SEA STATEMENT

OF THE

KILDARE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-2017

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for: Kildare County Council

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Naas

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Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Terms of Reference

This is the SEA Statement of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

1.2 SEA Definition

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

1.3 Legislative Context

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, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including land use planning.

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004), and, the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004). Both sets of regulations became operational on 21 July 2004.

The SEA Directive and the instruments transposing it into Irish Law require that after the adoption of a plan or programme, the plan or programme making authority is required to make a Statement available to the public, the competent environmental authorities and, where relevant, neighbouring countries. This Statement is referred to as an SEA Statement (DEHLG, 2004)¹.

1.4 Content of the SEA Statement

The SEA Statement is required to include information summarising:

- a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan,
- b) how
 - the environmental report,
 - submissions and observations made to the planning authority on the proposed Plan and Environmental Report, and
 - any transboundary consultations [this is not relevant to this SEA]

have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan,

- the reasons for choosing the Plan, as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and
- d) the measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan.

1.5 Implications of SEA for the Plan

As a result of the aforementioned legislation, the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017 was required to undergo SEA.

The findings of the SEA were expressed in an Environmental Report which accompanied the Draft Plan. The Environmental Report was updated by way of Addenda (see Section 3.4) to take account of changes being made to the Draft. On adoption of the Draft Plan, the Addenda were used to update the original Environmental Report into a final Environmental Report which is available alongside the adopted Plan. At each stage of the process the Elected Members took into account the findings of the Environmental Report and/or the Addenda as appropriate.

¹ Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2004) *Implementation of SEA Directive* (2001/42/EC): Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities Dublin: Government of Ireland.

Section 2 How Environmental Considerations were integrated into the Plan

2.1 Consultations

As environmental authorities identified under the SEA Regulations, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Department (DEHLG) and the Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR)² were all sent SEA scoping notices indicating that submissions or observations in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report could be made to Kildare County Council. The Eastern and Southern Regional Fisheries Boards were also sent SEA Scoping notices. Written submissions on the scope of the SEA were received from each of the environmental authorities and from the two fisheries boards and these were taken into account during the formulation of the scope of the SEA.

Representatives from the Southern and Eastern Regional Fisheries Boards, the EPA, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (DAFF), Kildare County Council and CAAS attended an SEA Scoping Meeting on 4 September 2009. The information provided at this meeting - including that which relating to Appropriate Assessment (AA) - was taken into account during the formulation of the scope of the SEA.

In order to help inform the content of both the Draft Plan and the SEA with regard to assimilative capacity and water services policies and objectives, a meeting was held with representatives from a number of departments in Kildare County Council, the EPA, the Southern and Eastern Regional Fisheries Boards, the NPWS and CAAS to discuss assimilative capacities of the County's water budget in the context of the review of the County Development Plan on 17 December 2009.

² The Marine function of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources has been transferred to the Department of Agriculture Food and Fisheries In addition, a number of submissions were made on the Development Plan, Environmental Report, Proposed Amendments and Addenda while they were on public display. Further information on these is provided under Section 3.2.

2.2 Environmental Sensitivities

2.2.1 Mapping and Early Communication

Environmental considerations were integrated into the Draft Plan before it was placed on public display for the first time.

Environmental sensitivities were mapped in order to identify which areas of the County would be most sensitive to development and would suffer the most adverse effects if growth was to be accommodated in those areas unmitigated.

The sensitivities were communicated to the Plan-making team on a regular basis from the outset of the Plan preparation process. Identifying areas with the most limited carrying capacity within the Plan area helped future growth to be diverted away from these areas.

The sensitivities considered by the SEA included the following:

- Designated ecological sites;
- Habitat Mapping;
- Land cover;
- Soil Type;
- Water Framework Directive (WFD) Risk Assessments for Rivers, Lakes, Ground, Coastal and Transitional Waters;
- WFD Status of Surface Waters;
- WFD Register of Protected Areas;
- EPA River Water Quality Monitoring;
- GSI Aquifer Vulnerability and Productivity;
- Flood Events & Extents, Benefitting Lands and Drainage Districts in the County;

- Waste Water Treatment capacity and demand;
- Drinking water supply;
- Drinking water quality;
- Archaeological Heritage;
- Architectural Heritage;
- Landscape Character Areas; and,
- Protected Views and Prospects.

A number of these sensitivities are mapped on Figure 2.1, Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3.

Macro-Environmental Sensitivity Map

In addition, and in order to provide preliminary feedback on the alternatives for the draft Plan which were developed and then evaluated for environmental effects and in order to inform the selection of the alternative which was developed for the Draft Plan, a strategic Macro-Environmental Sensitivity Map was also compiled for the County (see Figure 2.4).

