundary 70⁹, 72²⁶, 73²⁷, 74²⁸, 83²⁹, 98³⁰, 2.2¹¹, 2.3³¹, 2.4³², 2.9¹² and 2.10³³ etc. Similarly, the LACAP the role of non-designated sites for the maintenance and enhancement of European sites due to the connectivity and accessibility of ecological resources. Further to these provisions there are actions related to specific ecological resources and/or habitats such as 70⁹, 2.2¹¹, 2.3³¹ and 2.5³⁴. These actions apply to all plans, programmes and projects that may arise due to the implementation of the plan. Measures relating to light pollution, noise pollution, habitat loss and fragmentation are addressed above (further detailed in Section 5).

In addition to this the LACAP identifies actions to protect and improve water quality interactions (see below for further details) which can influence species densities. There are also a number of provisions relating to protective buffer zones, further assessment requirements as well as commitments to increasing water quality standards etc. These measures are detailed across the LACAP.

²⁶ Laois County Council will carry out shade-related tree planting in 10 previously constructed housing estates, subject to need and local agreement. There will be a commitment under this measure to plant native trees.

²⁷ Laois County Council will assist with the development of a Biodiversity Garden at the teachers Centre in Portlaoise

²⁸ Laois County Council will assist schools in developing biodiversity enhancing projects on their premises during the lifetime of the plan.

²⁹ Laois County Council will promote clean environments by continuing to support Tidy Towns, community groups and other environmental initiatives throughout the county.

³⁰ Laois County Council will update the Tenants' Handbook to incorporate a comprehensive guide on heat pump operation, troubleshooting, and information on biodiversity gardening.

³¹ Continue the Pollinator Friendly Roundabout Project to support local pollinators.

³² Establish a Biodiversity Demonstration Garden at the Laois Education Centre, serving as a showcase for a wide range of practical biodiversity and pollinator projects to inspire teachers.

³³ Enhance the town's green infrastructure to bolster biodiversity. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.

³⁴ Continue the ongoing management of little woodlands or An Choill Beag in local school as an educational opportunity for students to connect with nature.



4.3.1.5 *Changes of Indicators of Conservation Value*

Water quality is the primary macro indicator of conservation value. The LACAP contains many robust actions to ensure the protection of both surface and ground water quality. Development within the vicinity of groundwater or surface water dependant European sites will not be permitted where there is potential for a likely significant effect on the groundwater or surface water supply to the European sites. Action that specifically relate to the protection of water quality which account for potential effects to European sites include 10³⁵, 76¹⁰, 77³⁶ and 78³⁷. Similarly, emissions to air have potential to adversely affect the conservation status of European sites; however, the LACAP contains actions – such as 46¹⁴, 44³⁸, 78¹⁷, 33¹⁶, 51¹⁷, 52¹⁸, 53¹⁹, 54²⁰, 55²¹ and 58²² etc. – which account for this.

Additionally, the actions provide broader scope to ensure the protection of the wider landscape associated with riparian zones and habitats sensitive to hydrological interactions; such as 38³⁹.

³⁵ Laois County Council is required to achieve a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 based on 2016-2018 levels and improve energy efficiency by 50%.

³⁶ Laois County Council will continue to enforce GAP (Good Agricultural Practice) regulations, ensuring water bodies resilience to climate changes are sustained

³⁷ Laois County Council will work with partner bodies to continue to raise awareness on Good Agricultural Practices and diversification in the local agricultural sector to e.g. smart farming, farming for nature.

³⁸ By 2027 at least one of Laois County Councils' HGV fleet will be upgraded to use either sustainably sourced waste HVO or CNG to reduce CO2 emissions.

³⁹ In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will prepare a three-year forward plan for river maintenance of river channels (together with associated bridges) under its jurisdiction every two years. This comprehensive maintenance plan will be subject to statutory procedures (including Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures, if and as required) recognizing the sensitivity of the sites involved. The design process, the Plan, together with any statutory procedures will have due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, protected species, local air quality, and cultural heritage.



4.3.1.6 *Climate change*

The LACAP is specifically focused on climate action and most of the actions within the plan are aimed at reducing carbon emissions and move towards renewable energy sources; 1⁴⁰, 3⁴¹, 4⁴², 7⁴³, 8⁴⁴, 9⁴⁵, 10³⁵, 13⁴⁶, 27⁴⁷, 28⁴⁸, 2.2¹³ and 46³⁸.

Therefore, there are no sources for significant effects to climate change factors identified within the LACAP having regard for the measures identified above and in Section 5 below. Therefore, there are no changes projected to arise from climate change to the degree that it would affect the QIs or SCIs of the European sites considered.

⁴⁰ Climate Action requirements will be considered in the development of functional plans, strategies and programmes by Laois County Council.

⁴¹ Laois County Council will oversee the effective implementation of the LACAP actions, and will establish and maintain an internal Climate Action Steering Group with representatives from key local authority functions. This Steering Group will conduct regular meetings to ensure action plans are executed at the department level and identify opportunities for collaboration and cross-departmental synergies.

⁴² Climate Action will be included in the Laois County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan objectives; this in turn will provide for its translation into Team Development Plans and Personal Development Plans for relevant staff.

⁴³ Laois County Council will continue their commitment to achieve national targets on climate change and energy efficiency and to act as exemplar for climate action.

⁴⁴ Laois County Council will report regularly on progress towards achieving climate related objectives to ensure sustained implementation. This will require devising and implementing appropriate reporting mechanisms

⁴⁵ The Council will prepare applications seeking funding under various national programmes, including the Just Transition programme, to deliver on actions under this LACAP.

⁴⁶ Integration of Green Public Procurement (GPP) principles will be a standard practice in all Laois County Council procurement processes, aligning with the Sustainable Public Procurement Objectives outlined in LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL Corporate Procurement Plan 2021-2023 and GPP Internal Guidance Note 2023.

⁴⁷ All new build Laois County Council housing will adhere to Near Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standards (A2 BER).

⁴⁸ Laois County Council will retrofit from its existing social housing and voids to a B2 standard, subject to the availability of national funding; having due regard to all relevant environmental sensitivities, as appropriate.



Table 4-1: Characterisation of Potential Effects arising from the subject land area

Site Code	Site Name	Characterisation of Potential Effects
000412	Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to burning, agricultural practices, forestry, invasive species, mining, hydrological interactions, waste management, species composition change, recreation and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
000831	Cullahill Mountain SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to agricultural practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
000859	Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to burning, agricultural practices, hydrological interactions, waste management, species composition change, and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
000869	Lisbigney Bog SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to burning, agricultural practices, waste management, species composition change and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Characterisation of Potential Effects
001858	Galmoy Fen SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to agricultural practices, forestry and mining.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
002141	Mountmellick SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to hydrological interactions and waste management.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
002162	River Barrow and River Nore SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to burning, agricultural practices, forestry, invasive species, erosion, mining, hydrological interactions, changes in abiotic conditions, direct interaction with species and populations through fishing and hunting, recreation and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
002256	Ballyprior Grassland SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to agricultural practices, forestry, and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Characterisation of Potential Effects
002332	Coolrain Bog SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to burning, agricultural practices, forestry, invasive species, waste management, hydrological interactions, other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
002333	Knockacoller Bog SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to burning, agricultural practices, mining, hydrological interactions, biocenotic evolution and succession.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
004160	Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SPA relate to agricultural practices, forestry, other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
004233	River Nore SPA	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SPA relate to waste management and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Characterisation of Potential Effects
000571	Charleville Wood SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to agricultural practices, forestry, direct interaction with species and populations through hunting and predator control, recreation and removal of terrestrial plants.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
000407	The Loughans SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to agricultural practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
002236	Island Fen SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to burning, agricultural practices, species composition change, mining, direct interaction with species and populations through hunting, and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
002147	Lisduff Fen SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to agricultural practices, mining, hydrological interactions, waste management, and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Characterisation of Potential Effects
000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to burning, agricultural practices, forestry, mining, waste management, direct interaction with species and populations through fishing and hunting, recreation and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures of this SAC relate to agricultural practices, forestry, hydrological interactions, waste management, invasive species, direct interaction with species and populations through fishing and hunting, pollutants, mining, recreation, and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
004058	Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SPA relate to agricultural practices, direct interaction with species and populations through fishing and hunting, and recreation.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
000216	River Shannon Callows SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to agricultural practices, forestry, hydrological interactions, waste management, direct interaction with species and populations through hunting, predation, recreation and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Characterisation of Potential Effects
004096	Middle Shannon Callows SPA	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SPA relate to agricultural practices, hydrological interactions, direct interaction with species and populations through hunting and fishing, recreation and other direct land use practices. Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
002241	Lough Derg, North-East Shore SAC	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures for the SAC relate to, agricultural practices, forestry, invasive species, problematic native species, mining, species composition changes, eutrophication, hydrological interactions, waste management, climatic changes, recreation and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>
004077	River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	<p>The LACAP provides for actions related to climate action which seek to coordinate and facilitate a reduction in carbon emissions. Some of the actions support the development of infrastructure which could result in effect to European sites such as land take, hydrological interactions, alterations to land use etc.</p> <p>The known threats and pressures of this SPA relate to direct interaction with agricultural practices, waste management, species and populations through fishing, recreation, and other direct land use practices.</p> <p>Therefore mitigation measures are required to ensure no such impacts will affect the ecological integrity of the Europeans site. These measures are detailed in section 5 below.</p>



5. MITIGATION MEASURES

This section outlines measures that have been incorporated into the LACAP in order to mitigate against potential effects to European sites as identified above. The LACAP was prepared in an iterative manner whereby the Plan and AA documents have informed subsequent versions of the other. These mitigation measures ensure that there will be no significant effects to the ecological integrity of any European site from implementation of the LACAP. The mitigation measures most relevant to the protection of European sites are identified in Table 5-1 and Table 5-2 below.⁴⁹ Some of these measures, many of which were integrated into the current Plan through the SEA and AA processes for that Plan, have been retained and/or updated.

The plan making process was carried out in parallel with the SEA and AA processes. Regular communication and interaction took place between the environmental assessment team and the plan making team. Environmental considerations that came to light during the SEA and AA processes, including consultation processes, were regularly communicated to the plan making team during the plan making process. As necessary, environmental mitigation measures to ameliorate the potential negative environmental effects of implementing the LACAP were developed and then integrated into the LACAP. Much of the environmental mitigation was embedded in the plan early on in the process as a result of this. This process was carried out in an iterative manner to ensure optimal plan making and environmental outcomes. Environmental considerations were also integrated into the plan so as to facilitate maximizing identified positive environmental effects of the LACAP.

Mitigation measures have been proposed that maximize the co-benefits of climate action for other environmental components such as local air quality, human health, biodiversity, water quality and other interrelated areas (i.e., win-win solutions).

Additional text clarifying environmental protection related obligations and environmental enhancement opportunities has been attached to a variety of defined actions in the plan (as seen in Table 5-1). This text has been shaped to ensure that environmental considerations are appropriately taken into account during plan implementation. This text has also been shaped to ensure plan implementation generates the minimum level of negative environmental effects and the maximum level of positive environmental effects.

Several environmental governance principles were established to ensure plan implementation generates the minimum level of negative environmental effects and the maximum level of positive environmental effects (as seen in Table 5-2). These environmental governance principles shall underpin and guide plan implementation and shall apply to and be integrated into all actions/activities which result due to the implementation of the plan.

Due to the inter-relationship between various environmental components, environmental mitigation measures defined for one component can also serve to benefit another environmental component.

⁴⁹ For a complete assessment of the Plan, against all environmental components (These components comprise biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors), refer to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report.



Table 5-1: Recommendations integrated into the Plan

Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
23	Establish a baseline of derelict and vacant properties in prioritised locations under Town Centre First Programme and promote the redevelopment of same through engagement with the owners and use of legislative powers if required.	This action is an engagement/promotion related action, which will support regeneration of vacant and derelict dwellings. It has to potential to successfully underpin such projects leading to GHG emission reductions and positive effect on climate.	Establish a baseline of derelict and vacant properties in prioritised locations under Town Centre First Programme and promote the sustainable redevelopment of same through engagement with the owners and use of legislative powers if required.
28	Laois County Council will retrofit from its existing social housing and voids to a B2 standard, subject to the availability of national funding.	This action will support the reduction of Residential sector GHG emissions. The action is likely to have a slight positive environmental effect - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements. There is the potential for light and air pollution during retrofitting works. Retrofitting works may also negatively effect the appropriate conservation of protected structures. Therefore there is also scope for there to be negative effects if unmitigated.	Laois County Council will retrofit from its existing social housing and voids to a B2 standard, subject to the availability of national funding; having due regard to all relevant environmental sensitivities, as appropriate.
30	Laois County Council will establish a safe and accessible "Learn to Cycle" park to promote cycling skills and confidence, fostering a culture of active travel and sustainable mobility within the community.	This action facilitates modal shift and the use of active travel networks. This is beneficial to human health, air quality, and could lead to a reduction in GHG emissions. This action may support some degree of minor development to facilitate such a facility. Such development is unlikely to have significant impacts given its scale and magnitude.	Laois County Council will establish a safe and accessible "Learn to Cycle" facility to promote cycling skills and confidence, fostering a culture of active travel and sustainable mobility within the community
32	Laois County Council will complete three Local Transport Plans for largest urban centres population	This action has the potential to support modal shift and the use of public transport and active travel in the county's largest urban centres. This may lead to some degree of lowered traffic congestion, thereby positively	Laois County Council will complete three Local Transport Plans for largest urban centres population over 5,000 in County



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	over 5,000 in County Laois i.e. Portlaoise, Mountmellick and Portarlington.	impacting air quality and human health, and lowering GHG emissions associated with use of private vehicles.	Laois i.e. Portlaoise, Mountmellick and Portarlington - whilst having appropriate regard to environmental sensitivities and opportunities to promote climate action co-benefits.
34	By the year 2029, Laois County Council aims to transition a further 30% of its public lighting inventory to higher efficiency (lower energy) lighting sources and bringing the overall percentage of its public lighting stock using higher efficiency lighting sources to 94%.	This action will support the local authority in reducing its organisational GHG emissions in line with climate policy and legislation and emission reduction targets. The action is likely to have a slight positive environmental effect in terms of GHG emissions however, the spectrum of light from LED sources has the potential to impact nocturnal species. Therefore there is also scope for there to be slight negative effects if unmitigated.	By the year 2030, Laois County Council aims to transition 94% of its public lighting inventory to lower energy lighting sources having due regard to environmental sensitivities and bringing the overall percentage of its public lighting stock using higher efficiency lighting sources to 94%.
35	In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council aims to propose a real term increase of 1% per annum above inflation over the life of this plan for gully maintenance and general piped drainage maintenance.	This action will promote good flood risk management and flood risk reduction. Proper gully maintenance will generate a positive effect for environmental receptors that are at risk of being negatively impacted by flood events - by reducing the risk of such flood events.	In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council aims to propose a real term increase of 1% per annum above inflation over the life of this plan for gully maintenance and general piped drainage maintenance.
36	Considering the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will propose a real term increase of 1% per annum above inflation over the life of this plan for masonry bridge works.	This activity has the potential to adversely effect Annex II and IV species such as Daubenton's Bat through disturbance and habitat loss or impact protected structures if incorrectly implemented. Such work also has the potential to negatively impact the status of bridges that constitute protected structures or that have cultural heritage value attached to them.	Considering the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will propose a real term increase of 1% per annum above inflation over the life of this plan for masonry bridge works. During the execution of these works, the Council will continue to have due regard to the need to appropriately protect and



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
			<p>conserve protected structures in accordance with relevant protected structures regulations, and the need to not negatively impinge on any protected species or European sites.</p>
37	<p>Laois County Council will continue to support the development of flood protection schemes in the towns of Mountmellick, Portarlinton and Clonaslee; these schemes will make these settlements more resilient to flooding.</p>	<p>The progression of flood resilience related action has the potential to lead to significant development taking place at and in the vicinity of water bodies.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, such development could potentially have a variety of significant, negative environmental effects, including effects on: water quality and the hydrology of water bodies; biodiversity, including flora and fauna reliant on aquatic eco-systems; the receiving air environment (due to the generation of construction dust), the receiving noise environment (due to the generation of construction phase noise), and the receiving human environment.</p> <p>Flood resilience action has the potential to have positive environmental effects also.</p> <p>The possible development of nature based solutions and SuDS as part of a flood resilience scheme has the potential to have slight to significant, positive effects on biodiversity and water quality at or downstream of a particular water body.</p> <p>The delivery of flood resilience action also has the potential to reduce flood risk and prevent flood events. Reducing flood risk can generate significant, positive effects for a variety of environmental receptors that could be negatively impacted by flood events; including human receptors, ecological receptors and cultural heritage assets.</p>	<p>Laois County Council will continue to support (subject to statutory processes and adherence to environmental standards) the development of OPW flood protection schemes in the towns of Mountmellick, Portarlinton and Clonaslee; these schemes will make these settlements more resilient to flooding.</p>
38	<p>In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will</p>	<p>This action serves to protect surface waters and their associated structures against damage caused by increases in rainfall intensity. As mentioned in the action, such sites may be sensitive to alteration and</p>	<p>In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will prepare a three-year forward</p>



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>prepare a three-year forward plan for river maintenance of river channels (together with associated bridges) under its jurisdiction every two years. This comprehensive maintenance plan will be subject to statutory procedures (including Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures, if and as required) recognising the sensitivity of the sites involved.</p> <p>The design process, the Plan, together with any statutory procedures will have due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, protected species, local air quality, and cultural heritage including engagement with relevant statutory bodies as required.</p>	<p>therefore, works involved may lead to adverse impacts on biodiversity and water quality if improperly carried out.</p>	<p>plan for river maintenance of river channels (together with associated bridges) under its jurisdiction every two years. This comprehensive maintenance plan will be subject to statutory procedures (including Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures, if and as required) recognizing the sensitivity of the sites involved. The design process, the Plan, together with any statutory procedures will have due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, protected species, local air quality, and cultural heritage, including engagement with relevant statutory bodies as required.</p>
39	<p>In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will propose, in its annual budgets, a real term increase of 1% per annum above inflation over the</p>	<p>This action has the potential to support river drainage maintenance works.</p> <p>The progression of drainage related actions has the potential to lead to works taking place at and in the vicinity of rivers.</p>	<p>In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will propose, in its annual budgets, a real term increase of 1% per annum above inflation over the life of this plan for river drainage maintenance works. During the</p>



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	life of this plan for river drainage maintenance works.	In the absence of any mitigation, such works could potentially have a variety of significant, negative environmental effects, including effects on: water quality and the hydrology of water bodies; biodiversity, including flora and fauna reliant on aquatic eco-systems; the receiving air environment (due to the generation of construction dust), the receiving noise environment (due to the generation of construction phase noise).	execution of these works, the Council will continue to have due regard to environmental sensitivities at these locations, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.
44	By 2027 at least one of Laois County Councils' HGV fleet will be upgraded to use either waste HVO or CNG to reduce CO2 emissions.	This action has the potential to support the reduction of vehicle related emissions in the County. The scalable adoption of vehicles based on certain alternative fuels may contribute to the expansion of alternative fuel production sectors. These sectors may indirectly cause environmental effects (including uncertain and potentially negative effects) as a result of fuel sourcing, production and supply processes.	By 2027 at least one of Laois County Councils' HGV fleet will be upgraded to use either sustainably sourced waste HVO or CNG to reduce CO2 emissions.
46	Building on the experience of solar powered public lighting at Ballyfin, Laois County Council will pilot LED PV solar street lights at two further locations.	This action will support the local authority in reducing its organisational GHG emissions in line with climate policy and legislation and emission reduction targets. The action is likely to have a slight positive environmental effect in terms of GHG emissions however, the spectrum of light from LED sources has the potential to impact nocturnal species. Therefore there is also scope for there to be slight negative effects if unmitigated.	Building on the experience of solar powered public lighting at Ballyfin, Laois County Council will pilot LED PV solar street lights at two further locations; while ensuring the lumen levels and spectral range are maintained or reduced/controlled to avoid effects to biodiversity.
48	Over the lifetime of this plan Laois County Council will carry out a Renewable Electricity Strategy (RES) for the County, based on revised national guidance.	This is an action that serves to promote the development renewable energy projects. The supporting of such developments could result a variety of slight to significant negative environmental effects, including landscape and visual impacts and negative impacts on sensitive habitats and species, including European sites - thus further consideration and mitigation measures are required.	Over the lifetime of this plan Laois County Council will carry out a Renewable Electricity Strategy (RES) for the County, based on revised national guidance. Such a strategy would be appropriately shaped by planning and environmental protection requirements associated with renewable energy development.



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
49	Laois County Council will conduct a feasibility study for Solar Farm at Kyletalesha landfill.	<p>The assessment process associated with this action will not have any real environmental effect when considered in isolation.</p> <p>The action could potentially support the carrying out of renewable energy projects that could generate a range of slight to significant positive environmental effects, including positive effects on climate, water quality, the soils environment and biodiversity.</p> <p>In the absence of mitigation, the action could support the carrying out of potentially significant development which could have negative slight to significant environmental effects, including impacts on population and human health (due to solar panel glint and glare), biodiversity impacts, and impacts on the water or soils environment (due to development construction phase run-off of silt or cement based material). Such potential effects can be mitigated by considering planning and environmental related matters and constraints early on during the assessment/design process.</p>	Laois County Council will conduct a feasibility study for Solar Farm at Kyletalesha landfill, ensuring this study has appropriate regard to planning and environmental protection considerations.
55	Laois County Council will pilot a Transport Mobility Hub at Portlaoise train station, evaluating its success, and conducting a feasibility assessment for potential expansion to other train stations in the County.	<p>This action will encourage modal shift and promotes use of public transport and active travel. This may lead to reductions in GHG emissions associated with the use of ICE-based private vehicles.</p> <p>This action could support the carrying out of development at such a hub including the development of public transport, active travel or charging infrastructure. Such development activities may have an unintended negative environmental impact in the absence of appropriate design or appropriate environmental mitigation measures.</p>	Laois County Council will pilot a Transport Mobility Hub at Portlaoise train station, evaluating its success, and conducting a feasibility assessment for potential expansion to other train stations in the County. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
57	Laois County Council will work with other agencies to identify priority locations for bus shelters throughout the county and work with funding agencies to secure	This action has the potential to encourage modal shift and the use of public transport networks. This has the potential to lead to reductions in GHG emissions associated with private transport using ICE-based vehicles. Any construction/maintenance works involved in the	Laois County Council will work with other agencies to identify priority locations for bus shelters throughout the county and work with funding agencies to secure provision of bus shelters and upgrades to existing.