2.3 Early Identification and Evaluation of Alternatives

A range of potential alternative scenarios for the types of planning strategies adopted for the Development Plan were identified at an early stage in the process and evaluated for their likely significant environmental effects (see Section 4).

The environmental sensitivities and macroenvironmental sensitivity mapping shown on Figures 2.1 to 2.4 were used in order to predict and evaluate the environmental effects of implementing the scenarios.

Communication of the findings of this evaluation helped the Plan-making team to make an informed choice as to which alternative was to be put before the Elected Members as the proposed Plan.

Communication of this evaluation to the Elected Members through the Environmental Report helped the Elected Members to make an informed choice with regard to the making of the Development Plan.

Mitigation measures which arose from the evaluation and which were integrated into the Plan are detailed under Section 2.4 of this report.

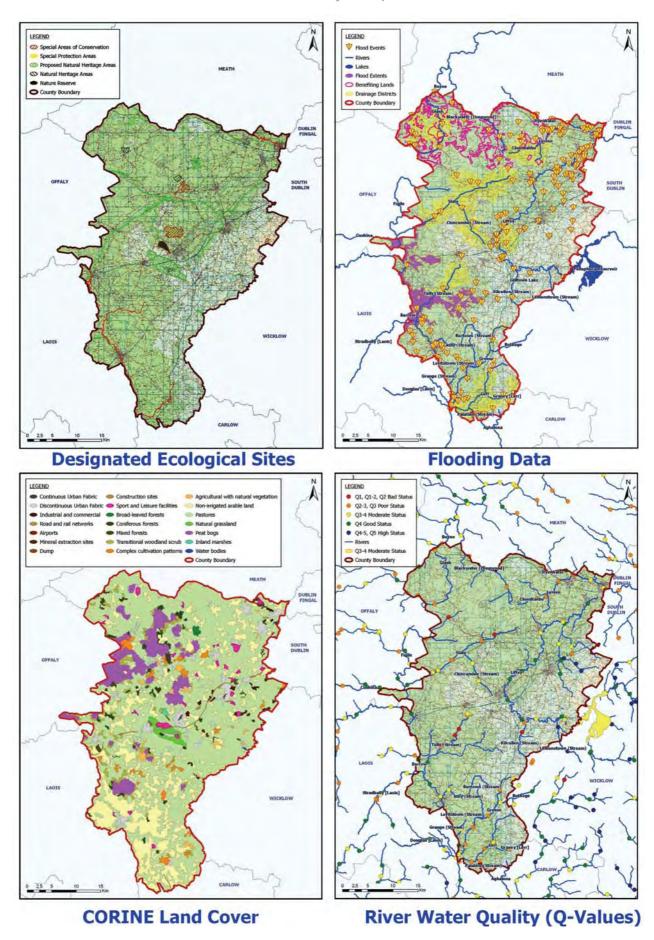


Figure 2.1 Environmental Sensitivities - Plate 1

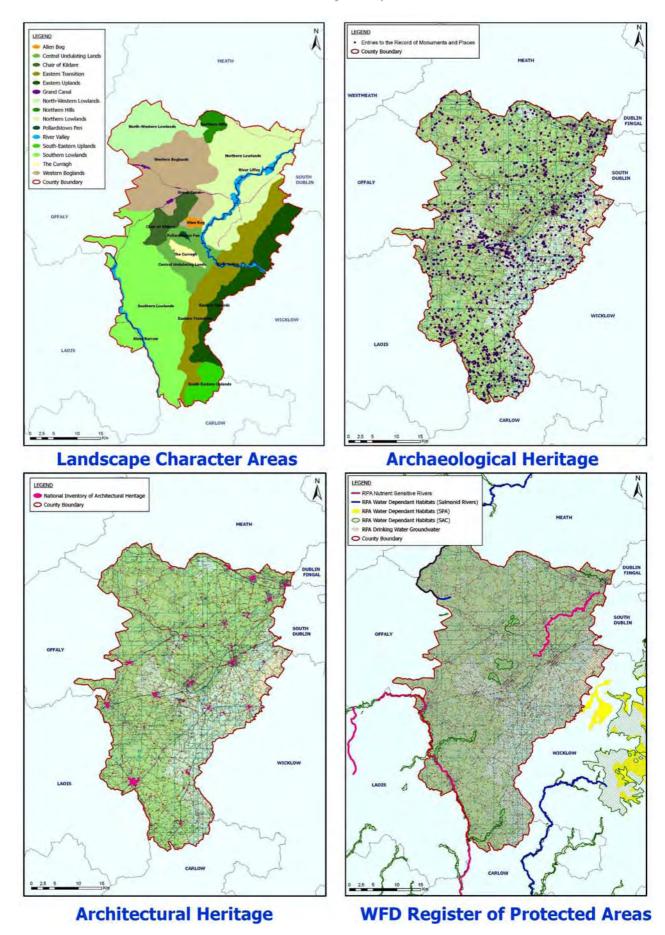


Figure 2.2 Environmental Sensitivities - Plate 2

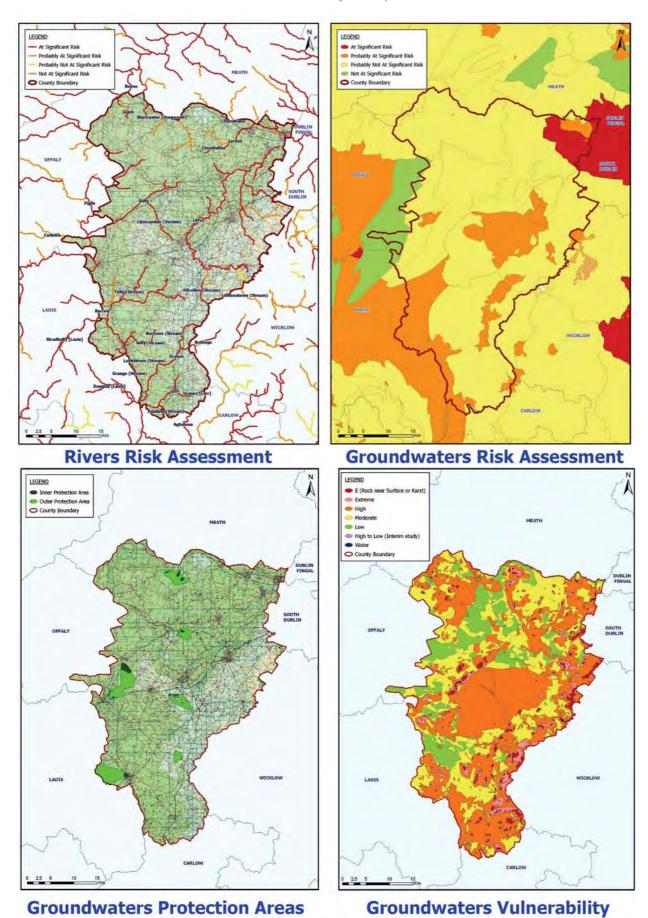


Figure 2.3 Environmental Sensitivities - Plate 3

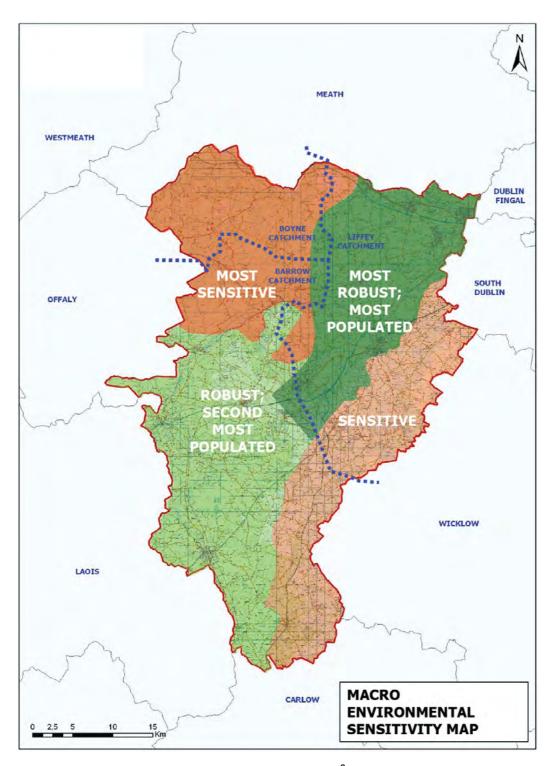


Figure 2.4 Macro-Environmental Sensitivity Map³

³ It is noted that although this map takes into account existing and planned water services infrastructure and capacity it does not take into account the capacity of water bodies within the County to assimilate discharges from waste water treatment plants. In order to communicate the potential sensitivity of river bodies which exist within the County the Water Framework Directive Risk Assessment for Rivers (see Figure 2.3) was considered alongside this map.