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	provision of bus shelters and upgrades to existing.	establishment of such corridors/cages/hubs is unlikely to result in any significant environment effect.	Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
58	Laois County Council will work with other agencies to assist the installation of designated bus cages, where bus pull in bays are unattainable; priority bus corridors in main towns where viable; bus hubs in main towns where feasible to allow for driver rest/comfort stops.	This action has the potential to encourage modal shift and the use of public transport networks. This has the potential to lead to reductions in GHG emissions associated with private transport using ICE-based vehicles. Any construction/maintenance works involved in the establishment of such corridors/cages/hubs is unlikely to result in any significant environment effect.	Laois County Council will work with other agencies to assist the installation of designated bus cages, where bus pull in bays are unattainable; priority bus corridors in main towns where viable; bus hubs in main towns where feasible to allow for driver rest/comfort stops. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
59	Laois County Council will continue engagement with, and support roll out of the Safe Routes to School Programme in conjunction with An Taisce.	<p>This action has the potential to encourage modal shift and the use of active travel networks. This action supports the development of additional pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in the construction of additional pedestrian or cycling infrastructure have the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts (due to construction plant operation), local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction) and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>This action also has the potential to generate some degree of positive environmental effect due to a reduction in vehicle use.</p> <p>The action has the potential to have a positive impact on population and human health by reducing traffic risk at schools.</p>	Laois County Council will continued engagement with, and support roll out of the Safe Routes to School Programme in conjunction with An Taisce - Active travel developments will continue to be carried out in a manner that has due regard to environmental sensitivities (such as local human receptors, Biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology, existing traffic and transport conditions and amenity value).



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
61	Laois County Council will examine suitable locations Park n Ride / Park n Stride facilities away from town centre locations	This action may lead to some degree of modal shift, if sites are located. This would lead to reductions in traffic congestion, leading to GHG reductions and improvements in air quality. If inappropriately located or planned, the establishment of such hubs may lead to localised traffic and transport impacts, such as congestion.	Laois County Council will examine suitable locations Park n Ride / Park n Stride facilities away from town centre locations. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
63	Laois County Council will formulate a Fleet Decarbonation Roadmap	The creation of a roadmap will have no environmental effect in and of itself. The implementation of such a roadmap may lead to reductions of GHG emissions associated with ICE-based vehicle use. This action could lead to the LA transitioning its vehicle fleet to a renewable fuel. The scalable adoption of vehicles based on certain alternative fuels may contribute to the expansion of alternative fuel production sectors. These sectors may indirectly cause environmental effects (including uncertain and potentially negative effects) as a result of fuel sourcing, production and supply processes.	Laois County Council will formulate a Fleet Decarbonation Roadmap, to provide a "roadmap" to the sustainable decarbonisation of the fleet.
68	Laois County Council will carry out a review of older masonry bridges on upper stretches of rivers that may be impacted by increased scour due to the higher intensities of rainfall. It is acknowledged that such River maintenance plan will be subject to its own AA and SEA procedures given the sensitivity of the sites in question.	This action has the potential to protect cultural heritage, in some instances, and also benefit human health. It may prevent against damage to local biodiversity and water quality.	Laois County Council will carry out a review of older masonry bridges on upper stretches of rivers that may be impacted by increased scour due to the higher intensities of rainfall. It is acknowledged that any Plan arising from such a Review will be subject to statutory procedures (including Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures, if and as required) recognizing the sensitivity of the sites involved. Due regard will be given to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites,



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
			protected species, local air quality, and cultural heritage within such a Plan.
69	Laois County Council will collaborate with neighbouring local authorities to develop a comprehensive Electric Vehicle (EV) charging strategy, ensuring a seamless and regionally integrated charging infrastructure to support the widespread adoption of electric vehicles.	<p>The expansion of the EV charging network will lead to the development of multiple charging points and ancillary electrical infrastructure including grid connection routes across the extent of the local authority's functional area.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in the construction of additional charging point infrastructure have the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction), material assets and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>The delivery of good network of charging infrastructure has the potential to promote the use of sustainable travel modes in the community, encourage modal shift and support the reduction of vehicle related emissions.</p> <p>This is likely to have a slight to moderate positive environmental effect - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements.</p>	Laois County Council will collaborate with neighbouring local authorities to develop a comprehensive Electric Vehicle (EV) charging strategy, ensuring a seamless and regionally integrated charging infrastructure to support the widespread adoption of electric vehicles, having due regard to environmental sensitivities (such as material assets, the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, local air quality, and cultural heritage).
70	Laois County Council will develop a Tree Strategy to provide the vision and direction for long-term planning, planting, protection and maintenance of trees, hedgerows and woodlands within County Laois.	This action has the potential to have wide ranging slight to moderate significant effects on local biodiversity, and slight to significant effects on landscape character and visual amenity. Promoting vegetative growth may result in an additional degree of carbon sequestration, marginally offsetting the effects of GHG emissions. Improper planning may lead to acidification of rivers/streams in some instances and soil instability. Due regard should be given to these issues during the planning process.	Laois County Council will develop a Tree Strategy to provide the vision and direction for long-term planning, planting, protection and maintenance of trees, hedgerows and woodlands within County Laois whilst taking measures to promote the use of native species over non-natives and having due regard for water quality and soil stability



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
			issues whilst undertaking the planning process.
72	Laois County Council will carry out shade related tree planting in 10 previously constructed housing estates, subject to need and local agreement.	This action has the potential to reduce the impacts of the urban-heat-island effect in local communities. It may lead to reductions in temperatures, especially during periods of greater heat, which is of benefit to human health. It also may have slight positive effects on local biodiversity and air quality.	Laois County Council will carry out shade-related tree planting in 10 previously constructed housing estates, subject to need and local agreement. There will be a presumption under this measure to plant native trees.
76	Laois County Council will develop and implement a good practice document for the reduction in use of chemical pesticides and herbicides lands and areas managed by the Council.	This action has the potential to have wide ranging slight to moderate effects on local biodiversity, water quality, soil, flora, fauna, etc. Limiting and regulating the use of herbicides and pesticides would prevent to some degree the occurrence of environmental pollution incidents due to the use of these substances. The negative environmental effect of the continued use of such substances is potentially significant, given the hazardous properties of these substances.	Laois County Council will develop and implement a good practice document for the reduction in use of chemical pesticides and herbicides lands and areas managed by the Council. Laois County Council will adopt defined good practice guide in the use of such products to reduce the risk of unintended adverse effects on the receiving environment.
91	Laois County Council will continue to support further education institutes in providing third level courses locally in County Laois.	Providing ease of access to third level education serves to create a resilient and educated community within the County. It also may contribute to lowering of GHG emissions locally as those seeking to attend higher education may not have to travel significant distances to do so. This places less strain on resources and may contribute to slight reductions in GHG emissions associated with vehicular travel within the country. It may, however, lead to higher rates of traffic locally which may adversely affect air quality.	Laois County Council will continue to support further education institutes in providing third level courses locally in County Laois whilst promoting and supporting the use of active travel a preferred means of transport to/from any further education institutions.
100	Laois County Council will pilot replicable, scalable demonstration projects during the lifetime of this	This action may support the carrying out of local energy efficiency upgrades or renewable energy developments. Such projects have the potential to have a positive climate impacts. Such projects may also have a variety of unintended negative environmental impacts, such as visual	Laois County Council will pilot replicable, scalable demonstration projects during the lifetime of this plan (Community Climate Action Fund projects), Development



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	plan (Community Climate Action Fund projects).	impacts, biodiversity related impacts, noise impacts, or impacts on protected structures (in the case of building retrofits), for example.	supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
111	Laois County Council will, in partnership, apply, over the period 2024-2026, for feasibility and eco tourism concept development through Just Transition Regenerative Tourism Fund, while also promoting the need for such a project to consider environmental protection requirements and climate action co-benefit opportunities	<p>This promotional action will support sustainable initiatives within the County. The action has the potential to have a net positive effect for climate action and awareness within the County. Recreational activity in natural spaces such as rivers and beaches are not inherently damaging. However, there are known impacts associated with inappropriately managed activities in sensitive habitats such as wetlands. Therefore, the promotion of access and engagement with waterways and natural spaces needs to be carefully considered.</p> <p>Similarly, infrastructure works such as culverting could have unintended consequences on water quality and associated aquatic habitats and species.</p> <p>If implemented correctly this action is likely to have moderate positive environmental effect in terms of water quality improvements, engagement with nature and biodiversity enhancements.</p> <p>The action should take into account other environmental factors such as biodiversity, cultural heritage, amenity value, and environmental health.</p>	Laois County Council will, in partnership, apply, over the period 2024-2026, for feasibility and eco tourism concept development through Just Transition Regenerative Tourism Fun, while also promoting the need for such a project to consider environmental protection requirements and climate action co-benefit opportunities.
2.2	Implement tree management strategies to maximize canopy cover in the area.	<p>This action has potential to support biodiversity protective measures. The action will generate a positive effect for biodiversity, flora and fauna.</p> <p>The planting of non native/ invasive trees may negatively impact biodiversity. Increasing tree cover in certain important habitats may have adverse effects on habitat quality.</p>	Implement tree management strategies to maximize canopy cover in the area with a focus on promoting native trees; having due regard to environmental sensitivities such as European sites and biodiversity.
2.10	Enhance the town's green infrastructure to bolster biodiversity.	<p>This action has the potential to have positive effects on biodiversity, and climate.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in the enhancement of existing or the construction of new green infrastructure have the</p>	Enhance the town's green infrastructure to bolster biodiversity. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction), and biodiversity impacts.	carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
3.1	Develop a Playful School Active Travel Zone to promote safe and active commuting.	<p>This action has the potential to encourage modal shift and the use of active travel networks.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in implementing this action the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction) and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>This action also has the potential to generate some degree of positive environmental effect due to a reduction in vehicle use.</p>	Develop a Playful School Active Travel Zone to promote safe and active commuting. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
3.5	Progress with Phases 2 and 3 of the Triogue Way project.	<p>This action has the potential to encourage modal shift and the use of active travel networks.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in implementing Phases 2 and 3 of the Triogue Way project have the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction) and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>This action also has the potential to generate some degree of positive environmental effect due to a reduction in vehicle use.</p>	Progress with Phases 2 and 3 of the Triogue Way project. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
3.7	Establish a School Travel Cluster to enhance safe and sustainable school commuting.	This action has the potential to encourage modal shift and the use of active travel networks.	Establish a School Travel Cluster to enhance safe and sustainable school commuting; having due regard to environmental



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
			sensitivities such as Biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology etc.
3.9	Implement Local Transport Plan to improve active travel infrastructure, road safety and modal shift to sustainable transport option	<p>This action has the potential to encourage modal shift and the use of active travel networks.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in the construction of additional active travel infrastructure have the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction) and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>The delivery of an expanded active travel network has the potential to promote the use of sustainable and active travel modes, encourage modal shift and support the reduction of vehicle related emissions. This is likely to have a slight to moderate positive environmental effect - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements.</p>	Implement Local Transport Plan to improve active travel infrastructure, road safety and modal shift to sustainable transport option; Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
3.12	Identify and construct new cycle and pedestrian routes, including Tyrrells-Borris Rd-Dublin Rd via HSE lands at St. Fintan's, connecting to Block Rd.	<p>This action supports the construction of additional active travel infrastructure.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in the construction of additional active travel infrastructure have the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction) and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>The delivery of an expanded active travel network has the potential to promote the use of sustainable and active travel modes, encourage modal shift and support the reduction of vehicle related emissions. This is likely to have a slight to moderate positive environmental effect -</p>	Identify and construct new cycle and pedestrian routes, including Tyrrells-Borris Rd-Dublin Rd via HSE lands at St. Fintan's, connecting to Block Rd. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		<p>having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements.</p>	
3.14	<p>Provide protected cycle lanes to ensure cyclist safety.</p>	<p>This action supports the construction of protected cycle lanes.</p> <p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in the construction of protected cycle lanes have the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction) and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>The delivery of an expanded protected cycle lanes network has the potential to promote the use of sustainable and active travel modes, encourage modal shift and support the reduction of vehicle related emissions. This is likely to have a slight to moderate positive environmental effect - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements.</p>	<p>Provide protected cycle lanes to ensure cyclist safety. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.</p>
3.15	<p>Develop a program to upgrade roundabouts, giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles.</p>	<p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in the upgrading of roundabouts have the potential to generate some slight environmental effects, including noise impacts and local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust).</p> <p>This action has the potential to promote the use of active travel modes in the community, encourage modal shift and support the reduction of vehicle related emissions. This is likely to have a slight to moderate positive environmental effect - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements.</p>	<p>Develop a program to upgrade roundabouts, giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.</p>



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
3.16	Enhance bus service infrastructure by establishing a bus terminal and related facilities.	<p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in constructing a bus terminal and related facilities have the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction), and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>The development of such a facility may also create unintended negative traffic and transport related effects, in the absence of good design or mitigation.</p> <p>The delivery of expanded sustainable/active travel networks has the potential to promote the use of sustainable and active travel modes in the community, encourage modal shift and support the reduction of vehicle related emissions. This is likely to have a slight to moderate positive environmental effect - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements.</p>	Enhance bus service infrastructure by establishing a bus terminal and related facilities; whilst promoting adherence to planning and environmental protection requirements, where appropriate.
3.17	Create park and ride/stride designated sites linked with bike rental locations.	<p>In the absence of any mitigation, works involved in constructing park and ride/stride facilities have the potential to generate a range of slight to significant environmental effects, including noise impacts, local air quality impacts (through the generation of construction dust), impacts on water quality (through the run-off of silt and cement based products during construction), and biodiversity impacts.</p> <p>The delivery of expanded sustainable/active travel networks has the potential to promote the use of sustainable and active travel modes in the community, encourage modal shift and support the reduction of vehicle related emissions. This is likely to have a slight to moderate positive environmental effect - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements.</p>	Create park and ride/stride designated sites linked with bike rental locations. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
3.18	Install EV chargers and mobility hubs at the Train station to promote electric vehicle use.	<p>This action will encourage modal shift and promotes use of public transport and active travel. This may lead to reductions in GHG emissions associated with the use of ICE-based private vehicles.</p> <p>This action could support the carrying out of development at such a hub including the development of public transport, active travel or charging infrastructure.</p> <p>Such development activities may have an unintended negative environmental impact in the absence of appropriate design or appropriate environmental mitigation measures.</p>	Install EV chargers and mobility hubs at the Train station to promote electric vehicle use. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
3.21	Support the development of EV charging points throughout the town.	<p>The expansion of the EV charging network will lead to the development of multiple charging points and ancillary electrical infrastructure including grid connection routes within the Decarbonisation Zone.</p> <p>As the area involved in the expansion of this EV charging network is relatively small, it is not likely to have substantial negative environmental effects.</p> <p>The delivery of good network of charging infrastructure has the potential to promote the use of sustainable travel modes in the community, encourage modal shift and support the reduction of vehicle related emissions.</p> <p>This is likely to have a slight to moderate positive environmental effect - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements.</p>	Support the development of EV charging points throughout the town, having due regard to planning and environmental protection requirements, as normal, and available grid capacity.
4.7	Facilitate a District Heating Feasibility Study to investigate effective heating solutions.	This action is likely to have no environmental effect in and of itself but will provide essential information underpinning the potential development of district heating which may result in lowering GHG emissions in the town. Such infrastructure may lead to unintended	Facilitate a District Heating Feasibility Study to investigate effective heating solutions., ensuring the study has appropriate regard to planning and environmental protection constraints and considerations.



Action Reference	Original Action	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated, including:	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		environmental effects, such as construction related dust or noise effects, effects on biodiversity or sensitive human receptors.	
4.9	Develop office hubs and co-working spaces in Portlaoise to facilitate remote working and reduce commuting.	This action will likely promote a reduction in transport emissions associated with home to work commuting using ICE based vehicles - which has the potential to generate some degree of positive effects on climate and local air quality. If inappropriately located or planned, the establishment of such hubs may lead to localised traffic and transport impacts, such as congestion.	Develop office hubs and co-working spaces in Portlaoise to facilitate remote working and reduce commuting. Development supported by this action will, as normal, be carried out in line with planning and environmental protection requirements.
4.10	Upgrade all public lighting to energy-efficient LED technology.	This action will support the local authority in reducing its organisational GHG emissions in line with climate policy and legislation and emission reduction targets. The action is likely to have a slight positive environmental effect in terms of GHG emissions however, the spectrum of light from LED sources has the potential to impact nocturnal species. Therefore there is also scope for there to be slight negative effects if unmitigated.	Upgrade all public lighting to energy-efficient LED technology; Having due regard to environmental sensitivities



Table 5-2: Environmental Mitigation Measures related Environmental Governance Principles suggested for inclusion in the plan - specifically the plan implementation section

Support the National Climate Action Plan (which itself supports international climate obligations) in a manner which will assist in addressing the causes of climate change the impacts of which affect humans, flora, fauna, habitats, heritage and the broader environment.
Support the National Climate Action Plan (which itself supports international climate obligations) in addressing the local impacts of climate change which has the potential to impact humans, flora, fauna, habitats, heritage and the broader environment.
Within the context of the range of Plans, Strategies and similar documents produced by the Council, to further provide for environmentally positive measures within the actions undertaken pursuant to this plan.
Promote climate action projects that support habitats such as protected trees, hedgerows wetlands, flood zones which contribute to green infrastructure.
In the context of advancing climate action, to support opportunities to improve ecological connectivity of non-designated habitats and sites to improve overall ecosystem resilience and functioning
To support community led projects (such as Abbeyleix Bog Project) which support peatland restoration, rehabilitation and maintenance and similar carbon improvement projects.
Within the context of European, National and Regional policy instruments (such as the Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management and similar) to seek to have co-benefits with such instruments within the actions arising from this plan
Within areas such as biodiversity protection and enhancement; improved air, water or soil quality; or enhanced recreation, amenity and cultural heritage value to seek to have co-benefits with such areas within the actions arising from this plan
That developments by the Council and their partners continue to have regard to the potential for potential environmental impacts and environmental protection requirements.
Having regard to climate change potentially affecting the rate of spread of invasive species, to continue within the Council's own infrastructural projects to take precautions and carry out the appropriate management to avoid spreading invasive species, particularly in regard to Schedule III species.



6. CONCLUSION

Stage 1 AA Screening and Stage 2 AA of the Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 has been carried out. Implementation of the LACAP has the potential to result in effects to the integrity of any European sites, if unmitigated.

The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and conservation objectives of the European sites have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures that will prioritise the avoidance of effects in the first place and mitigate effects where these cannot be avoided. In addition, all lower-level plans and projects arising through the implementation of the LACAP will themselves be subject to AA when further details of design and location are known.

In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects was considered in the assessment and the mitigation measures incorporated into the plan are seen to be robust to ensure there will be no significant adverse effects as a result of the implementation of the LACAP either alone or in-combination with other plans/projects.

Having incorporated mitigation measures, it is concluded that the Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 is not foreseen to give rise to any significant adverse effects on designated European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects⁵⁰. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species, for which these sites have been designated.

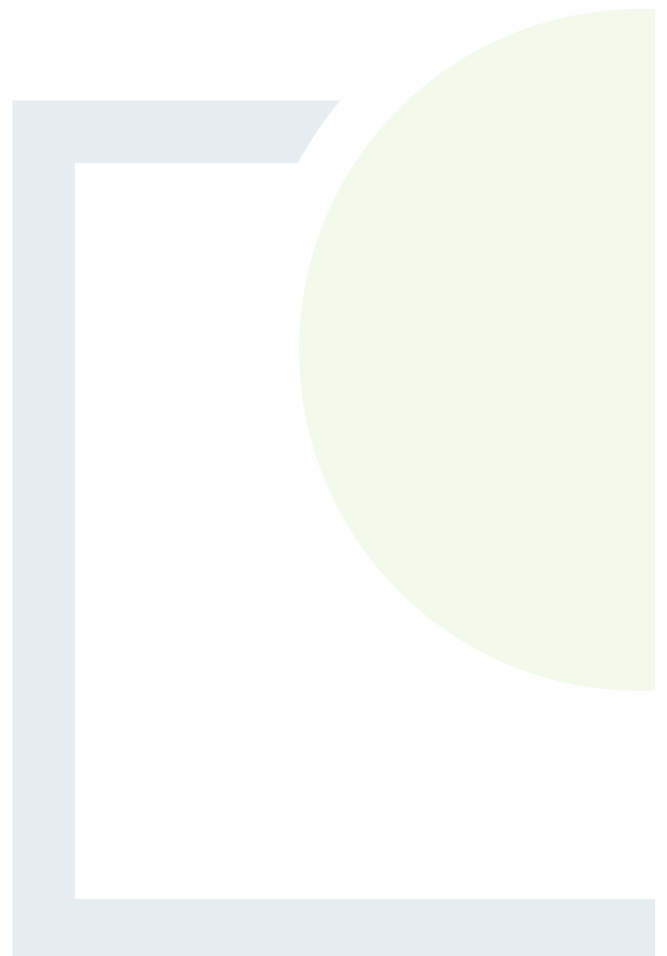
⁵⁰ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.



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APPENDIX 1

Background information to
European sites





Appendix 1 - Table 1 Quality and site characteristics of European sites considered in the assessment

Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
000571	Charleville Wood SAC	The woodland is one of a very few ancient woodlands in Ireland with some parts undisturbed for at least 200 years. Notable for its size and the occurrence of several rare insect species particularly Mycetobia obscura. The lake attracts locally to regionally important numbers of waterfowl. The site supports a large population of the rare snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> .	A large oak woodland on deep glacial deposits surrounded by estate parkland and agricultural grassland. Site includes a small lake partially overgrown by reed swamp with a wooded island and a stream bordering the western site margin.
000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	Estuaries and intertidal sand and mud flats are particularly well represented in this site with salinity ranging from full freshwater to full seawater. The quality of these habitats is generally good. The Slaney River and its tributaries display good examples of floating river vegetation. An important area of alluvial forest is found at Macmine while old oak woodlands occur at Toomnafinnoge the latter being a remnant of the ancient oak woods of Shillelagh. The site is of high importance for the conservation of fish species notably <i>Salmo salar</i> <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> <i>L. planeri</i> and the very localised <i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> . <i>Lutra lutra</i> is well distributed throughout while a significant population of <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> occurs on the Derreen River. The site provides year-round haul-out habitat for the Annex II species <i>Phoca vitulina</i> and includes regionally significant breeding and moulting sites. The site has high ornithological importance especially for wintering waterfowl with internationally important populations of <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> <i>Cygnus olor</i> <i>Limosa limosa</i> and <i>Limosa lapponica</i> . There is at least a further 14 species of wintering waterfowl which occur in numbers of national importance. Wintering <i>Larus</i> gulls are well represented especially <i>Larus ridibundus</i> and <i>Larus fuscus</i> . A nesting colony of <i>Egretta garzetta</i> has recently become established within the site and birds are present in the area throughout the year. The site supports one of the best breeding concentrations of <i>Acrocephalus scirpaeus</i> in the country.	This site comprises almost the entire Slaney system from the headwater streams in the Wicklow Mountains to the extensive estuarine area of Wexford Harbour. The main river tributaries included are the Bann Glasha Clody Derry Derreen Douglas and Carrigower Rivers. The tidal influence extends upriver as far as Enniscorthy. In the upper and central regions the geology consists of granite. Above Kilcarr Bridge the Slaney has cut a gorge into the granite plain. The Derry and Bann Rivers are bounded by a narrow line of uplands which corresponds to schist outcrops. South of Kildavin the Slaney flows through an area of Ordovician slates and grits. The river is often fringed by woodland and/or swamp vegetation. Other habitats which occur alongside the river include wet grassland scrub and in higher areas heath and bog. Improved grassland and arable land is included alongside the river for water quality reasons. Salt marshes are a feature of the lower estuarine area of the site.



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
		A range of flora and fauna species listed as Red Data Book species occur within the site.	
000849	Spahill and Clomantagh Hill SAC	The importance of the site lies in the variety of natural and semi-natural grassland communities found; these are generally rare in the south midlands. The site is also important for the small population of the rare and protected species <i>Orchis morio</i> that it supports.	This site comprises three separate areas of which two are dominated by dry grassland the third by broad-leaved deciduous woodland. The site is underlain by limestone and in places shales and sandstone. Soils on the site are generally quite thin and rock outcrops are scattered throughout. A small limestone cliff is found in one area of the site. Vegetation on the site generally varies with rock type and both calcicole and calcifuge species are found.
002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	The site contains many Annexed habitats including the most extensive area of estuarine habitat in Ireland. A good range of Annexed species are also present including the only known resident population of <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> in Ireland all three Irish species of lamprey and a good population of <i>Salmo salar</i> . A number of birds listed on the EU Birds Directive either winter or breed in the site. The site is internationally important for waterfowl with more than 50000 individuals occurring in winter. Several species listed in the Irish Red Data Book are present perhaps most notably the only known Irish populations of <i>Scirpus triquetus</i> .	A very large long site approximately 14 km wide and 120 km long encompassing: the drained river valley which forms the River Shannon estuary; the broader River Fergus estuary plus a number of smaller estuaries e.g. Poulnasherry Bay; the freshwater lower reaches of the Shannon River between Killaloe and Limerick plus the freshwater stretches of much of the Feale and Mulkear catchments; a marine area at the mouth of the Shannon estuary with high rocky cliffs to the north and south; ericaceous heath on Kerry Head and Loop Head; and several lagoons. The underlying geology ranges from Carboniferous limestone (east of Foynes) to Namurian shales and flagstones (west of Foynes) to Old Red Sandstone (at Kerry Head). The salinity of the system varies daily with the ebb and flood of the tide and with annual rainfall fluctuations seasonally.
004077	River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	This is the most important coastal wetland site in the country and regularly supports in excess of 50000 wintering waterfowl. It has internationally important populations of <i>Calidris alpina</i> <i>Limosa limosa</i> and <i>Tringa totanus</i> . A further 16 species have populations of national importance. The site is particularly significant for <i>Calidris alpina</i> (11% of national total) <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (7.5% of total) <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> (6.5% of total) <i>Tringa totanus</i> (6.1% of total) and <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> (6.0% of total). It has <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> and <i>Limosa lapponica</i> in significant numbers.	The River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries form the largest estuarine complex in Ireland. The site comprises all of the estuarine habitat west from Limerick City and south from Ennis extending west as far as Killadysert and Foynes on the north and south shores of the Shannon respectively (a distance of some 25 km from east to west). Also included are several areas in the outer Shannon estuary notably Clonderalaw Bay and Poulnasherry Bay. The site has vast expanses of intertidal flats.



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
		<p>The site was formerly frequented by a population of <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> but these have now abandoned the area. The site provides both feeding and roosting areas for the wintering birds and habitat quality for most of the estuarine habitats is good.</p>	<p>The main macro-invertebrate community is a <i>Macoma-Scrobicularia-Nereis</i> community which provides a rich food resource for the wintering birds. Eelgrass (<i>Zostera</i> spp.) is present in places. The intertidal flats are often fringed with salt marsh vegetation areas which provide important high tide roost sites for the birds. In the innermost parts of the estuaries the tidal channels or creeks are fringed with species such as <i>Phragmites australis</i> and <i>Scirpus</i> spp. <i>Spartina anglica</i> is frequent in parts.</p>
000585	Sharavogue Bog SAC	<p>Sharavogue Bog SAC is a site of considerable conservation significance comprising two subsites: Sharavogue Bog and Cangort (Kilfrancis) Bog which contain raised bog a rare habitat in the EU and one that is becoming increasingly scarce and under threat in Ireland. It contains good examples of the EU Habitats Directive Annex I habitats Active Raised Bog (7110) Degraded Raised Bog (7120) and Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion (7150). The site already supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats including some hummock/hollow complexes and rewetted cutover bog. Ireland has a high proportion of the total EU resource of Atlantic raised bog (over 50%) and so has a special responsibility for its conservation at an international level. Along the eastern margins of Sharavogue there is upwelling of base-rich water into the lagg zone and these areas now support carr woodland and calcareous fen vegetation. Areas of wet lagg vegetation such as this are very rare in Western Europe and the lagg system at Sharavogue is one of the best developed in the country. The protected semi-aquatic plant species Slender Cottongrass (<i>Eriophorum gracile</i>) is growing in fen vegetation in the lagg zone while the nationally rare shrub Alder Buckthorn (<i>Frangula alnus</i>) occurs in dry bog woodland on cutaway. Although the Cangort (Kilfrancis) Bog subsite of the SAC is small (13.12 ha) and currently lacks annex habitats full restoration measures have been implemented and it has the potential to support the retention of Degraded Raised Bog in Cangort Bog NHA (000890).</p>	<p>Sharavogue Bog (SAC) (236.55 ha) is located about 8km south of Birr Co. Offaly in the Little Brosna Valley. It consists of 2 raised bog sites. The main area Sharavogue Bog covers 223.43 ha while a smaller outlier Cangort (Kilfrancis) Bog is located 4km further south and comprises 13.12 ha. Sharavogue Bog is situated between the River Little Brosna and an elevated ridge of Carboniferous limestone. Sharavogue includes 137 ha of uncut raised bog and 86.43 ha of surrounding areas which include cutover bog wet grassland semi-natural woodland and an area of wet lagg vegetation in the cutover along the eastern margin of the bog. The bog is underlain by low permeability limestone and limestone till. Groundwater upwells at the base of the ridge that occurs to the east of the bog. Cangort (Kilfrancis) Bog is the part of Cangort Bog NHA (000890) and it has been restored as part of an EU LIFE project. The site consists of 2.53 ha of high bog and 10.59 ha of cutover most of which was afforested in the 1970s. The underlying geology is carboniferous limestone. Sharavogue Bog is one of the few remaining raised bogs in Ireland situated on a floodplain. It has a well-developed dome of uncut peat which is long and relatively narrow. Active Raised Bog (ARB) is confined to the more southern central part of the dome covers 25.8 ha but lacks any areas of central ecotope as a result of long-term drying out caused by peat cutting and marginal and river drainage. In addition drains were inserted across about 60% of the high bog dome in the early 1990s.</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
			<p> All the drains on the high bog and many of the drains on the south eastern area of the cutover were dammed in the late 1990s as part of an EU Cohesion project to restore peat forming conditions on the high bog and cutover. The bog surface has also been damaged by burning in the past and there are invasive native and non-native species are present on the bog dome. The dominant micro-topography consists of Sphagnum hummocks and hollows. Pools are scarce and Sphagnum cuspidatum filled lawn-like depressions are very occasional. Rhynchosporion depressions (7150) are open pioneer type vegetation communities of wet depressions on acid peat in both natural and man modified situations. Rhynchosporion vegetation occurs along pool edges (very scarce in Sharavogue Bog) on lawns and hollows underlain by deep wet and quaking peat. Cangort Bog NHA is a remnant of a larger area of bog much of which has now been cutover and reclaimed for forestry and agriculture. In the SAC section of the NHA all the afforested areas on the high bog and cutover were clear-felled and the associated drains blocked in 2014. Site specific conservation objectives have been set for Sharavogue Bog SAC for Active Raised Bog. One of the key targets is to restore the area of Active Raised Bog to 40.9 ha and it has been determined using modelling techniques that there is potential for 14.7 ha of Degraded Raised Bog to be restored to Active Raised Bog on the high bog following restoration measures. There is also long-term potential for 0.4 ha of Bog peat-forming habitats (BPFH) to develop if restoration measures are undertaken on cutover areas. A restoration plan has been developed to achieve these targets. Detailed objectives have yet to be developed for the Cangort (Kilfrancis) subsite of the SAC but will be produced as part of the restoration plan for the Cangort Bog NHA site. Cangort (Kilfrancis) Bog is being actively managed for conservation by the landowner Coillte as part of an EU LIFE Project and most of the required restoration measures have already been carried out. </p>



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
			Sharavogue Bog is part of the current NPWS Restoring Active Raised Bog in Irelands SAC Network 2016-2020 (LIFE NAT/IE/000032).
002236	Island Fen SAC	This site is important as it supports fine examples of the Annex 1 habitat Juniper scrub formations over calcareous grasslands/heath along with some small though species rich areas of alkaline fen - also an Annex 1 habitat. This Juniperus communis site is the only site proposed for this habitat type east of Lough Derg.	The geology of the site is of Lower Carboniferous Limestone and the principle soil is grey brown podzolic. The site overlies an old lake bed lined with shelly marl. Soil cover is generally thin with some rocks protruding locally. Much of the site is dominated by Phragmites australis reedbeds which merge northwards into calcareous grasslands/heath with upright Juniper scrub formations. To the west and south small zones of alkaline fen occur along with a small hazel and ash woodland.
004058	Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	Lough Derg is of importance for both breeding and wintering birds. The islands support nationally important breeding colonies of Sterna hirundo Phalacrocorax carbo Podiceps cristatus and probably Aythya fuligula. It is a traditional site for nesting Larus ridibundus but there is no recent survey information. In winter the lake is particularly important for diving ducks with nationally important populations of Aythya fuligula and Bucephala clangula occurring. Cygnus olor also has a population of national importance whilst a range of other species occur in lesser numbers including Cygnus cygnus Anas crecca Fulica atra and Vanellus vanellus. A flock of Anser albifrons flavirostris has traditionally used the site where they feed on grassy islands but birds have seldom been recorded in recent years.	Lough Derg is the largest of the Shannon Lakes being some 40 km long. Its maximum breadth across the Scarriff Bay-Youghal Bay transect is 13 km but for most of its length it is less than 5 km wide. The lake is relatively shallow at the northern end being mostly 6 m in depth but in the middle region it has an axial trench and descends to over 25 m in places. The narrow southern end of the lake has the greatest average depth with a maximum of 34 m. The greater part of the lake lies on Carboniferous limestone but the narrow southern section is underlain by Silurian strata. Most of the lower part of the lake is enclosed by hills on both sides the Slieve Aughty Mountains to the west and the Arra Mountains to the east. The northern end is bordered by relatively flat agricultural country. The lake shows the high hardness levels and alkaline pH to be expected from its mainly limestone catchment basin and it has most recently been classified as a mesotrophic system. The lake has many small islands especially on its western and northern sides. The shoreline is often fringed with swamp vegetation. Aquatic vegetation includes a range of charophyte species.



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
004096	Middle Shannon Callows SPA	This site is the largest area of semi-natural floodplain grassland in Ireland and has very many features of a natural ecosystem. Along with its main tributaries the River Suck and River Brosna it represents one of the most important wetland systems in the country. It is of International Importance for wintering waterfowl as numbers regularly exceed the 20000 threshold (mean of 34985 for the 5 winters 1994/94-1998/99). Of particular note is the presence of an Internationally Important population of <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> . A further five species have populations of national importance: <i>Cygnus olor</i> <i>Anas penelope</i> <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> and <i>Limosa limosa</i> . There is a well documented spring passage of <i>Limosa limosa</i> along the river valley. The Shannon callows are also of high importance for breeding birds. In particular it has the largest concentration of <i>Crex crex</i> in Ireland. Since 1991 a conservation programme involving annual monitoring of population size practical habitat management and publicity has been in operation. <i>Coturnix coturnix</i> a very rare species in Ireland also breeds in the grasslands. Several wader species notably <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> <i>Gallinago gallinago</i> and <i>Tringa totanus</i> have important breeding populations though these have declined substantially since the 1980s. The scarce breeding species <i>Anas clypeata</i> nests in small numbers each year. The callows is one of the very few sites in Ireland where <i>Limosa limosa</i> has bred. The habitats also support a range of ground nesting passerine species notably <i>Locustella naevia</i> and <i>Alauda arvensis</i> . In autumn and winter <i>Circus cyaneus</i> is a regular visitor.	The site follows the River Shannon from Athlone just below Lough Ree to Portumna just above Lough Derg a distance of over 50 km. It includes much of the flood plain of the river varying in width from approximately 0.5 km to up to 1.5 km in places. A weir at Meelick divides the flooding regime. The main habitat present is humid grassland improved to varying extents that is seasonally flooded. The less improved areas are species-rich. The grassland is used mainly for pasture but some is used for hay-making. The river channel is fringed by swamp and marsh vegetation. There is an extensive system of drainage channels many of which support a diverse flora. The callows often border raised bogs some of which are still intact.
000216	River Shannon Callows SAC	This site is the largest area of semi-natural floodplain grassland in Ireland and Britain and has very many features of a natural ecosystem. It has been placed among the most 'natural' floodplains in western Europe. It is subject to regular and prolonged annual winter flooding. Wooded alluvial islands which flood regularly occur at one location.	The River Shannon is the largest river in Ireland and its central route drains a large percentage of the whole country. It has proved too powerful to be tamed by drainage schemes in the past and this central section is still free to flood the surrounding lowlands in winter. It is a well-used agricultural resource of low intensity during the summer.



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
		<p>A number of Red Data Book and scarce plant species occur on the site the scarce species including <i>Leucosium aestivum</i> <i>Sium latifolium</i> <i>Botrychium lunaria</i> and <i>Lemna gibba</i>. In addition the site contains a very wide variety of native plant species. A small area of limestone pavement at Clorhane is of particular importance as it is the only example of this habitat in the region. Along with its tributary the Little Brosna (designated separately) this is one of the great waterfowl sites in Ireland with huge numbers of a wide range of species occurring in winter with a mean peak of 34985 waterbirds recorded from 1995/96 to 1999/00. This is the third highest for an inland site in Ireland. The highest is the Little Brosna which is an extension to the Middle Shannon Callows. Only three estuarine sites are higher. In 1996/97 one species was of International Importance (Whooper Swan) and six species were of National Importance. A small flock of <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> regularly use a few locations on the site and these are part of the Internationally Important flocks of both the Little Brosna and the River Suck. It is one of very few significant inland sites in Britain or Ireland for <i>Calidris alpina</i>. It is the top site in the country for <i>Cygnus olor</i> and close to that for <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> and <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>. The E.U. Birds Directive Annex I species <i>Circus cyaneus</i> regularly uses the site for hunting in autumn and winter. Perhaps even more important are its nesting <i>Crex crex</i> <i>Coturnix coturnix</i> and breeding waders. In 1987 1204 pairs of breeding waders were recorded (including adjacent parts of the Shannon) mainly <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> <i>Gallinago gallinago</i> <i>Numenius arquata</i> and <i>Tringa totanus</i>. <i>Crex crex</i> has one of its last strongholds here with 70 and 66 calling birds present in 1998 and 1999 respectively. The Shannon Callows is one of the few areas in Ireland where <i>Coturnix coturnix</i> breeds. Numbers vary between years but up to 14 males have been heard. There are high populations of ground-nesting passerines such as <i>Alauda arvensis</i> <i>Anthus pratensis</i> <i>Locustella naevia</i> and <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i> on the site.</p>	<p>This floodplain functions as a semi-natural meadow/marsh habitat (used for grazing or hay-making).</p> <p>There is an extensive system of surface drains. The site is linear running for about 50 km at an average width of about 0.75 km (but reaching 1.5 km in several places). For about half its length it borders raised bogs most of which are in the process of large-scale peat harvesting. Esker ridges lie adjacent to the callows in some places. There are areas of both relict and active levees. A weir at Meelick divides the flooding regime. Ecological diversity is caused and maintained by multiple ownership variation in the flooding regime due to the topography of the callows hundreds of kilometres of drainage ditches differences in the amount of peat and alluvium in the soils and by the extensive nature of the site. The main habitat on the site is humid grassland managed for hay and pasture and these areas have the same management regime as the lowland hay meadows and <i>Molinia</i> meadows.</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
		<p>The River Shannon Callows is a breeding site for two Red Data Book waterbird species: <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> and <i>Anas clypeata</i>.</p> <p>The Red Data Book species <i>Anas acuta</i> has also bred on the site though its current status is unknown. The E.U. Birds Directive Annex I species <i>Falco columbarius</i> bred on the site in 1996. Large rivers flowing unfettered through lowland floodplains are now rare anywhere in Europe. This river and its associated habitats are of the highest conservation importance.</p>	
000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC	<p>The largest spring-fed fen in Ireland largely intact and responding well to restoration measures. Supports one of the largest stands of <i>Cladium</i> fen and is one of the most studied examples of its kind in Ireland. Type locality for the <i>Cirsio dissecti-Schoenetum nigricantis</i> and contains a significant number of rare and threatened species. A number of internationally important invertebrates have been recorded and rare sub-aquatic invertebrates are particularly well represented. Pollardstown is the only known site in Ireland (or Europe) to support all three Annex II <i>Vertigo</i> species (<i>V.geyeri</i> <i>V.angustior</i> <i>V. moulinsiana</i>) and thus provides unique opportunity to study their different habitat and hydrological requirements. Re-flooding of reclaimed areas has increased the ornithological value of the site.</p>	<p>A large spring-fed fen situated in a shallow basin composed of up to 6m of marl/peat overlying clay. The fen contains the feeder channel of the Grand Canal and has survived several attempts at drainage and reclamation. Supports extensive areas of <i>Cladium</i> fen <i>Schoenus</i> fen reed and sedge swamp <i>Molinia</i> grassland and species-rich seepage areas. Restoration of the central fen area following partial reclamation in 1979 has caused re-flooding and allowed the re-establishment and expansion of aquatic and reedswamp vegetation and their associated fauna.</p>
000572	Clara Bog SAC	<p>Clara Bog is a very good example of a large midland raised bog which contains examples of the Annex I habitats active raised bog degraded raised bog woodland depressions on peat substrates (<i>Rhynchosporion</i>) and orchid-rich calcareous grassland. One of the most unusual features of the bog is the presence of an infilling lake which supports mesotrophic fen vegetation. There is an associated soak area which is dominated by a well-developed wet birch woodland. This area of bog woodland is one of the best examples of the habitat in the country and supports a rich invertebrate flora which includes <i>Parhelophilus consimilis</i> and <i>Ampedus pomorum</i>.</p>	<p>Most of the site is underlain by low permeability Waulsortian limestone. The southern section is underlain by relatively impermeable massive limestone. This bedrock is overlain by sands gravels and boulder clays which in turn are overlain by a layer of lacustrine clay. Shell marl is seen in a few places. The peat layer developed on top of this. An esker ridge runs roughly east-west along the northern edge of the site and a till mound is seen to the south. The raised bog developed in a former lake.</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
		The moss <i>Tetraplodon angustatus</i> has its only Irish station on the bog while it is also the last known site for the vascular plant species <i>Scheuchzeria palustris</i> (transplanted to the site and now thought to be extinct). The site also provides habitat for important bird species such as <i>Lagopus lagopus</i> and breeding <i>Falco columbarius</i> . Clara Bog has been subject to detailed hydrological and ecological studies.	Part of the old cutover bog has been converted to improved pasture which is included in the site for hydrological reasons. A conifer plantation will eventually be removed.
000582	Raheenmore Bog SAC	Raheenmore Bog is a medium-sized midland raised bog site which contains good examples of the priority Annex I habitat active raised bog and the non-priority habitats degraded raised bog and depressions on peat substrates (Rhynchosporion). These habitats are generally of good quality. Most of the site is owned by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and there has been considerable research and restoration carried out on the site over the past 15 years. In addition to the presence of a well-developed flora the site provides habitat for important animal species such as <i>Rana temporaria</i> <i>Lacerta vivipara</i> <i>Lagopus lagopus</i> and is within a breeding territory of <i>Falco columbarius</i> .	This site is underlain by muddy limestone with low permeability. This is overlain by sands gravels and boulder clays. A layer of lacustrine clay lies over this on which the peat layer developed. The bog developed in a basin between low hills in which a lake would initially have been present. Part of the cutover bog has been converted to improved grassland which is included in the site for hydrological reasons.
000934	Kilduff Devilsbit Mountain SAC	The main importance of the site lies in the fairly extensive area of good quality species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grassland that occurs and in the large population of the nationally rare and protected orchid <i>Pseudorchis albida</i> that it supports. The site is relatively diverse and includes a small area of good quality dry heath. Undamaged unimproved upland grassland sites such as this are becoming increasingly rare in Ireland.	The site is situated on the north-eastern slopes of Devilsbit Mountain a flat-topped ridge composed of silurian grits. The main vegetation type found on the site is species-rich heathy grassland. Degraded <i>Molinia</i> -dominated wet heath dry heath and stands of <i>Quercus</i> sp./ <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> woodland occur in the upper sections of the site. Light scrub is scattered throughout the lower sections of the site and here several streams and flushes are found. A wet broad-leaved Alder woodland in the wet area at the eastern side of the site.
004233	River Nore SPA	The River Nore supports nationally important numbers of <i>Alcedo atthis</i> . Other species which occur within the site include <i>Cygnus olor</i> <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> <i>Ardea cinerea</i> <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> <i>Gallinago gallinago</i> and <i>Riparia riparia</i> .	The River Nore SPA is a long linear site that includes the following river sections: the River Nore from the bridge at Townparks (north-west of Borris in Ossory) to Coolnamuck (approximately 3 km south of Inistioge) in Co. Kilkenny; the Delour River from its junction with the River Nore to Derrynaseera bridge (west of Castletown) in Co Laois; the Erkina River from its junction with the River Nore at Durrow Mills



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
			to Boston Bridge in Co. Laois; a 1.5 km stretch of the River Goul upstream of its junction with the Erkina River; the Kings River from its junction with the River Nore to a bridge at Mill Island Co. Kilkenny. The site includes the river channel and marginal vegetation.
000407	The Loughans SAC	This turlough is the highest in altitude and also at the SE margin of the range of this habitat - 55km from similar sites by Lough Derg. The vegetation shows relatively little diversity (10 out of a possible 32 types) but includes many plants rare in the county for example it is the only site for <i>Rorippa islandica</i> and <i>Chenopodium rubrum</i> .	The Loughans is a shallow basin surrounded by pasture land with low banks of calcareous drift extending out from the northern side. Some of these carry a species-rich heathy grassland with scattered bushes. There are two shallow ponds with aquatic plants but most of the floor dries out in summer and is grazed. Swallow holes occur in the SE corner and on the western side. The internal channels seem to have no real drainage effect.
001858	Galmoy Fen SAC	The site contains a good example of alkaline fen vegetation that has developed partly due to cutting of a former raised bog. Fen habitat is rare in the region. The site contains a typical range of species including <i>Schoenus nigricans</i> and supports the Red Data Book species <i>Rana temporaria</i> and <i>Lepus timidus hibernicus</i> .	Galmoy Fen is situated 7 km north of Johnstown in Co. Kilkenny. It lies in a depression and is underlain by Carboniferous limestone. The central part of the site comprises an area of cutover raised bog with numerous peat-cuttings resulting in a mosaic of dry peat banks and wet peaty pools. The pools have become flooded with base-rich groundwater and now support alkaline fen vegetation. A large area of fen vegetation surrounds the central part of the site; this area has a number of large pools that support calcicole species. Other habitats present on the site include scrub wet grassland improved grassland dry calcareous grassland and a small area planted with <i>Picea sitchensis</i> . A stream brings water to the site on its north-east side. Surrounding landuse is mainly agricultural.
002147	Lisduff Fen SAC	A small though relatively intact fen system. Petrifying springs with heavy tufa formations occur along the stream in the southern end of the site. An important site for <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> with a series of recent records including confirmed presence in 1995.	Lisduff Fen is located at Kilcoman crossroad approximately 4 km south-east of Birr. The fen system includes areas dominated by <i>Phragmites australis</i> some wet grassland areas of <i>Betula/Salix</i> scrub and communities tending towards raised bog. There are also some pools. Part of a small stream which enters the fen at the south end is included. Landuse in surrounding areas is mainly pasture for cattle.



Site Code	Site Name	Quality of Site	Other Site Characteristics
002241	Lough Derg North-East Shore SAC	<p>This site supports a wide range of habitats including Alkaline fens Juniper scrub formations limestone pavement Yew woodlands alluvial woodlands and Cladium fen. It also supports the only known population in the country for the Irish Red Data Book species <i>Inula salicina</i>. Other scarce plant species found here include <i>Sorbus aria</i> and <i>Rhamnus catharticus</i>. The endangered fish species <i>Coregonus autumnalis</i> has its European stronghold in Lough Derg. The open water areas of the lake itself are important for wintering wildfowl. Goat island holds a breeding colony of <i>Sterna hirundo</i>. A subflock of <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> uses the callow lands around Slevoy Bay in Winter. A good population of <i>Cygnus olor</i> occurs.</p>	<p>This site incorporates part of the water body of Lough Derg and includes most of the northern lake shore and approximately one-third of the northeast shoreline. Lough Derg itself is the lowest order lake on the River Shannon and is one of the largest freshwater bodies in Ireland. Most of the lake overlies Carboniferous Limestone which outcrops along the shores but some old Red Sandstone occurs on the eastern side. The site is of high scenic value and is a well known angling and tourism area.</p>



Appendix 1 - Table 2 Background data for European sites considered in the assessment; including the Qualifying features (Qualifying Interests or Special Conservation Interests) and the known threats and pressures as recorded by the National Parks and Wildlife Services

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature	Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
000216	River Shannon Callows SAC	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0], Limestone pavements [8240], Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510], <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410], Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355], Alkaline fens [7230]	B06, A04.01, G01, G05.01, F03.01, J02.04.01, A04.02.05, C01.03.02, A03.03, J02.05, A04.03, A10.01, J02.01, A08, K03.04, D01.01, J02.05.02, A03, A07, B02.02, J02.11	Grazing in forests or woodland, Intensive grazing, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Trampling, overuse, Hunting, Flooding, Non intensive mixed animal grazing, Mechanical removal of peat, Abandonment or lack of mowing, Modification of hydrographic functioning, general, Abandonment of pastoral systems lack of grazing, Removal of hedges and copses or scrub, Landfill, land reclamation and drying out, general, Fertilisation, Predation, Paths, tracks, cycling tracks, Modifying structures of inland water courses, Mowing or cutting of grassland, Use of biocides, hormones and chemicals, Forestry clearance, Siltation rate changes, dumping, depositing of dredged deposits
000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC	Geyer`s whorl snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>) [1013], Alkaline fens [7230], Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220], Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) [1014], Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210], Desmoulin`s whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) [1016]	C01.01, B, E01.03, F03.01, J01, F02.03, A04, E03.01, D02.01	Sand and gravel extraction, Sylviculture, forestry, Dispersed habitation, Hunting, Fire and fire suppression, Leisure fishing, Grazing, Disposal of household or recreational facility waste, Electricity and phone lines
000407	The Loughans SAC	Turloughs [3180]	A08, A04.01.01, A04	Fertilisation, Intensive cattle grazing, Grazing



Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature	Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
000571	Charleville Wood SAC	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0], <i>Desmoulin's whorl snail</i> (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) [1016]	B02, F03.02.03, G01.02, F03.02.04, G01, F04, G02.09, F05.04	Forest and Plantation management & use, Trapping, poisoning, poaching, Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles, Predator control, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Taking or Removal of terrestrial plants, general, Wildlife watching, Poaching
000572	Clara Bog SAC	Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150], Active raised bogs [7110], Bog woodland [91D0], Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) * important orchid sites [6210], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]	J02.10, A08, X, J02.15, E04.01, A04.03, F04, C01.03, E03.01, A05.02, J01.01, D01.01, C01.01.01	Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes, Fertilisation, No threats or pressures, Other human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Agricultural structures, buildings in the landscape, Abandonment of pastoral systems lack of grazing, Taking or Removal of terrestrial plants, general, Peat extraction, Disposal of household or recreational facility waste, Stock feeding, Burning down, Paths, tracks, cycling tracks, Sand and gravel quarries
000582	Raheenmore Bog SAC	Active raised bogs [7110], Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120], Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]	J02.01.03, X, A02.01	Infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits, No threats or pressures, Agricultural intensification
000585	Sharavogue Bog SAC	Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120], Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150], Active raised bogs [7110]	J02.15, I02, B02.02, J01.01, A08	Other human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Problematic native species, Forestry clearance, Burning down, Fertilisation
000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1099], Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330], Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260], Harbour seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>) [1365], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029], Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106], Alluvial forests with	A01, J02.11, A08, H01.05, D01.05, H01.08, E03, A09, K01.01, C01.01, D03.01.03, A10.01, B02, H01.01, F03.02.04, E05, J02.06.01, F01.03,	Cultivation, Siltation rate changes, dumping, depositing of dredged deposits, Fertilisation, Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to agricultural and forestry activities, Bridge, viaduct, Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to household sewage and waste waters, Discharges, Irrigation, Erosion, Sand and gravel extraction, Fishing harbours, Removal of hedges and copses or scrub, Forest and Plantation management & use, Pollution to surface waters by industrial plants, Predator control, Storage of



Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature	Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
		Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0], Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0], Twaité shad (Alosa fallax) [1103], Brook lamprey (Lampetra planeri) [1096], Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410], Estuaries [1130], Otter (Lutra lutra) [1355], Sea lamprey (Petromyzon marinus) [1095]	J02.05.02, J02.06, I01, F02.03.01, D01.01, H01, J02, J02.12.02	materials, Surface water abstractions for agriculture, Bottom culture, Modifying structures of inland water courses, Water abstractions from surface waters, Invasive non-native species, Bait digging or collection, Paths, tracks, cycling tracks, Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Dykes and flooding defense in inland water systems
000849	Spahill and Clomantagh Hill SAC	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) * important orchid sites [6210]	X, A10.01, A04.01, A08	No threats or pressures, Removal of hedges and copses or scrub, Intensive grazing, Fertilisation
000934	Kilduff, Devilsbit Mountain SAC	European dry heaths [4030], Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas - and submountain areas in Continental Europe [6230]	G01.04.01, G01.02, G02.09, F03.02.02, A10, H05.01	Mountaineering & rock climbing, Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles, Wildlife watching, Taking from nest (e.g. falcons), Restructuring agricultural land holding, Garbage and solid waste
001858	Galmoy Fen SAC	Alkaline fens [7230]	A04, X, B, C01.04.02	Grazing, No threats or pressures, Sylviculture, forestry, Underground mining
002147	Lisduff Fen SAC	Geyer's whorl snail (Vertigo geyeri) [1013], Alkaline fens [7230], Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]	A07, X, E03.01, J02.10, E05, A04.03, A08, A02.01, E03.03, C01	Use of biocides, hormones and chemicals, No threats or pressures, Disposal of household or recreational facility waste, Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes, Storage of materials, Abandonment of pastoral systems lack of grazing, Fertilisation, Agricultural intensification, Disposal of inert materials, Mining and quarrying
002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	Bottlenose dolphin (Tursiops truncatus) [1349], Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330], Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410], River lamprey (Lampetra fluviatilis) [1099], Otter (Lutra lutra) [1355], Coastal lagoons [1150],	G01.01, B, I01, E01, K02.03, A08, C01.03.01, H04, A04, D01.01, F03.01, F02.03, J02.10, E03,	Nautical sports, Sylviculture, forestry, Invasive non-native species, Urbanised areas, human habitation, Eutrophication (natural), Fertilisation, Hand cutting of peat, Air pollution, air-borne pollutants, Grazing, Paths, tracks, cycling tracks, Hunting, Leisure fishing, Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes,



Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature	Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
		Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1095], <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029], Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0], Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410], Estuaries [1130], Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230], Reefs [1170], Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110], Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1096], Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106], Large shallow inlets and bays [1160], Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	J02.01.02, F01, J02.01.01, C01.01.02, J02.12.01	Discharges, Reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Polderisation, Removal of beach materials, Sea defense or coast protection works, tidal barrages
002236	Island Fen SAC	Alkaline fens [7230], <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130]	F03.01, K02.01, A04.03, D01, X, J01.01, C01, A04.01	Hunting, Species composition change (succession), Abandonment of pastoral systems lack of grazing, Roads, paths and railroads, No threats or pressures, Burning down, Mining and quarrying, Intensive grazing
002241	Lough Derg, North-East Shore SAC	Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davalliana</i> [7210], Limestone pavements [8240], Alkaline fens [7230], <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130], Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0], <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles [91J0]	K02.03, G01, J02.10, A08, J02, G02.09, I01, J02.01.03, A10.01, C01, K02.01, B02.01.01, H01.08, I02, A04.01, M01.02, M01.03, D01.01, D03.01.02,	Eutrophication (natural), Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes, Fertilisation, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Wildlife watching, Invasive non-native species, Infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits, Removal of hedges and copses or scrub, Mining and quarrying, Species composition change (succession), Forest replanting (native trees), Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to household sewage and waste waters, Problematic native



Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature	Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
			M01.01, H01, A04.02.05	species, Intensive grazing, Droughts and less precipitations, Flooding and rising precipitations, Paths, tracks, cycling tracks, Piers or tourist harbours or recreational piers, Temperature changes (e.g. rise of temperature & extremes), Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Non intensive mixed animal grazing
004058	Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017], Common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193], Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067]	G01.01, F02.03, A08, F03.01	Nautical sports, Leisure fishing, Fertilisation, Hunting
004077	River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA	Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054], Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046], Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160], Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038], Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050], Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142], Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137], Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017], Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>) [A164], Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143], Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141], Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179], Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140], Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056], Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162], Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048], Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149], Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) [A062], Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052], Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]	A08, D03.02, E03, F01, E02, G01.01, E01	Fertilisation, Shipping lanes, Discharges, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Industrial or commercial areas, Nautical sports, Urbanised areas, human habitation



Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature	Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
004096	Middle Shannon Callows SPA	Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038], Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156], Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050], Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179], Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140], Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142]	A04, E01, F02.03, D01.05, G01.02, G01.01, A04.03, F03.01, A08, D01.01, A03	Grazing, Urbanised areas, human habitation, Leisure fishing, Bridge, viaduct, Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles, Nautical sports, Abandonment of pastoral systems lack of grazing, Hunting, Fertilisation, Paths, tracks, cycling tracks, Mowing or cutting of grassland
004233	River Nore SPA	Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>) [A229]	D03.01, J02.01, X	Port areas, Landfill, land reclamation and drying out, general, No threats or pressures



Appendix 1 - Table 3 Known threats and pressures related to the qualifying interests from each Special Area of Conservation as per article 17 reporting from the National Parks and Wildlife Services

Qualifying Interests	EU Code	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Geyer's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>)	[1013]	Loss of riverside and canalside habitat; exploitation of esker sites and drainage of wetlands, and sheep grazing and overexploitation of dune sites.	Changes to ground vegetation condition, groundwater dependent and is highly sensitive to hydrological changes.
Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>)	[1014]	Loss of riverside and canalside habitat; exploitation of esker sites and drainage of wetlands, and sheep grazing and overexploitation of dune sites.	Changes to ground vegetation condition, groundwater dependent and is highly sensitive to hydrological changes.
Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>)	[1016]	Loss of riverside and canalside habitat; exploitation of esker sites and drainage of wetlands, and sheep grazing and overexploitation of dune sites.	Changes to ground vegetation condition, groundwater dependent and is highly sensitive to hydrological changes.
Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>)	[1029]	In stream works, hydrological and morphological alterations, sediment and enrichment, pollution due urbanisation etc. Poor substrate quality due to increased growth of algal and macrophyte vegetation as a result of severe nutrient enrichment, as well as physical siltation.	Surface water dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological change. Very highly sensitive to pollution.
Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)	[1095]	Barriers to upstream migration (e.g. weirs), which limit access to spawning beds and juvenile habitat are main threats to this species.	Marine water dependent. Low sensitivity to hydrological changes. Coastal development, trampling from recreational activity.
Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>)	[1096]	Channel maintenance, barriers, passage obstruction, gross pollution and specific pollutants.	Surface water dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological change. Availability of suitable spawning ground is a considerable issue for the species.
River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)	[1099]	Channel maintenance, barriers, passage obstruction, gross pollution and specific pollutants.	Surface water dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological change. Availability of suitable spawning ground is a considerable issue for the species.
Twait Shad (<i>Alosa fallax fallax</i>)	[1103]	Habitat quality, particularly at spawning sites is the most notable threat to this species.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change.



Qualifying Interests	EU Code	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)	[1106]	Marine survival rates are of concern for the populations.	Disease, parasites and barriers to movement.
Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time	[1110]	None identified by the NPWS in the 2019 publication of the Status of EU protected habitats and species in Ireland.	None identified.
Estuaries	[1130]	Pollution, fishing /aquaculture and habitat quality.	Inappropriate development, changes in turbidity
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	[1140]	Aquaculture, fishing, bait digging, removal of fauna, reclamation of land, coastal protection works and invasive species, particularly cord-grass; hard coastal defence structures; sea-level rise.	Surface and marine water dependent. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Moderate sensitivity to pollution. Changes to salinity and tidal regime. Coastal development.
Coastal lagoons	[1150]	Eutrophication. Modification of hydrological glow and drainage.	Erosion and silting up. Accumulation of seaweed. Land use management resulting in hydrological interactions.
Large shallow inlets and bays	[1160]	Pressures on the habitat include nutrient enrichment, dredging and invasive alien species. Overall Status is assessed as Bad and deteriorating, a genuine decline since the 2013 assessment of Inadequate and improving, and is based on more detailed information.	Inappropriate development, changes in turbidity, surface water runoff, discharge etc. On site management activities.
Reefs	[1170]	Professional fishing; taking for fauna; taking for flora; water pollution; climate change; and change in species composition.	Sensitive to disturbance and pollution.
Perennial vegetation of stony banks	[1220]	Disruption of the sediment supply, owing to the interruption of the coastal processes, caused by developments such as car parks and coastal defence structures including rock armour and sea walls. The removal of gravel.	Marine water dependent. Low sensitivity to hydrological changes. Coastal development, trampling from recreational activity and gravel removal.
Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts	[1230]	A number of significant pressures were identified, including trampling by walkers, invasive non-native species, gravel extraction, and sea-level and wave exposure changes due to climate change. There have been no significant losses in sea cliff habitat since the Directive came into force.	Land use activities such as tourism and/or agricultural practices. Direct alteration to the habitat or effects such as burning or drainage.



Qualifying Interests	EU Code	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand	[1310]	Invasive Species; erosion and accretion.	Marine water dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Infilling, reclamation, invasive species.
Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)	[1330]	Overgrazing; erosion; invasive species, particularly common cordgrass (<i>Spartina anglica</i>); infilling and reclamation.	Marine and groundwater dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Overgrazing, erosion and accretion.
Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	[1349]	Pressures acting on the species in Irish waters mainly involve commercial vessel-based activities such as impacts arising from geophysical seismic exploration or from local/regional prey removal from fisheries.	Large vessel movement effecting distributions. Prey availability, reduction in available habitat and water quality.
Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	[1355]	Decrease in water quality: Use of pesticides; fertilization; vegetation removal; professional fishing (including lobster pots and fyke nets); Hunting; poisoning; sand and gravel extraction; mechanical removal of peat; urbanised areas; human habitation; continuous urbanization; drainage; management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes; and canalization or modifying structures of inland water course.	Surface and marine water dependent. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Sensitivity to pollution.
Harbour Seal(<i>Phoca vitulina</i>)	[1365]	Distance to human activities, accidental entanglement in fishing gear competition for prey resources, illegal killing, pollution and habitat degradation.	Prey availability, reduction in available habitat and water quality.
Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)	[1410]	Over-grazing by cattle or sheep; infilling and reclamation.	Marine and groundwater dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Coastal development and reclamation.
Turloughs	[3180]	Nutrient enrichment; afforestation; waste water; invasive alien species; sport and leisure activities.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution.



Qualifying Interests	EU Code	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Water courses of plain to montane levels with vegetation (Ranunculus fluitans and Callitriche-Batrachion)	[3260]	Hydrological and morphological changes, water quality, enrichment, and surface water discharges from industrial site and/or agriculture.	Surface water dependent Highly sensitive to hydrological change and direct physical interactions.
European dry heaths	[4030]	Afforestation, overburning, over-grazing, under-grazing and bracken invasion.	Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Changes in management. Changes in nutrient status.
Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands	[5130]	Overgrazing, erosion, scrub clearance, inappropriate land use management, and succession processes.	Changes in management such as grazing regime. Changes in nutrient or base status. Changes to vegetation composition. Introduction of alien species.
Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia)* important orchid sites	[6210]	Land reclamation, afforestation; drainage; and infrastructural development.	Changes in management such as grazing regime. Changes in nutrient or base status. Changes to vegetation composition. Introduction of alien species.
Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)	[6230]	Bracken encroachment, succession, inappropriate grazing, afforestation; drainage; and infrastructural development.	Changes in management such as grazing regime. Changes in nutrient or base status. Changes to vegetation composition. Introduction of alien species.
Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae)	[6410]	Agricultural intensification; drainage; abandonment of pastoral systems.	Changes in management such as grazing regime. Changes in nutrient or base status. Changes to vegetation composition. Introduction of alien species.
Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis)	[6510]	Agricultural intensification; drainage; abandonment of pastoral systems.	Changes in management such as grazing regime. Changes in nutrient or base status. Changes to vegetation composition. Introduction of alien species.



Qualifying Interests	EU Code	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Active raised bogs	[7110]	Drainage; burning; peat extraction; overgrazing; afforestation; erosion; and climate change.	Surface water interactions. Groundwater isolated system with sensitivities related to the bog basin. Drainage and land use management are the key things.
Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration	[7120]	Drainage; burning; peat extraction; overgrazing; afforestation; erosion; and climate change.	Surface water interactions. Groundwater isolated system with sensitivities related to the bog basin. Drainage and land use management are the key things.
Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion	[7150]	Drainage; burning; peat extraction; overgrazing; afforestation; erosion; and climate change.	Surface and ground water interactions. Drainage and land use management are the key things.
Calcareous fens with species of mariscus sedge and bog cotton (Cladium mariscus and Caricion davallianae)	[7210]	Hydrological changes, pollution to surface waters, urbanisation, roads development, groundwater interactions, grazing and cultivation practices and the inappropriate use of pesticides.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management.
Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)	[7220]	Ground water interactions, on site management activities.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution.
Alkaline fens	[7230]	Land reclamation, peat extraction; afforestation; erosion and landslides triggered by human activity; drainage; burning and infrastructural development.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management.
Limestone pavements	[8240]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access.	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles	[91A0]	The introduction of alien species; sub-optimal grazing patterns; general forestry management; increases in urbanisation and human habitation adjacent to oak woodlands; and the construction of communication networks through the woodland.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Introduction of alien species.
Bog woodland	[91D0]	The introduction of alien species; sub-optimal grazing patterns; general forestry management; increases in urbanisation and human habitation adjacent to oak woodlands; and the construction of communication networks through the woodland.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Introduction of alien species.



Qualifying Interests	EU Code	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Taxus baccata woods of the British Isles	[91J0]	Invasive Species; erosion and accretion.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Introduction of alien species.



Appendix 1 - Table 4 Known threats and pressures related to the qualifying interests from each Special Area of Conservation as per article 17 reporting from the National Parks and Wildlife Services

Species Code	Common Name	Scientific Name	Threats and Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
A017	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo carbo</i>	D01	Wind, wave and tidal power, including infrastructure
A038	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	A02, A11, C03, D02, G01, H07	Modification of cultivation practices, Agriculture activities not referred to above, Renewable abiotic energy use, Utility and service lines, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Other forms of pollution
A046	Light-Bellied Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>	A02, A11, C03, D02, F01, G01, G05, H03, H07, I01, J03	Modification of cultivation practices, Agriculture activities not referred to above, Renewable abiotic energy use, Utility and service lines, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Other Human intrusions and disturbances, Marine water pollution, Other forms of pollution, Invasive non-native species, Other Ecosystem Modifications
A048	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	F01, F02, G01, H03, M01	Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Changes in abiotic conditions
A050	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	C03, F01, F03, G01, H01, H03, H07, I01, J02, J03	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial), Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Marine water pollution, Other forms of pollution, Invasive non-native species, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications
A052	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Xxp/Xxt	No threats and pressures identified by the NPWS



Species Code	Common Name	Scientific Name	Threats and Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
A054	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	C03, F01, F03, G01, H01, H03, H07, J02	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial), Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Marine water pollution, Other forms of pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions
A056	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	C03, F03, G01, H01, H03, H07	Renewable abiotic energy use, Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial), Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Marine water pollution, Other forms of pollution
A061	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	C03, F03, G01, H01, H07, M02	Renewable abiotic energy use, Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial), Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Other forms of pollution, Changes in biotic conditions
A062	Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	C03, F01, F02, F03, G01, H01, H03	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial), Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Marine water pollution
A067	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	C03, F01, F03, G01, H01, H03, H07, M02	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Hunting and collection of wild animals (terrestrial), Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Marine water pollution, Other forms of pollution, Changes in biotic conditions
A122	Corn Crake	<i>Crex crex</i>	A03.01, A04.01, K03.04, M01.03	Intensive Mowing or intensification, Intensive grazing, Predation, Flooding and rising precipitations



Species Code	Common Name	Scientific Name	Threats and Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
A137	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	C03, F01, F02, G01, H03, J02, J03, M01	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications, Changes in abiotic conditions
A140	European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	A02, A04, B01, C01, C03, F01, G01, H03, J01, K03, M02	Modification of cultivation practices, Grazing, Forest planting on open ground, Mining and quarrying, Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Fire and Fire suppression, Interspecific faunal relations, Changes in biotic conditions
A141	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	C03, F01, F02, G01, H03, J02, J03, M01	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications, Changes in abiotic conditions
A142	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	A02, C03, F01, G01, H03	Modification of cultivation practices, Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution
A143	Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	C03, F01, F02, G01, H03, J02, J03, M01	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications, Changes in abiotic conditions



Species Code	Common Name	Scientific Name	Threats and Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
A149	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	C03, F01, F02, G01, H03, J02, J03, M01	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications, Changes in abiotic conditions
A156	Black-Tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>	A02, C03, F01, F02, G01, H03, J02, J03	Modification of cultivation practices, Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications
A157	Bar-Tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	C03, F01, F02, G01, H03, J02, J03, M01	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications, Changes in abiotic conditions
A160	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata arquata</i>	C03, F01, F02, G01, H03, J02, J03	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications
A162	Common Redhank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	C03, F01, F02, G01, H03, J02, J03, M01	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Other Ecosystem Modifications, Changes in abiotic conditions



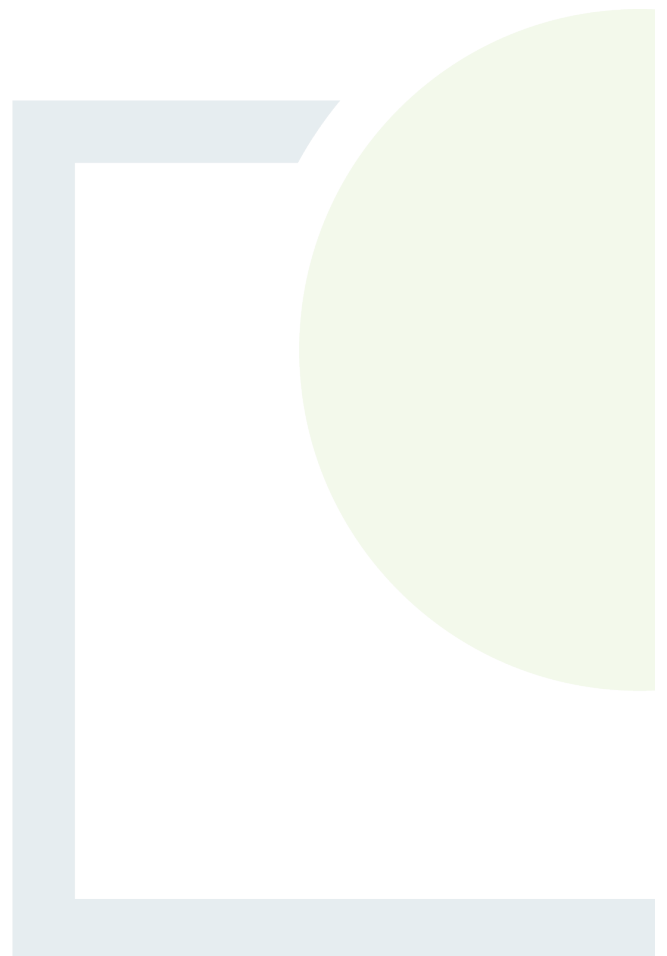
Species Code	Common Name	Scientific Name	Threats and Pressures Codes	Known Threats and Pressures
A164	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	C03, F01, G01, H03, J02, M01	Renewable abiotic energy use, Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Marine water pollution, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions, Changes in abiotic conditions
A179	Black-Headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	A04, C03, F02, H03, J03, M01	Grazing, Renewable abiotic energy use, Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources, Marine water pollution, Other Ecosystem Modifications, Changes in abiotic conditions
A193	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	C03, D01, D03, G01, I01	Renewable abiotic energy use, Roads, paths and railroads, Shipping lanes, ports, marine constructions, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Invasive non-native species
A229	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	A11, D01, G01, H01, I01, J02	Agriculture activities not referred to above, Roads, paths and railroads, Outdoor sports and leisure activities, recreational activities, Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish), Invasive non-native species, Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions



CONSULTANTS IN ENGINEERING,
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APPENDIX 2

Relationship with other plans
and programmes



This appendix is not intended to be a full and comprehensive review of inter-related Plans or Programmes, EU Directives, the transposing regulations or the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The information is not exhaustive and it is recommended to consult the Plan or Programme, Directive or Regulation to become familiar with the full details of each.

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
European Level			
SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. • Provide for a high level of protection of the environment by carrying out an environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out an environmental assessment for plans or programmes referred to in Articles 2 to 4 of the Directive. • Prepare an environmental report which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme and reasonable alternatives that consider the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme. • Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission. • Consult other Member States where the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have transboundary environmental effects. • Inform relevant authorities and stakeholders on the decision to implement the plan or programme. • Issue a statement to include requirements detailed in Article 9 of the Directive. • Monitor and mitigate significant environmental effects identified by the assessment. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires the assessment of the environmental effects of public and private projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All projects listed in Annex I are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require an EIA. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to assess and implement avoidance or mitigation measures to eliminate environmental effects, before consent is given of projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects. Those projects are defined in Article 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For projects listed in Annex II, a "screening procedure" is required to determine the effects of projects on the basis of thresholds/criteria or a case by case examination. This should take into account Annex III. The environmental impact assessment shall identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in the light of each individual case and in accordance with Articles 4 to 12, the direct and indirect effects of a project on the following factors: human beings, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, climate and the landscape, material assets and the cultural heritage, the interaction between each factor. Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission before a decision is made. 	<p>achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Maintain or restore to favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of community interest. Promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose and protect sites of importance to habitats, plant and animal species. Establish a network of European sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, to enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. Carry out comprehensive assessment of habitat types and species present. Establish a system of strict protection for the animal species and plant species listed in Annex IV. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state including their eggs, nests and habitats. • Protect, manage and control these species and comply with regulations relating to their exploitation. • The species included in Annex I shall be the subject of special conservation measures concerning their habitat in order to ensure their survival and reproduction in their area of distribution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Annex 1. • Preserve, maintain and establish biotopes and habitats to include the creation of protected areas (Special Protection Areas). • Ensure the upkeep and management in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats inside and outside the protected zones, re-establish destroyed biotopes and creation of biotopes. • Measures for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I is required as regards their breeding, moulting and wintering areas and staging posts along their migration routes. The protection of wetlands and particularly wetlands of international importance. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Bathing Water Directive (revised) 2006 [2006/7/EC]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this Directive is to preserve, protect and improve the quality of the environment and to protect human health by complementing Directive 2000/60/EC 	<p>This Directive lays down provisions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the monitoring and classification of bathing water quality; • the management of bathing water quality; and • the provision of information to the public on bathing water quality 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and - preventing further such pollution. 	<p>Ireland’s Nitrates Action Programme is designed to prevent pollution of surface waters and ground water from agricultural sources and to protect and improve water quality. Ireland’s third NAP came into operation in 2014. Each Member State’s NAP must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a limit on the amount of livestock manure applied to the land each year 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set periods when land spreading is prohibited due to risk • set capacity levels for the storage of livestock manure 	regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions	<p>The purpose of this Directive is lay down rules to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce industrial emissions into air, water and land and to prevent the generation of waste, in order to achieve a high level of environmental protection.</p>	<p>The legislation covers industrial activities in the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • energy; • metal production and processing; • minerals; • chemicals; • waste management; • and other sectors such as pulp and paper production, slaughterhouses and the intensive rearing of poultry and pigs. <p>All installations covered by the directive must prevent and reduce pollution by applying the best available techniques (BATs)* and address efficient energy use, waste prevention and management and measures to prevent accidents and limit their consequences.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU Plant Protection (products) Directive 2009/127/EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Directive aims at reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and • the environment by introducing different targets, tools and measures such as Integrated Pest • Management (IPM) or National Action Plans (NAPs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Framework Directive applies to pesticides which are plant protection products. • Regarding pesticide application equipment already in professional use, the Framework Directive introduces requirements for the inspection and maintenance to be carried out on such equipment. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
EU Renewable Energy Directive (EU/2018/2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Directive sets an overall European renewable energy target of 32% by 2030 and includes rules to ensure the uptake of renewables in the transport sector and in heating and cooling. • The directive sets common principles and rules for renewable energy support schemes, sustainability criteria for biomass and the right to produce and consume renewable energy and to establish renewable energy communities. • It also establishes rules to remove barriers, stimulate investments and drive cost reductions in renewable energy technologies and empowers citizens and businesses to participate in the clean energy transformation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Directive promotes cooperation amongst EU countries (and with countries outside the EU) to help them meet their renewable energy targets. • The Directive specifies national renewable energy targets for each country, taking into account its starting point and overall potential for renewables. • EU countries set out how they plan to meet these targets and the general course of their renewable energy policy in national renewable energy action plans. • Progress towards national targets is measured every two years when EU countries publish national renewable energy progress reports. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Directive 2018/2001 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (recast)	<p>This Directive establishes a common framework for the promotion of energy from renewable sources. It sets a binding European Union target for the overall share of energy from renewable sources in the Union's gross final consumption of energy in 2030: Member States shall collectively ensure that the share of energy from renewable sources in the Union's gross final consumption of energy in 2030 is at least 32%. Support schemes for energy from renewable sources shall be adopted by Member States. Provisions on joint projects between Member States and between Member States and third countries are laid down too.</p>	<p>The Directive lays down rules on financial support for electricity from renewable sources, on self-consumption of such electricity, on the use of energy from renewable sources in the heating and cooling sector and in the transport sector, on regional cooperation between Member States, and between Member States and third countries, on guarantees of origin, on administrative procedures and on information and training. It also establishes sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria for biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels. The latter include fuels produced from waste, from agricultural biomass and from forest biomass.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<p>The Commission shall monitor the origin of biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels consumed in the European Union and the impact of their production, including the impact as a result of displacement, on land use in the Union and in the main third countries of supply.</p>	
<p>Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (2014/94/EU)</p>	<p>This Directive establishes a common framework of measures for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Union in order to minimise dependence on oil and to mitigate the environmental impact of transport.</p>	<p>This Directive sets out minimum requirements for the building-up of alternative fuels infrastructure, including recharging points for electric vehicles and refuelling points for natural gas (LNG and CNG) and hydrogen, to be implemented by means of Member States' national policy frameworks, as well as common technical specifications for such recharging and refuelling points, and user information requirements.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Energy Efficiency Directive (EU) 2023/1791</p>	<p>The new directive introduces a series of measures to help accelerate energy efficiency, including embracing the “energy efficiency first” principle in the energy and non-energy policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing an EU legally-binding target to reduce the EU’s final energy consumption by 11.7% by 2030 (relative to the 2020 reference scenario). This includes for each Member State the requirement to set its indicative national contribution based on objective criteria reflecting national circumstances. If the national contributions do not add up to the EU target, an ambition gap mechanism is applied by the Commission. • Increasing annual energy savings from 0.8% (at present) to 1.3% (2024-2025), then 1.5% (2026-2027) and 1.9% from 2028 onwards. That’s an average of 1.49% of new annual savings for the period from 2024-2030. • Obliging Member States to prioritise vulnerable customers and social housing within the scope of their energy savings measures. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing an annual energy consumption reduction target of 1.9% for the public sector as a whole. • Extending the annual 3% buildings renovation obligation to all the levels of public administration. • Introducing a different approach, based on energy consumption, for business to have an energy management system or to carry out an energy audits. • Bringing in a new obligation to monitor the energy performance of data centres, with an EU-level database collecting and publishing data. • Promoting local heating & cooling plans in larger municipalities. • Progressively increasing the efficient energy consumption in heat or cold supply, also in district heating. 	
<p>EU Seveso Directive (2012/18/EU)</p>	<p>This Directive lays down rules for the prevention of major accidents which involve dangerous substances, and the limitation of their consequences for human health and the environment, with a view to ensuring a high level of protection throughout the Union in a consistent and effective manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Seveso Directive is well integrated with other EU policies, thus avoiding double regulation or other administrative burden. This includes the following related policy areas: • Classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals; • The Union's Civil Protection Mechanism; • The Security Union Agenda including CBRN-E and Protection of critical infrastructure; • Policy on environmental liability and on the protection of the environment through criminal law; • Safety of offshore oil and gas operations. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
<p>Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 - Bringing nature back into our lives (European Commission, 2020)</p>	<p>The EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030 is a comprehensive, ambitious and long-term plan to protect nature and reverse the degradation of ecosystems. The strategy aims to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030, and contains specific actions and commitments.</p>	<p>The Strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at • sea, building upon existing Natura 2000 areas, with strict protection for areas of very high biodiversity and climate value. • An EU Nature Restoration Plan - a series of concrete commitments and actions to restore degraded ecosystems across the EU by 2030, and manage them sustainably, addressing the key drivers of biodiversity loss. • A set of measures to enable the necessary transformative change: setting in motion a new, strengthened governance framework to ensure better implementation and track progress, improving knowledge, financing and investments and better respecting nature in public and business decision making. • Measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge, demonstrating that the EU is ready to lead by example towards the successful adoption of an ambitious global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>EU Green Infrastructure Strategy</p>	<p>Aims to create a robust enabling framework in order to promote and facilitate Green Infrastructure (GI) projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting GI in the main EU policy areas. • Supporting EU-level GI projects. • Improving access to finance for GI projects. • Improving information and promoting innovation. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
			environmental protection and management.
UNESCO (1972) The Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> links concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural properties; and recognizes the way in which people interact with nature, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sets out the duties of States Parties in identifying potential sites and their role in protecting and preserving them; each country pledges to conserve not only the World Heritage sites situated on its territory, but also to protect its national heritage; encourages to integrate the protection of the cultural and natural heritage into regional planning programmes, set up staff and services at their sites, undertake scientific and technical conservation research and adopt measures which give this heritage a function in the day-to-day life of the community. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management</p>
UN (1992) The Convention on Biological Diversity	<p>An overall objective is to develop national strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.</p>	<p>The Convention has three main goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the conservation of biological diversity (or biodiversity); the sustainable use of its components; and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
<p>UN (1992) Framework Convention on Climate Change</p>	<p>It is aimed at stabilising greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.</p>	<p>The Convention acknowledges the vulnerability of all countries to the effects of climate change and calls for special efforts to ease the consequences, especially in developing countries which lack the resources to do so on their own.</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise.</p> <p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>UN Kyoto Protocol (2nd Kyoto Period), the Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II), Paris climate conference (COP21) 2015 (Paris Agreement)</p>	<p>The UN Kyoto Protocol set of policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II) aims to identify and develop all the necessary elements of an EU strategy to implement the Kyoto Protocol.</p> <p>At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal. The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kyoto Protocol is implemented through the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II). • EU member states implement measures to improve on or compliment the specified measures and policies arising from the ECCP. • Under COP21, governments agreed to come together every 5 years to set more ambitious targets as required by science; report to each other and the public on how well they are doing to implement their targets; track progress towards the long-term goal through a robust transparency and accountability system. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
EU 2020 Climate and Energy Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Binding legislation which aims to ensure the European Union meets its climate and energy targets for 2020. • Aims to achieve a 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels. • Aims to raise the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%. • Achieve a 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency. 	<p>Four pieces of complimentary legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) to include a cap on emission allowances in addition to existing system of national caps. • Member States have agreed national targets for non-EU ETS emissions from countries outside the EU. • Meet the national renewable energy targets of 16% for Ireland by 2020. • Preparing a legal framework for technologies in carbon capture and storage. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EU 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030 that has been agreed by European countries. • Targets include a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels, at least a 27% share of renewable energy consumption and at least 27% energy savings compared with the business-as-usual scenario. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet the targets, the European Commission has proposed the following policies for 2030: • A reformed EU emissions trading scheme (ETS). • New indicators for the competitiveness and security of the energy system, such as price differences with major trading partners, diversification of supply, and interconnection capacity between EU countries. • First ideas for a new governance system based on national plans for competitive, secure, and sustainable energy. These plans will follow a common EU approach. They will ensure stronger investor certainty, greater transparency, enhanced policy coherence and improved coordination across the EU. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
The Clean Air for Europe Directive (2008/50/EC) (EU Air Framework Directive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CAFE Directive merges existing legislation into a single directive (except for the fourth daughter directive). • Sets new air quality objectives for PM2.5 (fine particles) including the limit value and exposure related objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole. • Aims to assess the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accounts for the possibility to discount natural sources of pollution when assessing compliance against limit values. Allows the possibility for time extensions of three years (PM10) or up to five years (NO2, benzene) for complying with limit values, based on conditions and the assessment by the European Commission. The Fourth Daughter Directive lists pollutants, target values and monitoring requirements for the following: arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtains information on ambient air quality in order to help combat air pollution and nuisance and to monitor long-term trends and improvements resulting from national and community measures. Ensures that such information on ambient air quality is made available to the public. Aims to maintain air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases. Aims to promote increased cooperation between the Member States in reducing air pollution. 	regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)	<p>The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction from source.</p>	<p>The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw up strategic noise maps for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels; Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise. <p>The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities.</p>	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks Reduce adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess all water courses and coast lines at risk from flooding through Flood Risk Assessment Prepare flood hazard maps and flood risk maps outlining the extent or potential of flooding and assets and humans at risk in these areas at River Basin District level (Article 3(2) (b)) and areas covered by Article 5(1) and Article 13(1) (b) in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3. Implement flood risk management plans and take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce flood risk for the areas covered by the Articles listed above. Inform the public and allow the public to participate in planning process. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a framework for the protection of water bodies to include inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater and their dependent wildlife and habitats. Preserve and prevent the deterioration of water status and where necessary improve and maintain “good status” of water bodies. Promote sustainable water usage. The Water Framework Directive repealed the following Directives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Drinking Water Abstraction Directive Sampling Drinking Water Directive Exchange of Information on Quality of Surface Freshwater Directive Shellfish Directive Freshwater Fish Directive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect, enhance and restore all water bodies and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Directive. Achieve "good status" for all waters. Manage water bodies based on identifying and establishing river basins districts. Involve the public and streamline legislation. Prepare and implement a River Basin Management Plan for each river basin districts identified and a Register of Protected Areas. Establish a programme of monitoring for surface water status, groundwater status and protected areas. Recover costs for water services. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater Directive • Dangerous Substances Directive 		
Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect, control and conserve groundwater. • Prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater. • Implements measures to prevent and control groundwater pollution, including criteria for assessing good groundwater chemical status and criteria for the identification of significant and sustained upward trends and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet minimum groundwater standards listed in Annex 1 of Directive. • Meet threshold values adopted by national legislation for the pollutants, groups of pollutants and indicators of pollution which have been identified as contributing to the characterisation of bodies or groups of bodies of groundwater as being at risk, also taking into account Part B of Annex II. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Drinking Water Directive (2020/2184)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recast Drinking Water Directive is the EU’s main law on drinking water. It concerns the access to and the quality of water intended for human consumption to protect human health. • The EU adopted the recast Drinking Water Directive in December 2020 and the Directive entered into force in January 2021. Member States have to transpose the Directive into national law and comply with its provisions by 12 January 2023. The recast Drinking Water Directive will further protect human health thanks to updated water quality standards, tackling pollutants of concern, such as endocrine disruptors and microplastics, and leading to even cleaner water from the tap for all. 	<p>Key features of the revised Directive are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reinforced water quality standards, in line or, in some cases, even more stringent than the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations • tackling emerging pollutants, such as endocrine disruptors and PFAs, as well as microplastics • a preventive approach favouring actions to reduce pollution at source by introducing the risk-based approach • measures to ensure better access to water, particularly for vulnerable and marginalised groups • measures to promote tap water, including in public spaces and restaurants, to reduce (plastic) bottle consumption • harmonisation of the quality standards for materials and products in contact with water • measures to reduce water leakages and to increase transparency of the sector 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water and the treatment and discharge of waste water from certain industrial sectors. The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of waste water discharges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban waste water entering collecting systems shall before discharge, be subject to secondary treatment. Annex II requires the designation of areas sensitive to eutrophication which receive water discharges. Establishes minimum requirements for urban waste water collection and treatment systems in specified agglomerations to include special requirements for sensitive areas and certain industrial sectors. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) as amended by Directive 2006/21/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC and Directive 2013/30/EU	<p>Establish a framework of environmental liability based on the 'polluter-pays' principle, to prevent and remedy environmental damage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relates to environmental damage caused by any of the occupational activities listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities; damage to protected species and natural habitats caused by any occupational activities other than those listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities, whenever the operator has been at fault or negligent. Where environmental damage has not yet occurred but there is an imminent threat of such damage occurring, the operator shall, without delay, take the necessary preventive measures. Where environmental damage has occurred the operator shall, without delay, inform the competent authority of all relevant aspects of the situation and take all practicable steps to immediately control, contain, remove or otherwise manage the relevant contaminants and/or any other damage factors in order to limit or to prevent further environmental damage and adverse effects on human health or further impairment of services and the necessary remedial measures, in accordance with Article 7. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The operator shall bear the costs for the preventive and remedial actions taken pursuant to this Directive. • The competent authority shall be entitled to initiate cost recovery proceedings against the operator. • The operator may be required to provide financial security guarantees to ensure their responsibilities under the directive are met. • The Environmental Liability Directive has been amended through a number of Directives that are not of significant relevance to the SEA for the Guidelines. Implementation of the Environmental Liability Directive is contributed towards by a Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) 'Making the Environmental Liability Directive more fit for purpose' that is updated annually to changing developments, growing • knowledge and new needs. 	
<p>European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta 1992)</p>	<p>The aim of this (revised) Convention is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.</p>	<p>The Valletta Convention makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It also deals with public access, in particular to archaeological sites, and educational actions to be undertaken to develop public awareness of the value of the archaeological heritage. It also constitutes an institutional framework for pan-European co-operation on the archaeological heritage, entailing a systematic exchange of experience and experts among the various States.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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Convention of the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada 1995)	<p>The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co- operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reinforcement and promotion of policies for protecting and enhancing the heritage within the territories of the parties. • The affirmation of European solidarity with regard to the protection of the heritage and the fostering of practical co- operation between states and regions. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
ICOMOS (2011) Principles for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage Sites, Structures, Areas and Landscapes ('Dublin Principles')	<p>It is aimed to assist in the documentation, protection, conservation and appreciation of industrial heritage as part of the heritage of human societies around the World.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (I) Document and understand industrial heritage structures, sites, areas and landscapes and their values; • (II) Ensure effective protection and conservation of the industrial heritage structures, sites, areas and landscapes; • (III) Conserve and maintain the industrial heritage structures, sites, areas and landscapes; and • (IV) Present and communicate the heritage dimensions and values of industrial structures, sites, areas and landscapes to raise public and corporate awareness, and support training and research. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. • Recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal. Take the necessary steps to apply the provisions of this Convention concerning the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society. Greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned. 	<p>environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>European Landscape Convention 2000</p>	<p>The developments in agriculture, forestry, industrial and mineral production techniques, together with the practices followed in town and country planning, transport, networks, tourism and recreation, and at a more general level, changes in the world economy, have in many cases accelerated the transformation of landscapes. The Convention expresses a concern to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment. It aims to respond to the public's wish to enjoy high quality landscapes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote protection, management and planning of landscapes. Organise European co-operation on landscape issues. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>The Seventh Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the European Community (2013-2020)</p>	<p>It identifies three key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing 	<p>Four so called "enablers" will help Europe deliver on these objectives (goals):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better implementation of legislation. Better information by improving the knowledge base. More and wiser investment for environment and climate policy. Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme: • To make the Union's cities more sustainable. • To help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively. 	
Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats)	<p>The convention has three main aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats • to promote cooperation between states • to give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species including endangered and vulnerable migratory species 	<p>The Parties under the convention recognise the intrinsic value of nature, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations, they also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to ensure the conservation of nature in their countries, paying particular attention to planning and development policies and pollution control. • Look at implementing the Bern Convention in central Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. • Take account of the potential impact on natural heritage by other policies. • Promote education and information of the public, ensuring the need to conserve species is understood and acted upon. • Develop an extensive number of species action plans, codes of conducts, and guidelines, at their own initiative or in co- operation with other organisations. • Created the Emerald Network, an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Bali Road Map (2007)	<p>The overall goals of the project are twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase national capacity to co-ordinate ministerial views, participate in the UNFCCC process, and negotiate positions within the timeframe of the Bali Action Plan; and 	<p>The Bali Action Plan is centred on four main building Blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mitigation • adaptation • technology 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assess investment and financial flows to address climate change for up to three key sectors and/or economic activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> financing 	achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Cancun Agreements (2010)	<p>Set of decisions taken at the COP 16 Conference in Cancun in 2010 which addresses a series of key issues in the fight against climate change. Cancun Agreements' main objectives cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation Transparency of actions Technology Finance Adaptation Forests Capacity building 	Among the most prominent agreements is the establishment of a Green Climate Fund to transfer money from the developed to developing world to tackle the impacts of climate change.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Doha Climate Gateway (2012)	Set of decisions taken at the COP 18 meeting in Doha in 2012 which pave the way for a new agreement in Paris in 2015.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following actions were committed to by governments at this conference: Set out a timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015 (to come into effect in 2020); Complete the work under Bali Action Plan and to focus on new completing new targets; Strengthen the aim to cut greenhouse gases and help vulnerable countries to adapt; Amend Kyoto Protocol to include a new commitment period for cutting down the greenhouse gases emissions; and Provide the financial and technology support and new institutions to allow clean energy investment and sustainable growth in developing countries. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
EU Common Agricultural Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve agricultural productivity, so that consumers have a stable supply of affordable food; and To ensure that EU farmers can make a reasonable living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring viable food production that will contribute to feeding the world's population, which is expected to rise considerably in the future; Climate change and sustainable management of natural resources; Looking after the countryside across the EU and keeping the rural economy alive. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU REACH Regulation (EC 1907/2006)(as amended)	Aims to improve the protection of human health and the environment through the better and earlier identification of the intrinsic properties of chemical substances.	The aims are achieved by applying REACH, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation; and Restriction of chemicals. REACH also aims to enhance innovation and competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Stockholm Convention	The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibit and/or eliminate the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A to the Convention Restrict the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B to the Convention Reduce or eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C to the Convention Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To target additional POPs • Other provisions of the Convention relate to the development of implementation plans, information exchange, public information, awareness and education, research, development and monitoring, technical assistance, financial resources and mechanisms, reporting, effectiveness evaluation and non-compliance 	
Ramsar Convention	<p>The Convention’s mission is “the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world”.</p>	<p>Under the “three pillars” of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work towards the wise use of all their wetlands; • Designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the “Ramsar List”) and ensure their effective management; • Cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European 2020 Strategy for Growth	<p>Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe’s social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; • Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; • Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion. 	<p>In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed; 2. 3% of the EU’s GDP should be invested in R&D; 3. the “20/20/20” climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right); 4. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree; 5. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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The European Green Deal (EGD) 2019	The deal sets out how to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, boosting the economy, improving people’s quality of life, caring for nature and leaving no one behind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sets out a roadmap with actions to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, restore biodiversity and cut pollution. • It outlines investments required, financing tools available and explains how to ensure a just and inclusive transition. • In order to meet the goal to become climate neutral by 2050 as part of the European Green Deal, the European Union (EU) Commission proposed on 4th March 2020 to bring about the first European Climate Law and legally bind the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU (2018) Clean Air Policy Package	Aims to substantially reduce air pollution across the EU.	The proposed strategy sets out objectives for reducing the health and environmental impacts of air pollution by 2030, and contains legislative proposals to implement stricter standards for emissions and air pollution.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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National Level			
Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework, and the National Development Plan (2021 - 2030)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Planning Framework is the Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between. The National Development Plan sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the successful implementation of the new National Planning Framework. This will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions in Ireland over the next two decades, to cater for an expected population increase of over 1 million people. 	<p>The National Planning Framework published alongside the National Development Plan yields ten National Strategic Outcomes as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compact Growth 2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility 3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities 4. Sustainable Mobility 5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills 6. High-Quality International Connectivity 7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage 8. Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society 9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources 10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Planning, Land Use and Transport Outlook 2040 [In Preparation]	<p>The PLUTO will take account of forecasted future economic and demographic scenarios, affordability considerations and relevant Government policies and will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantify in broad terms the appropriate scale of financial investment in land transport over the long term; Consider how fiscal, environmental and technological developments might impact on this investment; and, 	<p>In preparation.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify strategic priorities for future investment to ensure land transport infrastructure provision facilitates the objectives of Project Ireland 2040. 		
Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)	<p>The core principal objectives of this Act are to amend the Planning Acts of 2000 – 2022 with specific regard given to supporting economic renewal and sustainable development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development, with certain exceptions, is subject to development control under the Planning Acts and the local authorities grant or refuse planning permission for development, including ones within protected areas. There are, however, a range of exemptions from the planning system. Use of land for agriculture, peat extraction and afforestation, subject to certain thresholds, is generally exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission. Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for a range of classes and large scale projects. Under planning legislation, Development Plans must include mandatory objectives for the conservation of the natural heritage and for the conservation of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed. There are also discretionary powers to set objectives for the conservation of a variety of other elements of the natural heritage. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011	<p>The purpose of these Regulations is to transpose into Irish law Directive 2001/42/EC of 27 June 2001 (O.J. No. L 197, 21 July 2001) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment — commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regulations cover plans and programmes in all of the sectors listed in article 3(2) of the Directive except land-use planning. • These Regulations also amend certain provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide the statutory basis for the transposition of the Directive in respect of land-use planning. • Transposition in respect of the land-use planning sector is contained in the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004). 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011, as amended)	<p>These Regulations provide a new for the implementation in Ireland of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on habitats and protection of wild fauna and flora (as amended) and for the implementation of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of wild birds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They provide, among other things, for: the appointment and functions of authorized officers; identification, classification and other procedures relative to the designation of Community sites. • The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the CJEU against Ireland, notably cases C- 418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Waste Management Act 1996, as amended	<p>To make provision in relation to the prevention, management and control of waste; to give effect to provisions of certain acts adopted by institutions of the European communities in respect of those matters; to amend the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, and to repeal certain enactments and to provide for related matters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Waste Management Act contains a number of key legal obligations, including requirements for waste management planning, waste collection and movement, the authorisation of waste facilities, measures to reduce the production of waste and/or promote its recovery. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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<p>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 296 of 2009)</p>	<p>The purpose of these Regulations is to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for freshwater pearl mussels</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set environmental quality objectives for the habitats of the freshwater pearl mussel populations named in the First Schedule to these Regulations that are within the boundaries of a site notified in a candidate list of European sites, or designated as a Special Area of Conservation, under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94/1997). • Require the production of sub-basin management plans with programmes of measures to achieve these objectives. • Set out the duties of public authorities in respect of the sub-basin management plans and programmes of measure 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2016 (S.I. No. 366 of 2016)</p>	<p>To amend the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) to make further provision to implement Commission Directive 2014/80/EU of 20 June 2014 amending Annex II to Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration.</p>	<p>The substances and threshold values set out in Schedule 5 to S.I. No. 9 of 2010 have been reviewed and amended where necessary, based on existing monitoring information and international guidelines on appropriate threshold values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part A of Schedule 6 has been amended to include changes to the rules governing the determination of background levels for the purposes of establishing threshold values for groundwater pollutants and indicators of pollution. • Part B of Schedule 6 has been amended to include nitrites and phosphorus (total) / phosphates among the minimum list of pollutants and their indicators which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must consider when establishing threshold values 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part C of Schedule 6 amends the information to be provided to the Minister by the EPA with regard to the pollutants and their indicators for which threshold values have been established 	
S.I. No. 113/2022 - European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of the Regulations is to provide a basic set of measures to ensure the protection of waters, including drinking water sources, against pollution caused by nitrogen and phosphorus from agricultural sources, with the primary emphasis on the management of livestock manures and other fertilisers. The set of measures also provide some basic safeguards against possible harmful impacts on water quality arising from agricultural expansion. This basic set of measures has been strengthened over the last two reviews and this new programme provides a further strengthened set of measures to help reduce nitrogen and phosphorus losses from agriculture and contribute to improvements in water quality. 	<p>The Regulations include measures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periods when land application of fertilisers is prohibited Limits on the land application of fertilisers Storage requirements for livestock manure; and Monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures in terms of agricultural practice and impact on water quality. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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<p>National legislation transport the Industrial Emissions Directive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, amended by the Protection of the Environment Act 2003; and • Environmental Protection Agency (Integrated Pollution Control) (Licensing) Regulations 2013. • European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment)(Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992)(Amendment) Regulations 2020 • Environmental Protection Agency (Industrial Emissions)(Licensing) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. • European Union (Industrial Emissions) Regulations 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this Directive is lay down rules to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce industrial emissions into air, water and land and to prevent the generation of waste, in order to achieve a high level of environmental protection. This legislation transposes the provision of the Directive 	<p>The legislation covers industrial activities in the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • energy; • metal production and processing; • minerals; • chemicals; • waste management; • and other sectors such as pulp and paper production, slaughterhouses and the intensive rearing of poultry and pigs. <p>All installations covered by the directive must prevent and reduce pollution by applying the best available techniques (BATs)* and address efficient energy use, waste prevention and management and measures to prevent accidents and limit their consequences.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Protection Agency (Industrial Emissions)(Licensing) Regulations 2013. <p>Environmental Protection Agency (Licensing Fees) Regulations 2013</p>			
<p>Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 (S.I. 79 of 2008)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These Regulations provide for transposition of the EU Bathing Water Directive 2006 (Directive 2006/7/EC of 15 February 2006) which aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve health protection for bathers To establish a more pro-active approach to management of bathing waters, and To promote increased public involvement and dissemination of information to the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regulations establish a new classification system for bathing water quality based on four classifications “poor”, “sufficient”, “good” and “excellent” and generally require that a classification of at least “sufficient” be achieved by 2015 for all bathing waters. Local authorities must take appropriate measures with a view to improving waters which are classified as “poor” and increasing the number of bathing waters classified as “good” or “excellent”. A permanent advice against bathing must be issued in a case where a bathing water is classified as “poor” for five consecutive years. Local authorities are required annually to identify bathing waters, establish a monitoring calendar, carry out the specified monitoring, report the results to the EPA, carry out appropriate management measures where necessary and provide information to the public. There must be public participation in the identification of waters and the general implementation of the Regulations. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA is required by the Regulations to classify bathing waters, generally on the basis of the monitoring results for the four preceding bathing seasons, and to publish an annual report in relation to bathing water quality. • Monitoring by local authorities is to commence not later than 2011 with a view to ensuring that a classification is assigned to bathing waters not later than 2015. • Private controllers of access lands may be required to contribute towards the costs incurred by a local authority or the EPA. 	
Bathing Water Quality (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I 351 of 2011)	This Regulation defines further the minimum number of bathing water samples required to carry out a bathing water quality assessment.	Further defines the minimum number of bathing water samples required to carry out a bathing water quality assessment.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021	An Act to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy.	When considering a plan or framework, for approval, the Government shall endeavour to achieve the national transition objective within the period to which the objective relates and shall, in endeavouring to achieve that objective, ensure that such objective is achieved by the implementation of measures that are cost effective and shall, for that purpose, have regard to:	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ultimate objective specified in Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change done at New York on 9 May 1992 and any mitigation commitment • entered into by the European Union in response or otherwise in relation to that objective, • The policy of the Government on climate change, • Climate justice, • Any existing obligation of the State under the law of the European Union or any • international agreement referred to in section 2; and • The most recent national greenhouse gas emissions inventory and projection of future greenhouse gas • emissions, prepared by the Agency. 	<p>environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Climate Action Plan 2023</p>	<p>The Climate Action Plan 2023 provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting Ireland on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021.</p>	<p>The Plan lists the actions needed to deliver on our climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy. It will be updated annually, to ensure alignment with Ireland’s legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings</p>	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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Ireland's Second National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals (2022 - 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Implementation Plan 2022 - 2024 is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The first version of the Plan (2018 – 2020) provided a 'SDG Matrix' which identifies the responsible Government Departments for each of the 169 targets. It also included a 'SDG Policy Map' indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets. 	<p>The Plan identifies five strategic objectives to guide implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To embed the SDG framework into the work of Government Departments to achieve greater Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development; To integrate the SDGs into Local Authority work to better support the localisation of the SDGs; Greater partnerships for the Goals; To further incorporate the principle of Leave No One Behind into Ireland's Agenda 2030 implementation and reporting mechanisms; and Strong reporting mechanisms 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Clean Air Strategy for Ireland (2023)	<p>The Clean Air Strategy provides the strategic policy framework necessary to identify and promote integrated measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner air while delivering on wider national objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through this document Ireland can develop the necessary policies and measures to comply with new and emerging EU legislation. The Strategy should also help tackle climate change. The Strategy considers a wider range of national policies that are relevant to clean air policy such as transport, energy, home heating and agriculture. In any discussion relating to clean air policy, the issue of people's health is paramount, this is a strong theme of the Strategy. 	<p>Implementation of the Guidelines need to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
EirGrid 's Grid25 Strategy and associated Grid25 Implementation Programme 2017 - 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EirGrid 's mission is to develop, maintain and operate a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system for Ireland. 	<p>Grid25, EirGrid 's roadmap to uprate the electricity transmission grid by 2025, continues to be implemented so as to increase the capacity of the grid, to satisfy future demand, and to help Ireland meet its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable energy by 2020.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Our vision is of a grid developed to match future needs, so it can safely and reliably carry power all over the country to the major towns and cities and onwards to every home, farm and business where the electricity is consumed and so it can meet the needs of consumers and generators in a sustainable way.” 		
All Island Grid Study 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The All Island Grid Study is the first comprehensive assessment of the ability of the electrical power system and, as part of that, the transmission network (“the grid”) on the island of Ireland to absorb large amounts of electricity produced from renewable energy sources. • The objective of this five-part study is to assess the technical feasibility and the relative costs and benefits associated with various scenarios for increased shares of electricity sourced from renewable energy in the all island power system. 	<p>Key conclusions of the study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presented results indicate that the differences in cost between the highest cost and the lowest cost portfolios are low (7%), given the assumptions made and costs included in the Study. • All but the high coal-based portfolio lead to significant reductions of CO2 emissions compared to portfolio 1 • All but the high coal-based portfolio lead to reductions on the dependency of the all island system on fuel and electricity imports. • The limitations of the study may overstate the technical feasibility of the portfolios analysed and could impact the costs and benefits resulting. Further work is required to understand the extent of such impact. • Timely development of the transmission networks, requiring means to address the planning challenge, is a precondition for implementation of the portfolios considered. • Market mechanisms must facilitate the installation of complementary, i.e. flexible, dispatchable plant, so as to maintain adequate levels of system security. 	<p>Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objective of this Strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenways users. It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over the next 10 years with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Strategic Greenway network of national and regional routes, with a number of high capacity flagship routes that can be extended and/or link with local Greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure; Greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to Ireland and are regularly used by overseas visitors, domestic visitors and locals thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity; Greenways that provide a substantially segregated offroad experience linking places of interest, recreation and leisure in areas with beautiful scenery of different types with plenty to see and do; and Greenways that provide opportunities for the development of local businesses and economies, and Greenways that are developed with all relevant stakeholders in line with an agreed code of practice. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Water Resources Plan (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NWRP is a plan on how to provide a safe, secure and reliable water supply to customers for the next 25 years, without causing adverse impact on the environment. The objective of the NWRP is to set out how we intend to maintain the supply and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term whilst minimising the impact on the environment. 	<p>The key objectives of the plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify areas where there are current and future potential water supply shortfalls, taking into account normal and extreme weather conditions Assess the current and future water demand from homes, businesses, farms, and industry Consider the impacts of climate change on Ireland’s water resources 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a drought plan advising measures to be taken before and during drought events • Develop a plan detailing how we deal with the material that is produced as a result of treating drinking water • Identify, develop and assess options to help meet potential shortfalls in water supplies • Assess the water resources available at a national level including lakes, rivers and groundwater 	
<p>Construction 2020, A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction 2020 sets out a package of measures agreed by the Government and is aimed at stimulating activity in the building industry. • The Strategy aims both to increase the capacity of the sector to create and maintain jobs, and to deliver a sustainable sector, operating at an appropriate level. It seeks to learn the lessons of the past and to ensure that the right structures and mechanisms are in place so that they are not repeated. 	<p>This Strategy therefore addresses issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategic approach to the provision of housing, based on real and measured needs, with mechanisms in place to detect and act when things are going wrong; • Continuing improvement of the planning process, striking the right balance between current and future requirements; • The availability of financing for viable and worthwhile projects; • Access to mortgage finance on reasonable and sustainable terms; • Ensuring we have the tools we need to monitor and regulate the sector in a way that underpins public confidence and worker safety; • Ensuring a fit for purpose sector supported by a highly skilled workforce achieving high quality and standards; and • Ensuring opportunities are provided to unemployed former construction workers to contribute to the recovery of the sector. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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<p>National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 and National Landscape Character</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Landscape Strategy will be used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing the landscape while positively managing its change. It will provide a high level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape by way of supporting actions. Landscape Strategy Vision: “Our landscape reflects and embodies our cultural values and our shared natural heritage and contributes to the well-being of our society, environment and economy. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning.” 	<p>The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into the approach to sustainable development; Establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape; Provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of the landscape; Ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (EPA) 2021 - 2027</p>	<p>This Plan sets out the priorities to be pursued over the next six years and beyond to improve the management of hazardous waste, taking into account the progress made since the previous plan and the waste policy and legislative changes that have occurred since the previous plan was published.</p> <p>Section 26 of the Waste Management Act 1996 as amended, sets out the overarching</p>	<p>The revised Plan makes 20 recommendations under the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy and Regulation Prevention Collection and Treatment Implementation 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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	<p>objectives for the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. In this context, the following objectives are included as priorities for the revised Plan period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste by industry and society generally; • To maximise the collection of hazardous waste with a • view to reducing the environmental and health impacts of any unregulated waste; • To strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export; • To minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management. 		
National Ports Policy 2013	The core objective of National Ports Policy is to facilitate a competitive and effective market for maritime transport services.	National Ports Policy introduces clear categorisation of the ports sector into Ports of National Significance (Tier 1), Ports of National Significance (Tier 2) and Ports of Regional Significance.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Aviation Policy 2015	Specifically, the principal goals of this National Aviation Policy are:	<p>The National Aviation Policy commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining safety as the number one priority in Irish aviation and ensuring that safety regulation is robust, effective and efficient; 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance Ireland’s connectivity by ensuring safe, secure and competitive access responsive to the needs of business, tourism and consumers; • To foster the growth of aviation enterprise in Ireland to support job creation and position Ireland as a recognised global leader in aviation; and • To maximise the contribution of the aviation sector to • Ireland’s economic growth and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating conditions to encourage the development of new routes and services, particularly to new and emerging markets; • Ensuring a high level of competition among airlines operating in the Irish market; • Optimising the operation of the Irish airport network to ensure maximum connectivity to the rest of the world; • Ensuring that the regulatory framework for aviation reflects best international practice and that economic regulation facilitates continued investment in aviation infrastructure at Irish airports to support traffic growth; • Supporting the aircraft leasing and aviation finance sectors to maintain Ireland’s leading global position in these spheres; and • Maintaining a safe and innovative general aviation sector to support Ireland’s broader aviation industry 	achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Ministerial Guidelines such as Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and Flood Risk Management Guidelines	<p>The Department produces a range of guidelines designed to help planning authorities, An Bord Pleanála, developers and the general public and cover a wide range of issues amongst others, architectural heritage, child care facilities, landscape, quarries and residential density.</p>	<p>The Minister issues statutory guidelines under Section 28 of the Act which planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are obliged to have regard to in the performance of their planning functions.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
HSE Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025	<p>The vision is: <i>“A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where</i></p>	<p>These four goals are interlinked, interdependent and mutually supportive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and</p>

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	<i>wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone’s responsibility.”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities • Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing • Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland 	bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Tourism Policy Statement: People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025	The main goal of this policy statement is to have a vibrant, attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country; is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; helps promote a positive image of Ireland overseas, and is a sector in which people want to work.	<p>The Tourism Policy Statement sets three headline targets to be achieved by 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseas tourism revenue of €5 billion per year • net of inflation excluding carrier receipts; • 250,000 people employed in tourism; and • 10 million overseas visitors to Ireland per year. 	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in combination effects may arise. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland: 10 Year Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Strategy will be published in 2024. • The plan sets out a 10-year plan for the growth of the tourism sector in Northern Ireland., with an aim to increase the value of tourism to the economy by 50-75% compared to 2019. 	<p>The strategic goals and core themes of the Strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative • Inclusive • Sustainable • Attractive • Collaborative <p>The document identifies the key challenges and drivers for growth.</p>	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision is to “Establish Northern Ireland as a year-round world class destination which is renowned for its authentic experiences, landscape, heritage and culture and which benefits communities, the economy and the environment, with sustainability at its core.” • This Plan may or may not be directly relevant to the LACAP, however, is considered influential in the context of national climate action delivery. 		
Our Sustainable Future: A framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012	<p>A medium to long term framework for advancing sustainable development and the green economy in Ireland. It identifies spatial planning as a key challenge for sustainable development and sets a series of measures to address these challenges.</p>	<p>Sets out the challenges facing us and how we might address them in making sure that quality of life and general wellbeing can be improved and sustained in the decades to come.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIFTI is the Department of Transport’s framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network to support the delivery of the National Strategic Outcomes. • The NIFTI will guide transport investment in the years ahead to enable the National Planning Framework, support the Climate Action Plan, and promote social, environmental and economic outcomes throughout Ireland. 	<p>The four investment priorities stated in NIFTI are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility of people and goods in urban areas. • Protection and renewal. • Enhanced regional and rural connectivity. • Decarbonisation. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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<p>National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2018 and associated regional, local and sectoral adaptation plans (including transport)</p>	<p>NAF specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities in their administrative areas in order to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation under this Framework should seek to minimise costs and maximise the opportunities arising from climate change. • Adaptation actions range from building adaptive capacity (e.g. increasing awareness, sharing information and targeted training) through to policy and finance based actions. • Adaptation actions must be risk based, informed by existing vulnerabilities of our society and systems and an understanding of projected climate change. • Adaptation actions taken to increase climate resilience must also consider impacts on other sectors and levels of governance 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Governments White Paper ‘Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future’ (2015 – 2030)</p>	<p>The White Paper sets out a vision and a framework to guide Irish energy policy between now and 2030. A complete energy policy update informed by the vision to transform Ireland into a low carbon society and economy by 2050.</p>	<p>2030 will represent a significant milestone, meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced GHG emissions from the energy sector by between 80% and 95% • Ensuring that secure supplies of competitive and affordable energy remain available to citizens and businesses. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Wildlife Act of 1976</p> <p>Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000</p>	<p>The act provides protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides protection for certain species, their habitats and important ecosystems • Give statutory protection to NHAs • Enhances wildlife species and their habitats • Includes more species for protection 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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Actions for Biodiversity (2017-2021) Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan	Sets out strategic objectives, targets and actions to conserve and restore Ireland's biodiversity and to prevent and reduce the loss of biodiversity in Ireland and globally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To mainstream biodiversity in the decision-making process across all sectors. • To substantially strengthen the knowledge base for conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity. • To increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystems services. • To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside. • To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the marine environment. • To expand and improve on the management of protected areas and legally protected species. • To substantially strengthen the effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Broadband Plan (2012)	Sets out the strategy to deliver high speed broadband throughout Ireland.	The Plan sets out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear statement of Government policy on the delivery of High Speed Broadband. • Specific targets for the delivery and rollout of high speed broadband and the speeds to be delivered. • The strategy and interventions that will underpin the successful implementation of these targets. • A series of specific complementary measures to promote implementation of Government policy in this area. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
<p>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out comprehensive mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning process. • Ensures flood risk is a key consideration in preparing land use plans and in the assessment of planning applications. • Implementation of the Guidelines is through actions at national, regional, local authority and site-specific levels. • Planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are required to have regard to the Guidelines in carrying out their functions under the Planning Acts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding. • Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface water run-off. • Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains. • Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth. • Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders. • Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation • are complied with at all stages of flood risk management. <p>The 2009 Flood Risk Management Guidelines were amended by Circular PL 2/2014 (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government) that provides advice on the use of OPW flood mapping in assessing planning applications and clarifies some advice from the 2009 Guidelines.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 722 of 2003)</p> <p>European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transpose the Water Framework Directive into legislation. • Outlines the general duty of public authorities in relation to water. • Identifies the competent authorities in charge of water policy (amended to Irish Water in 2013) and gives EPA and the CER the authority to regulate and supervise their actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements River basin districts and characterisation of RBDs and River Basin Management Plans. • Requires the public to be informed and consulted on the Plan and for progress reports to be published on RBDs. • Implements a Register of protected areas, Classification systems and Monitoring programmes for water bodies. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for</p>

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<p>of 2003 (SI 350 of 2014)</p> <p>European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface waters) Regulations of 2009 (SI 272 of 2009)(as amended)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows the competent authority to recover the cost of damage/destruction of status of water body. • Outlines environmental objectives and programme of measures and environmental quality standards for priority substances. • Outlines criteria for assessment of groundwater. • Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for surface water bodies. • Outlines surface water quality standards. • Establishes threshold values for the classification and protection of surface waters against pollution and deterioration in quality. 	<p>environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 to 1990</p>	<p>The Water Pollution Acts allow Local Authorities the authority regulate and supervise actions relating to water in their division.</p>	<p>The Water Pollution Acts enable local authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecute for water pollution offences. • Attach appropriate pollution control conditions in the licensing of effluent discharges from industry, etc., made to waters. • Issue notices ("section 12 notices") to farmers, etc., specifying measures to be taken within a prescribed period to prevent water pollution. • issue notices requiring a person to cease the pollution of waters and requiring the mitigation or remedying of any effects of the pollution in the manner and within the period specified in such notices; • Seek court orders, including High Court injunctions, to prevent, terminate, mitigate or remedy pollution/its effects. • Prepare water quality management plans for any waters in or adjoining their functional areas. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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<p>Water Services Act 2007</p> <p>Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012</p> <p>Water Services Act (No. 2) 2013</p> <p>Water Services Act 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the water services infrastructure. • Outlines the responsibilities involved in delivering and managing water services. • Identifies the authority in charge of provision of water and wastewater supply. • Irish Water was given the responsibility of the provision of water and wastewater services in the amendment act during 2013, therefore these services are no longer the responsibility of the 34 Local Authorities in Ireland. 	<p>Key strategic objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring Irish Water delivers infrastructural projects that meet key public health, environmental and economic objectives in the water services sector. • Ensuring the provision of adequate water and sewerage services. • Ensuring good quality drinking water is available to all consumers of public and group water supplies, in compliance with national and EU drinking water standards • Ensuring the provision of the remaining infrastructure needed to provide secondary wastewater treatment, for compliance with the requirements of the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. • Promoting water conservation through Irish Water’s Capital Investment Plan, the Rural Water Programme and other measures. • Monitoring the on-going implementation of septic tanks inspection regime and the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems. • Ensuring a fair funding model to deliver water services. • Overseeing the establishment of an economic regulation function under the CER. 	<p>Implementation of the Guidelines need to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
<p>Irish Water’s (now known as Uisce Eireann) Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed</p>	<p>This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and</p>	<p>Six strategic objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet Customer Expectations. • Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply. • Provide Effective Management of Wastewater. • Protect and Enhance the Environment. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the</p>

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Capital Investment Plan (2020 - 2024)	identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Social and Economic Growth. • Invest in the Future. 	achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Raised Bog SAC Management Plan and Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Areas 2017 - 2022	Aims to meet nature conservation obligations while having regard to national and local economic, social and cultural needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the implications of management choices for water levels, quantity and quality are fully explored, understood and factored into policy making and land use planning. • Review the current raised bog NHA network in terms of its contribution to the national conservation objective for raised bog habitats and determine the most suitable sites to replace the losses of active raised bog habitat and high bog areas within the SAC network and to enhance the national network of NHAs. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Food Harvest 2020	Food Harvest 2020 is a roadmap for the Irish food industry, as it seeks to innovate and expand in response to increased global demand for quality foods. It sets out a vision for the potential growth in agricultural output after the removal of milk quotas.	Seeks for the improvement of all agricultural sectors at all levels in terms of sustainability, environmental consideration and marketing development.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Agri-vision 2015 Action Plan	Outlines the vision for agricultural industry to improve competitiveness and response to market demand while respecting and enhancing the environment	Not applicable	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for

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			environmental protection and management.
Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS) Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS) Green, Low-Carbon, Agri- environment Scheme (GLAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agri-environmental funding schemes aimed at rural development for the environmental enhancement and protection. • GLAS is the new replacement for REPS and AEOS which are both expiring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish best practice farming methods and production methods in order to protect landscapes and maximise conservation. • Protect biodiversity, endangered species of flora and fauna and wildlife habitats. • Ensure food is produced with the highest regard to the environment. • Implement nutrient management plans and grassland management plans. • Protect and maintain water bodies, wetlands and cultural heritage. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Rural Development Programme	The National Rural Development Programme, prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, sets out a national programme based on the EU framework for rural development and prioritises improving the competitiveness of agriculture, improving the environment and improving the quality of life in rural areas	<p>At a more detailed level, the programme also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports structural change at farm level including training young farmers and encouraging early retirement, support for restructuring, development and innovation; • Aims to improve the environment, biodiversity and the amenity value of the countryside by support for land management through funds such as Natura 2000 payments etc.; and • Aims to improve quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity through the implementation of local development strategies such as non-agricultural activities 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Forestry Programme 2023 – 2027	The new Forestry Programme 2023-2027 came into force in 2023, as soon as State Aid approval by the European Commission has been received. The new Programme sets out increased support for a number of schemes.	<p>The proposed Forestry Programme 2023-2027 contains a series of eight different interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest creation; • Agroforestry; • Infrastructure and technology investments; 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable forest management; • Developing skills and empowering the forest sector for sustainable forest management; • Open forests - social, cultural and heritage forests; • Climate resilient reforestation; • Reconstruction. 	achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
River Basin Management Plan	River Basin Management Plans set out the measures planned to maintain and improve the status of waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to protect and enhance all water bodies in the RBD and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive. • Identify and manages water bodies in the RBD. • Establish a programme of measures for monitoring and improving water quality in the RBD. • Involve the public through consultations. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Peatlands Strategy (2015-2025)	This Strategy aims to provide a long-term framework within which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution to the well-being of this and future generations.	<p>Objectives of the Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give direction to Ireland’s approach to peatland management. • To apply to all peatlands, including peat soils. • To ensure that the relevant State authorities and state owned companies that influence such decisions contribute to meeting cross-cutting objectives and obligations in their policies and actions. • To ensure that Ireland’s peatlands are sustainably managed so that their benefits can be enjoyed responsible. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To inform appropriate regulatory systems to facilitate good decision making in support of responsible use. • To inform the provision of appropriate incentives, financial supports and disincentives where required. • To provide a framework for determining and ensuring the most appropriate future use of cutover and cutaway bogs. <p>To ensure that specific actions necessary for the achievement of its objectives are clearly identified and delivered by those involved in or responsible for peatlands management or for decisions affecting their management.</p>	
Flood Risk Management Plans arising from National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme	<p>The national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme commenced in Ireland in 2011 and is being overseen by the Office of Public Works. The CFRAM Programme is intended to deliver on core components of the National Flood Policy, adopted in 2004, and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive.</p>	<p>CFRAM Studies have been undertaken for all River Basin Districts. The studies are focusing on areas known to have experienced flooding in the past and areas that may be subject to flooding in the future either due to development pressures or climate change. Flood Risk and Hazard mapping, including Flood Extent Mapping, was finalised in 2017. The final outputs from the studies are the CFRAM Plans, finalised in 2018. The Plans define the current and future flood risk in the River Basin Districts and set out how this risk can be managed.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Draft National Bioenergy Plan 2014 - 2020	<p>The Draft Bioenergy Plan sets out a vision as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bioenergy resources contributing to economic development and sustainable growth, generating jobs for citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner. 	<p>Three high level goals of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development are identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To harness the market opportunities presented by bioenergy in order to achieve economic development, growth and jobs. • To increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing bioenergy. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that bioenergy developments do not adversely impact the environment and its living and non-living resources. 	environmental protection and management.
Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE) 2016	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2018/2001: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017-2030	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFV forecasts Electricity targets Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets Hydrogen targets Biofuels targets LPG targets Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)	Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten year plan for the agri-food sector. It underlines the sector's unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.	Food Wise 2025 identifies ambitious and challenging growth projections for the industry over the next ten years including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% increase in exports to €19 billion. 70% increase in value added to €13 billion. 60% increase in primary production to €10 billion. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The creation of 23,000 additional jobs all along the supply chain from producer level to high end value added product development. 	environmental protection and management.
Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) NI	The SPPS consolidates some twenty separate policy publications into one document and sets out strategic subject planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. It also provides the core planning principles to underpin delivery of the two-tier planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall objective of the planning system is to further sustainable development and improve well-being for the people of the North. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Policy Framework For Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport represents the first step in communicating our longer term national vision for decarbonising transport by 2050, the cornerstone of which is our ambition that by 2030 all new cars and vans sold in Ireland will be zero-emissions capable. By 2030 it is envisaged that the movement in Ireland to electrically-fuelled cars and commuter rail will be well underway, with natural gas and biofuels developing as major alternatives in the freight and bus sectors. 	<p>This policy set out to achieve five key goals in transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce overall travel demand Maximise the efficiency of the transport network Reduce reliance on fossil fuels Reduce transport emissions Improve accessibility to transport <p>These goals remain the cornerstone of transport policy and are fully aligned to the objectives of this National Policy Framework.</p>	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage in Ireland ranges from private homes, commercial and public buildings, national monuments, underwater and buried archaeology and the physical and cultural settings of all of these. 	<p>The five adaptation goals for built and archaeological heritage in Ireland are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To improve understanding of each heritage resource and its vulnerability to climate change 	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This plan considers not only those structures and sites that have been statutorily listed, but all man-made assets that have historical, aesthetic and cultural value, but does not consider natural heritage. <p>Aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build adaptive capacity within the sector Reduce the vulnerability of built and archaeological heritage to climate change Identify and capitalise on the various potential opportunities for the sector. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To develop and mainstream sustainable policies and plans for climate-change adaptation of built and archaeological heritage To conserve Ireland’s heritage for future generations To communicate and transfer knowledge <p>To exploit the opportunities for built and archaeological heritage to demonstrate value and secure resources</p>	<p>achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection.</p>
<p>Heritage related legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Monuments Act 1930 as amended; Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999; and The Heritage Act 2018. 	<p>Irish Heritage regulations that are relevant to the LACAPs. Broadly, this legislation is designed to conserve and enhance heritage.</p>	<p>Irish Heritage regulations that are relevant to the LACAPs. Broadly, this legislation is designed to conserve and enhance heritage.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection.</p>

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All-Island Strategic Rail Review	The Review aims to inform policy and future strategy for the railways in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland.	<p>The Review sets out six high-level goals which aim to use rail as effectively as possible to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contribute to decarbonisation; • improve All Island connectivity between major cities; • enhance regional accessibility; • stimulate economic activity; • encourage sustainable mobility; and <p>achieve economic and financial feasibility.</p>	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection.
Regional/ County/Local Level			
Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies	The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework.	<p>The Eastern and Midland Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy includes provisions for its 12 constituent local authorities: Fingal County Council; Dublin City Council; South Dublin County Council; Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council; Louth County Council; Kildare County Council; Meath County Council; Wicklow County Council; Longford County Council; Laois County Council; Offaly County Council; and Westmeath County Council.</p> <p>The Southern Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy includes provisions for its nine constituent local authorities: Waterford City and County Council, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Tipperary County Council, Wexford County Council, Kerry County Council, Clare County Council, Limerick City and County Council, Kilkenny County Council and Carlow County Council.</p> <p>The Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy includes provisions for its eight constituent local authorities: Donegal County Council, Leitrim County Council, Sligo County Council, Cavan County Council, Monaghan County Council, Mayo</p>	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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		County Council, Roscommon County Council, and Galway County Council.	
Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Northern Ireland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial strategy for the future development of Northern Ireland. • Strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide public and private sectors. • This Plan may or may not be directly relevant to the LACAP, however, is considered influential in the context of national climate action delivery. 	<p>Aims to provide long-term policy direction with a strategic spatial perspective.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Guidelines need to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Greater Dublin Area (GDA) Transport Strategy (2022-2042)	<p>It sets out how transport will be developed across the region, covering Dublin, Meath, Wicklow and Kildare, over the period of the strategy and has been approved by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport in accordance with the relevant legislation.</p> <p>This Strategy may or may not be directly relevant to the LACAP, however is considered influential in the context of national climate action delivery.</p>	<p>They set out a number of core principles deriving from the strategic vision, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dublin as the capital city of Ireland and a major European centre shall grow and progress, competing with other cities in the EU, and serving a wide range of international, • national, regional and local needs. • The Dublin and Mid-East Regions will be attractive, vibrant locations for industry, commerce, recreation and tourism and will be a major focus for economic growth within the Country. • The GDA, through its ports and airport connections will continue to be the most important entry/exit point for the country as a whole, and as a Gateway between the European Union and the rest of the World. Access to and through the GDA will continue to be a matter of national importance. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in the GDA shall be directly related to investment in integrated high quality public transport services and focused on compact urban form. • Development within the existing urban footprint of the Metropolitan Area will be consolidated to achieve a more compact urban form • Development in the Hinterland Area will be focused on the high quality integrated growth and consolidation of development in key identified towns, separated from each other by extensive areas of strategic green belt land devoted to agriculture and similar uses. 	
Transport Strategy for the Cork Metropolitan Area 2040	<p>The Strategy addresses all transport modes and its objective will be to provide a long-term strategic planning framework for the integrated development of transport infrastructure and services in the Cork Metropolitan Area, over the next two decades.</p> <p>This Strategy may or may not be directly relevant to the LACAP, however is considered influential in the context of national climate action delivery.</p>	<p>It will be used to inform transport investment levels and investment prioritisation over both the longer and shorter terms and will be able to inform sustainable integrated land use and transport policy formulation at the strategic (Metropolitan Area) level and at the local level.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out a ten year cycling strategy for Counties Dublin, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow • Plan to increase regions cycle network dramatically 	<p>Aims to identify and determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Urban Cycle Network at the Primary, Secondary and Feeder level • The Inter-Urban Cycle Network linking the relevant sections of the Urban Network including the elements of the National Cycle Network within the Greater Dublin Area including linkages to key transport locations outside of urban areas such as airports and ports 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan refers to the EuroVelo International Cycle Route Network of the European Cyclists Federation is a network of 15 long distance cycle routes connecting and uniting the whole European continent. Two of these routes are in Ireland including EV2 from Galway through Dublin to London, Berlin, Warsaw and Moscow. This Strategy may or may not be directly relevant to the LACAP, however, is considered influential in the context of national climate action delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Green Route Network being cycle routes for development of tourist, recreational and leisure purposes. 	
Dublin to Galway Greenway Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a segregated cycling and walking trail to international standards, extending from Dublin City to Galway which is of a scale that will allow Ireland to harness the potential of an identified growing tourism market for cycling. This route forms part of an interconnected National Cycle Network of high quality, traffic free, inter urban routes, which will establish Ireland as a quality international tourism destination for a broad range of associated recreational activities and pursuits. This Strategy may or may not be directly relevant to the LACAP, however, is considered influential in the context of national climate action delivery. 	<p>To provide a segregated, substantially off road cycle route from Dublin City to Clifden via Galway City, maximising the use of – where feasible – existing and approved routes and disused railway line corridors and to also use existing plans and/or permitted projects where these have been subject to a consent process that has previously included the carrying out or screening for SEA, EIA and AA.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Local Transport Plans and Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Transport Plans and Strategies relevant to a particular local authority functional area provide a more granular framework for the delivery of sustainable transport systems in accordance with higher-level plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote sustainable transport. To promote integrated and proper transport planning. To promote safe travel. To promote the active travel infrastructural development. To encourage modal shift. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Water Quality Management Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the quality of waters covered by the plan is maintained. Maintain and improve the quantity and quality of water included in the Plan scope. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of water bodies against quality standards. Outlines management programmes for water catchments. Purpose is to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of groundwater. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs	<p>Management planning for nature conservation sites has a number of aims. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify and evaluate the features of interest for a site To set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest To describe the site and its management To identify issues (both positive and negative) that might influence the site To set out appropriate strategies/management actions to achieve the objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs (i.e. sites within the Natura 2000 network) have to be set for the habitats and species for which the sites are selected. These objectives are used when carrying out appropriate assessments for plans and projects that might impact on these sites. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Groundwater Protection Schemes	A Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidelines for the planning and licensing authorities in carrying out their functions, and a framework to assist in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.	A Groundwater Protection Scheme aims to maintain the quantity and quality of groundwater, and in some cases improve it, by applying a risk assessment-based approach to groundwater protection and sustainable development.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP)	The overarching vision for each LECP is: “to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities”	The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Planning Schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines planning objectives for land use development (including transport objectives). • Strategic framework for planning and sustainable development including those set out in National Planning Framework and Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies. • Sets out the policies and proposals to guide development in the specific Local Authority area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies future infrastructure, development and zoning required. • Protects and enhances amenities and environment. • Guides planning authority in assessing proposals. • Aims to guide development in the area and the amount of nature of the planned development. • Aims to promote sustainable development. • Provide for economic development and protect natural environmental, heritage. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Green Infrastructure Plans/Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes the maintenance and improvement of green infrastructure in an area. 	Not applicable	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to protect and enhance biodiversity and habitats. 		<p>and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Biodiversity Action Plans	<p>Aims to protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services across all spectrums.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines the status of biodiversity and identifies species of importance. Outlines objectives and targets to be met to maintain and improve biodiversity. Aims to increase awareness. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
Heritage Plans	<p>Aims to highlight the importance of heritage at a strategic level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and promote heritage as well as increase awareness. Aim to conserve and protect heritage. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.</p>
County Landscape Character Assessments	<p>Characterises the geographical dimension of the landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the quality, value, sensitivity and capacity of the landscape area. Guides strategies and guidelines for the future development of the landscape. 	<p>Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and</p>

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
			bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Freshwater Pearl Mussel Sub- Basin Management Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the current status of the species and the reason for loss or decline. Identifies measure required to improve or restore current status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies pressures on Freshwater Pearl Mussels for each of the designated populations in Ireland. Outlines restoration measures required to ensure favourable conservation status. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Local Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produced by Local Authorities. Outlines areas local flood risk. Sets out measures to manage and prevent flood risk at a local level. 	Not applicable	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Shellfish Pollution Reduction Programmes	Aims to improve water quality and ensure the protection or improvement of designated shellfish waters in order to support shellfish life and growth and contribute to the high quality of shellfish products directly edible by man.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies key and secondary pressures on water quality in designated shellfish areas. Outlines specific measures to address identified key and secondary pressures on water quality. Addresses the specific pressures acting on water quality in each area. 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

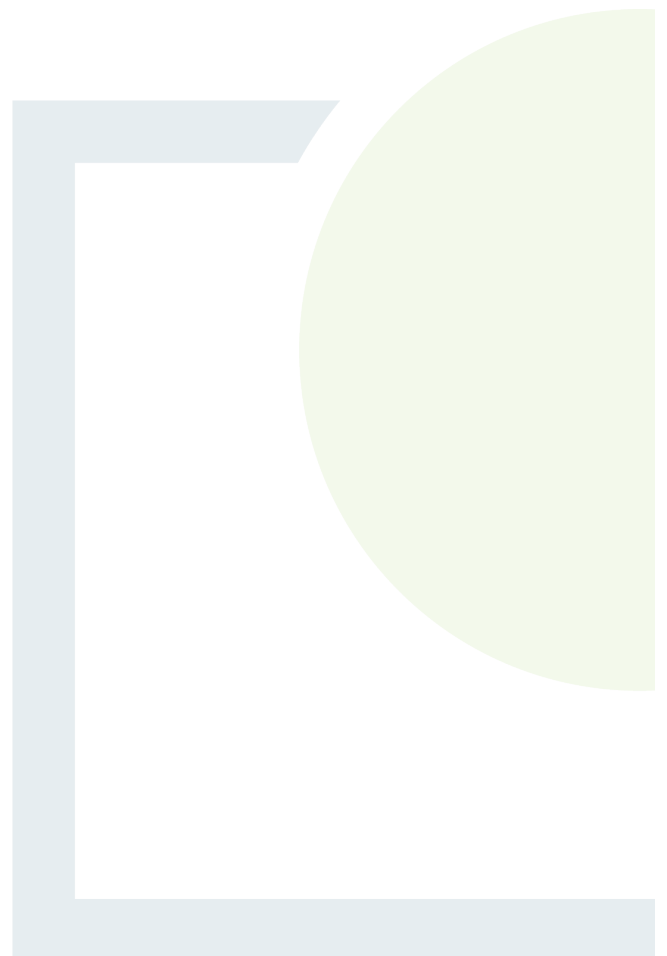
Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
			achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Regional Waste Management Plans	These plans (for the Connacht-Ulster, Southern, and Eastern-Midlands regions) give effect to national and EU waste policy, and address waste prevention and management (including generation, collection and treatment) over the period 2015-2021.	To manage wastes in a safe and compliant manner, a clear strategy, policies and actions are required.	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Noise Action Plans	<p>The Noise Action Plans are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, Statutory Instrument 140 of 2006. These Regulations give effect to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise.</p> <p>This Directive sets out a process for managing environmental noise in a consistent manner across the EU and the Noise Regulations set out the approach to meeting the requirements of the Directive in Ireland.</p>	<p>The main purpose of the Noise Action Plan is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects and the measures which may be considered to address noise problems • Address strategic noise issues by requiring competent authorities to draw up action plans to manage noise issues and their effects • Reduce noise, where possible, and maintain the environmental acoustic quality where it is good 	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection.



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APPENDIX 3

Appropriate Assessment
Screening Report for Plan
Modifications





CONSULTANTS IN ENGINEERING,
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE &
PLANNING

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

**AA Screening Report For Modifications To
The Local Authority Climate Action Plan
2024 - 2029**

Prepared for:
Laois County Council



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Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for Modifications to the Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029

REVISION CONTROL TABLE, CLIENT, KEYWORDS AND ABSTRACT

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Client: Laois County Council

Keywords: Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, Appropriate Assessment, AA, Natura Impact Report, LACAP, Climate Action Plan Implementation Plan.

Abstract: Fehily Timoney and Company is pleased to submit this AA Screening Report for Modifications to the Local Authority Climate Action 2024 - 2029 to Laois County Council.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This is the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report for modifications to the Laois County Council (LCC) Local Authority Climate Action Plan (referred to as either the 'LACAP' or the 'Plan') 2024 - 2029.

Section 16 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 sets out the provisions governing the establishment and operation of a LACAP. The broad purpose of a LACAP will be to define adaptation and mitigation measures at local level to support the reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions within a local authority as an organization and throughout the local community. LACAPs shall be implemented over a five-year period.

1.2 Plan-making Process to Date

A draft version of the LACAP was prepared. This document was accompanied by a Draft Natura Impact Report (NIR) which considered, evaluated and presented the environmental effects of the Draft LACAP on European sites and presented mitigation measures to avoid or minimise identified effects. This AA process was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive¹ and transposing national legislation.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was also undertaken on the Draft LACAP in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive² and transposing national legislation. A Draft SEA Environmental Report which considered the effects of the Draft LACAP on the environment was therefore prepared also. The Draft NIR suitably informed this report.

A period of consultation has been undertaken in relation to the Draft LACAP, the Draft SEA Environmental Report and the Draft NIR. Statutory environmental authorities, interested stakeholders and members of the public were invited to make submissions in connection with the Draft LACAP and the associated Draft SEA Environmental Report and Draft NIR.

All submissions made on this documentation have been reviewed by LCC. These submissions were taken into consideration prior to finalisation of the LACAP. LCC have prepared a Chief Executive Report on the submissions received. This document details the submissions received, LCC responses to the submissions, and Plan Action modifications arising following consideration of the submissions.

1.3 Purpose of this Assessment

An AA Screening Assessment must be carried out on all modifications made to the Draft LACAP Actions arising following consideration of submissions. The purpose of this assessment is to identify whether the Plan Action modifications will result in additional effects on European sites not previously considered in the AA process to date, and to inform whether or not a full AA is required on the Plan Action modifications. This AA Screening Assessment only considers changes to the binding 'Actions' defined within the Plan.

¹ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

² Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment



This report documents the AA Screening undertaken to identify the need for full AA in this case. This report accompanies the documented Plan Action modifications.

This report should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

1. The Laois County Council LACAP 2024 - 2029.
2. The Draft NIR for the Laois County Council LACAP 2024 - 2029.
3. The Draft SEA Environmental Report for the Laois County Council LACAP 2024 - 2029.
4. Laois County Council LACAP Submissions Chief Executive Report.
5. The SEA Screening Report for modifications to Laois County Council LACAP 2024 - 2029.



2. APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING METHODOLOGY

2.1 Legislative Requirements

Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the “favourable conservation status” of habitats and species of European Community Interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives (Habitats Directive as above and Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds) with Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable among them. These two designations are collectively known and referred to as European sites.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect such sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA. These requirements are implemented in the Republic of Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Specifically, Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (Natura 2000 sites) but likely to have significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public".

Therefore, the AA process is an assessment of the following key concepts:

- Whether a plan or project can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site.
- Whether the project will have a potentially significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, in view of the site's conservation objectives or if residual uncertainty exists regarding potential impacts.

The provisions of Article 6(3) do not apply where the proposed plan or project is ‘connected with or necessary to the management of the site’. Where a formal consent process applies, the AA process is concluded by the relevant competent authority making a determination in accordance with article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

2.2 Guidance

The assessment was conducted in accordance with the following guidance:

- Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (European Commission, 2002).



- This document was updated by Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. Commission Notice (2021) Brussels, 28.9.2021 C(2021) 6913 final;
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin (2009, updated 2010);
- Commission Notice: Managing Natura 2000 sites. The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (2018). Brussels, (2019/C 33/01). OJ C 33, 25.1.2019;
- Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission 2013;
- OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, Office of the Planning Regulator (2021).

The AA screening is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological and hydrological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and 'grey' literature was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife Website including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and in particular sensitive qualifying interests/special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives. The EPA Envision Map-viewer (www.epa.ie) and available reports were also reviewed:

- Definitions of conservation status, integrity and significance used in this assessment are defined in accordance with 'Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC' (EC, 2000).
- The conservation status of a natural habitat is defined as the sum of the influences acting on a natural habitat and its typical species that may affect its long-term natural distribution, structure and functions as well as the long-term survival of its typical species;
- The conservation status of a species is defined as the sum of the influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its population;
- The integrity of a European Site is defined as the coherence of the site's ecological structure and function, across its whole area, or the habitats, complex of habitats and/or populations of species for which the site is or will be classified; and
- Significant effect should be determined in relation to the specific features and environmental conditions of the protected site concerned by the plan or project, taking particular account of the site's conservation objectives.

2.3 Assessment Process and Approach

A Draft NIR has been produced for the LCC Draft LACAP. This report contains the information on the receiving environment, European sites, and potential effects of the Draft LACAP on European sites. The report also defines mitigation measures designed to avoid and minimise effects on European sites. The information contained in this Draft NIR has been referred to during the carrying out of the AA Screening Assessment documented in this report.

This assessment commences with a description of the Plan Action modifications being considered. The type of impacts that are likely due to the Plan Action modifications are then identified and evaluated having regard to nature and characteristics of the Plan Action modifications. The overall AA process will be completed in a revised full NIR at the end of the plan development process incorporating all interim steps, modifications and reports/assessments.



An ecological desktop study has been completed for the AA Screening Assessment of the Plan Action modifications, which comprised the following elements:

- Identification of European sites that may be impacted by Plan Action modifications.
- Identification of European sites pathways.
- Review of the NPWS site synopses and conservation objectives for relevant European sites.
- Examination of available information on protected species.

This desktop assessment mainly involved a review of the Draft NIR produced for the Draft LACAP.

The process of determining the likelihood of significant effects from a plan or a project on European sites is an iterative process centred around a Source-Pathway-Receptor (S-P-R) model. In order for an effect to be established, all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the mechanism is sufficient to conclude that a potential effect is not of any relevance or significance.

- Source(s) – e.g., pollutant run-off, noise, removal of vegetation etc.;
- Pathway(s) – ecological connectivity linkages e.g., groundwater connecting to nearby qualifying wetland habitats; and,
- Receptor(s) – ecological resources supporting the qualifying habitats and species of European sites.

In the context of this report, a receptor is an ecological feature that is known to be utilised by the Qualifying Interests (QI) or Special Conservation Interests (SCI) of a European site. A source is any identifiable element of the Plan Action modifications that is known to interact with ecological processes. A pathway is any connection or link between the source and the receptor³.

An important element of the AA process is the identification of the Conservation Objectives, QIs and/ or SCIs of European sites requiring assessment. QIs are the habitat features and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive for which each European site has been designated and afforded protection. SCIs are wetland habitats and bird species listed within Annexes I and II of the Birds Directive. It is also vital that the threats to the ecological / environmental conditions that are required to support QIs and SCIs are considered as part of the assessment.

The likelihood of significant effects, including in-combination effects, on European Sites is then interrogated having regard to the nature and characteristics of Plan Action modifications, environmental pathways, and the sensitivity of relevant European sites.

Where significant effects are determined to be likely, or where there is uncertainty regarding the likelihood of significant effects, the Plan Action modification must be will be subject to Stage 2 AA and the preparation of a Natura Impact Report (NIR).

³ Qualifying interest or special conservation interests of the European site in question and the known sensitivities of these key ecological receptors



Having regard to the European Commission Communication on the Precautionary Principle (European Commission, 2000) the:

“absence of scientific evidence on the significant negative effect of an action cannot be used as justification for approval of this action. When applied to Article 6(3) procedure, the precautionary principle implies that the absence of a negative effect on Natura 2000 sites has to be demonstrated before a plan or project can be authorised. In other words, if there is a lack of certainty as to whether there will be any negative effects, then the plan or project cannot be approved.”

This AA screening is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and ‘grey’ literature was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife Website including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and in particular sensitive qualifying interests/special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives.



3. MODIFICATIONS TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

A summary of Plan Action modifications arising following consideration of consultation submissions is provided in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Summary of Plan Action Modifications

Action	Summary of Modification
15	<p>The action below has been amended to include the words “and to encourage local informed climate actions” after the word “achievements”:</p> <p>Laois County Council will publicise and communicate progress on implementing this Climate Action Plan, both to the public and internally within the Council. Laois County Council will utilise a range of communication mechanisms, appropriate for each audience, to highlight climate action achievements and to encourage local informed climate actions.</p>
37	<p>The action below has been amended by replacing "river drainage works" with "river drainage maintenance works":</p> <p>In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will propose, in its annual budgets, a real term increase of 1% per annum above inflation over the life of this plan for river drainage maintenance works. During the execution of these works, the Council will continue to have due regard to environmental sensitivities at these locations, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.</p>
39	<p>The action below has been amended by adding "including engagement with relevant statutory bodies as required" to the end of the action:</p> <p>In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will prepare a three-year forward plan for river maintenance of river channels (together with associated bridges) under its jurisdiction every two years. This comprehensive maintenance plan will be subject to statutory rocedures (including Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures, if and as required) recognising the sensitivity of the sites involved. The design process, the Plan, together with any statutory procedures will have due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, protected species, local air quality, and cultural heritage including engagement with relevant statutory bodies as require.</p>
83	<p>The action below has been amended to include the words “ to encourage local informed climate actions” after the words “guidance documentation”:</p> <p>Laois County Council will continue to deliver countywide climate related educational and awareness information events, communication campaigns and guidance documentation to encourage local informed climate actions.</p>
109	<p>The action below has been amended to include the words “over the period 2024-2026” after the word “apply”:</p> <p>Laois County Council will, in partnership, apply, over the period 2024-2026, for feasibility and eco tourism concept development through Just Transition Regenerative Tourism Fund, while also promoting the need for such a project to consider environmental protection requirements and climate action co-benefit opportunities.</p>



Action	Summary of Modification
NA	An additional action will be inserted: "LCC will develop initiatives aimed at supporting resource efficiency, waste minimisation and the circular economy across the county"
NA	An additional action will be inserted: "Support community based food growing initiatives through the development of community gardening advice guidelines"



4. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction to Screening

This stage of the process identifies any likely significant effects to European Sites from the Plan Action modifications, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans.

The following has been considered when carrying out the AA Screening Assessment of Plan Action modifications to the Draft LACAP.

- The likely significant effect on the environment and European sites of implementing the Draft LACAP.
- The likely significant effect on the environment and European sites of implementing the Plan Action modifications.
- The mitigation measures defined in Section 5 of the Draft NIR.

Therefore, the Plan Action modifications must be considered in relation to the current Draft LACAP which has already been subject to SEA and AA considerations. All Plan Action modifications are considered therefore in the context of potential additional sources for impacts/effects which were not previously considered.

The first stage of the Screening process in this case involved interrogating Plan Action modifications to ascertain the materiality of the modifications and whether the modifications will result in the occurrence of additional effects on European sites not previously considered in the AA process to date.

4.2 Assessment Criteria

The following parameters are described when characterising impacts (following CIEEM (2016), EPA (2002) and NRA (2009)):

- **Direct and Indirect Impacts** - An impact can be caused either as a direct or as an indirect consequence of a proposed development.
- **Magnitude** - Magnitude measures the size of an impact, which is described as high, medium, low, very low or negligible.
- **Extent** - The area over which the impact occurs – this should be predicted in a quantified manner.
- **Duration** - The time for which the effect is expected to last prior to recovery or replacement of the resource or feature.
 - Temporary: Up to 1 Year;
 - Short Term: The effects would take 1-7 years to be mitigated;
 - Medium Term: The effects would take 7-15 years to be mitigated;
 - Long Term: The effects would take 15-60 years to be mitigated; and
 - Permanent: The effects would take 60+ years to be mitigated.
- **Likelihood** - The probability of the effect occurring taking into account all available information.
 - Certain/Near Certain: >95% chance of occurring as predicted;
 - Probable: 50-95% chance as occurring as predicted;
 - Unlikely: 5-50% chance as occurring as predicted; and
 - Extremely Unlikely: <5% chance as occurring as predicted.



The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidelines for ecological impact assessment (2016) define: an ecologically significant impact as an impact (negative or positive) on the integrity of a defined site or ecosystem and/or the conservation status of habitats or species within a given geographic area; and the integrity of a site as the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, which enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.

The Habitats Directive requires the focus of the assessment at this stage to be on the integrity of the site as indicated by its Conservation Objectives. It is an aim of NPWS to draw up conservation management plans for all areas designated for nature conservation. These plans will, among other things, set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest within a site.

SSCOs have been prepared for a number of European Sites. These detailed SSCO's aim to define favourable conservation condition for the qualifying habitats and species at that site by setting targets for appropriate attributes which define the character habitat. The maintenance of the favourable condition for these habitats and species at the site level will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a species can be described as being achieved when: 'population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself, and the natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.'

Favourable conservation status of a habitat can be described as being achieved when: 'its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing, and the ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable'.

Generic Conservation Objectives for SACs have been provided as follows:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.

One generic Conservation Objective has been provided for SPAs as follows:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

EC guidance⁴ outlines the types of effects that may affect European sites. These include effects from the following activities:

- Land take;
- Resource Requirements (Drinking Water Abstraction Etc.);
- Emissions (Disposal to Land, Water or Air);

⁴ Assessment of plans and Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission Environment DG, 2001.



- Excavation Requirements;
- Transportation Requirements;
- Duration of Construction, Operation, Decommissioning.

In addition, the guidance outlines the following likely changes that may occur at a designated site, which may result in effects on the integrity and function of that site:

- Reduction of Habitat Area.
- Disturbance to Key Species.
- Habitat or Species Fragmentation.
- Reduction in Species Density.
- Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.).
- Climate Change.

4.3 Elements of the Plan Modifications with Potential to Give Rise to Effects

An evaluation of the potential environmental implications of each Plan Action modification has been carried out. This evaluation is presented in Table 4-1.



Table 4-1: Evaluation of Potential Environmental Implications of each Plan Action Modification

Action	Summary of Modification	Evaluation of Potential Environmental Implications of each Plan Action Modification
15	<p>The action below has been amended to include the words “and to encourage local informed climate actions” after the word “achievements”:</p> <p>Laois County Council will publicise and communicate progress on implementing this Climate Action Plan, both to the public and internally within the Council. Laois County Council will utilise a range of communication mechanisms, appropriate for each audience, to highlight climate action achievements and to encourage local informed climate actions.</p>	<p>This amended action provides clarification to the text previously considered. It clarifies the Council will support suitably informed climate action. Therefore there are no additional sources for effects which were not already considered by the existing NIR. No further considerations are required in that regard.</p>
37	<p>The action below has been amended by replacing "river drainage works" with "river drainage maintenance works":</p> <p>In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will propose, in its annual budgets, a real term increase of 1% per annum above inflation over the life of this plan for river drainage maintenance works. During the execution of these works, the Council will continue to have due regard to environmental sensitivities at these locations, including water quality, biodiversity, European sites, riparian corridors and aquatic ecology.</p>	<p>This amended action provides clarity on the types of river drainage works that will be carried out by the Local Authority. . Therefore there are no additional sources for effects which were not already considered by the existing NIR. No further considerations are required in that regard.</p>
39	<p>The action below has been amended by adding "including engagement with relevant statutory bodies as required" to the end of the action:</p> <p>In response to the predicted frequency of higher intensity rainfalls, Laois County Council will prepare a three-year forward plan for river maintenance of river channels (together with associated bridges) under its jurisdiction every two years. This comprehensive maintenance plan will be subject to statutory rocedures (including Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures, if and as required) recognising the sensitivity of the sites involved.</p>	<p>This amended action ensures that river maintenance works are carried out with input and guidance from relevant statutory bodies, thereby strengthening the existing mitigation measures against potential significant environmental effects. This amendment does not introcuce any not already considered by the NIR process to date.</p>



Action	Summary of Modification	Evaluation of Potential Environmental Implications of each Plan Action Modification
	<p>The design process, the Plan, together with any statutory procedures will have due regard to environmental sensitivities such as the receiving water environment, biodiversity, European sites, protected species, local air quality, and cultural heritage including engagement with relevant statutory bodies as require.</p>	
83	<p>The action below has been amended to include the words “ to encourage local informed climate actions” after the words “guidance documentation”: Laois County Council will continue to deliver countywide climate related educational and awareness information events, communication campaigns and guidance documentation to encourage local informed climate actions.</p>	<p>This amended action provides clarification to the text previously considered. It clarifies the Council will support suitably informed climate action. Therefore there are no additional sources for effects which were not already considered by the existing NIR. No further considerations are required in that regard.</p>
109	<p>The action below has been amended to include the words “over the period 2024-2026” after the word “apply”: Laois County Council will, in partnership, apply, over the period 2024-2026, for feasibility and eco tourism concept development through Just Transition Regenerative Tourism Fund, while also promoting the need for such a project to consider environmental protection requirements and climate action co-benefit opportunities</p>	<p>This amended action provides clarification to the text previously considered. Therefore there are no additional sources for effects which were not already considered by the existing NIR. No further considerations are required in that regard.</p>
NA	<p>An additional action will be inserted: “LCC will develop initiatives aimed at supporting resource efficiency, waste minimisation and the circular economy across the county”</p>	<p>This action will support circular economy action with sustainability improvements at the core. The adoption of this action can potentially result in reduced energy consumption and prevent GHG emissions. The action is likely to have a slight positive effect on climate - having regard to the share of GHG emission reductions that can be supported via this action relative to national GHG emission reduction targets and requirements. This action, as defined at high-level, does not introduce any additional sources of significant environmental effects not previously considered under the SEA/AA process to date.</p>



Action	Summary of Modification	Evaluation of Potential Environmental Implications of each Plan Action Modification
		The environmental effects of waste management related action have been considered and mitigated by way way of a series of Environmental Governance Principles under the SEA/AA process to date.
NA	An additional action will be inserted: "Support community based food growing initiatives through the development of community gardening advice guidelines"	This action aligns with the Environmental Governance Principles defined in the Plan and is unlikely to have any significant environmental effect It is in keeping with existing actions promoting biodiversity contained in the draft plan that were assessed and enhanced under SEA and AA processes to date. The amendment does not introduce additional environmental effects not already considered and mitigated against under the SEA process.



4.1 Summary of the Evaluation

The Plan Action modifications are broadly intended to provide clarification on existing information and give better effect to the LACAP having regard to the consultation process. They will not result in any additional sources for likely, significant environmental effects, including effects on ecological processes or European sites, not already considered by the existing NIR for the Draft LACAP.

The Plan Action modifications will not introduce any of the following types of additional environmental effect that have the potential to affect European sites.

- Land take;
- Resource Requirements (Drinking Water Abstraction Etc.);
- Emissions (Disposal to Land, Water or Air);
- Excavation;
- Transportation;
- Construction, Operation, Decommissioning activities.

The Plan Action modifications will not result in any of the following types of change that may occur at a European site, which may result in effects on the integrity and function of that site:

- Reduction of Habitat Area.
- Disturbance to Key Species.
- Habitat or Species Fragmentation.
- Reduction in Species Density.
- Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.).
- Climate Change impact.

Further assessment is therefore not required.

4.2 Other Plans and Programs

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combination with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely impact upon European Sites. There are no additional sources for effects identified within the Proposed amendments; therefore, there are no in-combination effects.



5. CONCLUSION

Stage 1 Screening for AA of Plan modifications was carried out to determine the need for a full AA for the Plan modifications to the Draft LACAP in this case. It has been demonstrated that implementation of the Plan modifications are not foreseen to have any significant effects on any European Site.

The principal reasons the Modifications to the Draft LACAP do will not give rise to any likely significant effects on designated European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, are as follows:

- The modifications are only intended to provide clarification on existing Climate Actions defined in the Draft LACAP and make the LACAP more operative and focussed.
- The modifications are not material and will not result in any additional, likely significant environmental effects, including effects in ecological processes or European sites, not already considered in the NIR for the Draft LACAP.

It is concluded in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of conservation objectives, that the Modifications to the Draft LACAP will not give rise to any likely significant effects on designated European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Consequently, a Stage 2 AA is not required for the Plan modifications.



6. REFERENCES

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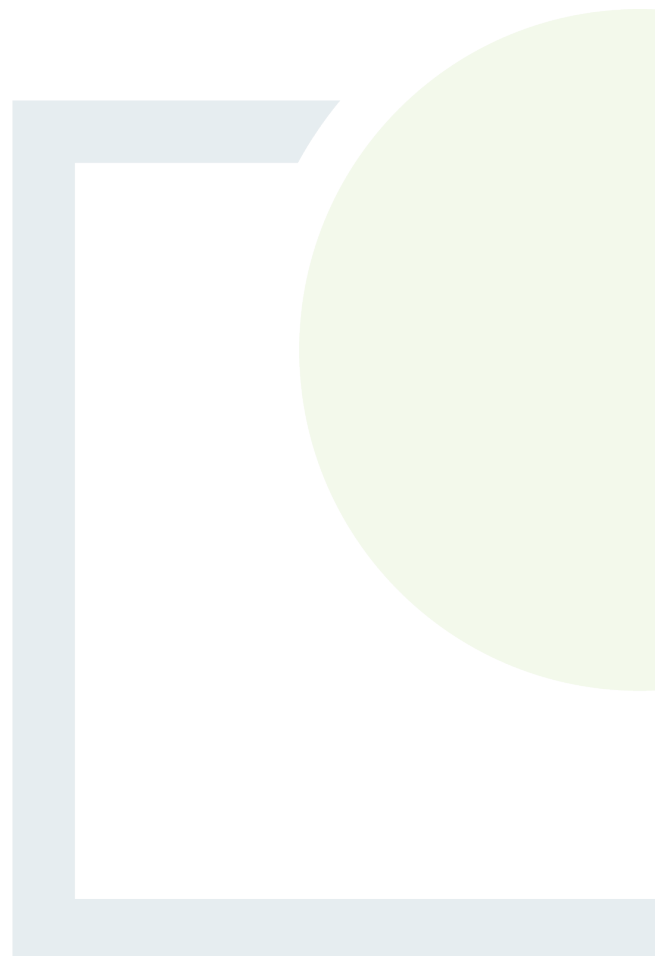
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APPENDIX 1

Author Details



Author Details

Lead Author - Andrew Torsney is a Principal Ecologist with over 12 years' experience working on major national and local scale projects. Andrew graduated from University College Dublin in 2011 with a B.Sc. degree in Zoology and obtained Master's degree in Biodiversity and Conservation from the University of Leeds in 2012. He has a range of ecological skills which include habitat mapping, ecological surveying, data interpretation and report writing. Andrew is a vegetative plant specialist, who has a wealth of experience classifying riparian habitats and identifying rare floral species. Andrew has a vast knowledge of riparian and freshwater ecosystems and undertakes freshwater surveys regularly. Andrew holds 4 national protected species licenses and has a lot of experience optioning surveying licenses for aquatic species such as the white clawed crayfish. He is also a Bat specialist with a wealth of experience, in acoustic surveying and monitoring of bats. Throughout Andrews' career he has worked on a number of large-scale multifaceted projects such as the Killaloe to Dublin water supply project NIS. For this work, Andrew designed and oversaw all ecological field work relating to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and AA.

Andrew has been the principal ecologist for a range of projects including the AA of the National Wind Energy Guidelines, a number of AAs for County Councils and a range of large-scale infrastructure projects.



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