2.4 Mitigation

2.4.1 Introduction

In order to comply with various statutory requirements and in order to comply with the requirements of the statutory consultees, mitigation measures⁴ were recommended to be integrated into the Plan. In addition to these measures the Council proactively integrated a number of measures into the Plan which also provide for the integration of environmental considerations into the Plan and mitigation of potential effects.

Mitigation measures generally benefit multiple environmental components i.e. a measure providing for the protection of surface water resources could beneficially impact upon the protection of biodiversity, flora and fauna, drinking water resources, human health and provision of appropriate waste water treatment infrastructure.

Table 2.1 arrays potential environmental effects of implementing the Plan together with the measures which have been integrated into the Plan. The reference codes identified are those which accompany the relevant measures in both the Plan and Section 8 of the Environmental Report.

⁴ Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing a human action, be it a plan, programme or project. Mitigation measures can be roughly divided into those that: prevent effects; reduce the magnitude or extent, probability and/or severity of effect; repair effects after they have occurred, and; compensate for effects, balancing out negative impacts with other positive ones. Where there are likely to be significant negative effects, consideration should be given in the first instance to preventing these effects or, where this is not possible, to reducing the effects.

Likely Significant Effect, if unmitigated	Mitigation Measure Reference(s) from the Plan (including)
Loss of biodiversity with regard to Natura 2000 Sites	Policies: HB 1, NT 5, WS 8, DS 1, DS 2, DS 3, DS 4, DS 5, DS 6 and DS 7 Objective: NHO 5
Loss of biodiversity with regard to ecological connectivity and stepping stones	Policies: HB 1, NT 1, NT 2, NT 3, NT 4, NT 5, TW 1, TW 2, TW 3, TW 4, TW 5, TW 6, IS 1, IW 1, IW 2, IW 3, IW 4, IW 5, IW 6, IW 7, IW 8 and IW 9
	Objectives: NHO 1, NHO 2, NHO 3, NHO 4, NHO 5, NHO 6 NHO 7, NHO 8 and NHO 9
Loss of rural management practices	Policy NHO5 and Various provisions of the Core Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and Housing Chapter
Spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from exposure to incompatible land uses	Policies: WS 1, WS 2, WS 3, WS 4, WS 5, WS 6, WS 7, WW 1, WW 2, WW 3, WW 4, WW 5, WW 6 AG 3, RH 5, ECD 16, ECD17, WQ 1, WQ 2, WQ 3, WQ 4, WQ 5, WS 6, PC 1, PC 2, PC 3, PC 4, PC 5, PC 6 and NR 4
	Objectives: WDO 1, WDO 2, WDO 3, WDO 4, WDO 5, WDO 6, WDO 7, WDO 12, WDO 13, WDO 14, ENO 4, EN 4, EN 6, EN 7, EN 8 and EN 9
Pollution and/or contamination of soils.	Policies: AG 3, RH 5, ECD 16, ECD17, WQ 1, WQ 2, WQ 3, WQ 4, WQ 5 and WS 6 Objectives: WDO 4, ENO 4, EN 7, EN 8 and EN 9
Adverse impacts upon the quality of surface waters	Policies: WQ 1, WQ 2, WQ 3, WQ 4 and WQ 5 Objective: WDO 4
Adverse impacts upon ground water quality	Policies: WQ 1, WQ 2, WQ 3, WQ 4 and WQ 5 Objective: WDO 4
Flooding	Policies: SW 1, SW 2, SW 3, SW 4, SW 5, SW 6, SW 7, SW 8, SW 9, SW 10, SW 11, SW 12, SW 13, SW 14, SW 15, SW 16, SW 17, SW 18, SW 19 and SW 20
	Objectives: WDO 9, WDO 10, WDO 11 and WDO 14
Inadequate waste water treatment for new populations	Policies: WS 1, WW 1, WW 2, WW 3, WW 4, WW 5, WW 6, WW 7, WW 8, WW 9 and WW 10.
	Objectives: WDO 1, WDO 2 and WDO 14
Inadequate drinking water supply for new populations	Policies: WS 1, WS 2, WS 3, WS 4, WS 5, WS 6, WS 7 and WS 9.
	Objectives: WDO 1, WDO 3, WDO 5, WDO 6, WDO 7, WDO 12 and WDO 13
Increases in greenhouse gas emissions and increases in car dependency	Policies: TL 2, TL 4 and TL 5 Objectives: ST1, ST 2, ST 3, ST 4, ST 5, ST 6, ST 7, ST 8, ST 9, ST 10, ST 11, ST 12, ST 13, ST 14, ST 16 and ST 15
Effects on entries to the Record of Monuments and Places	Policies: AH 1, AH 2, AH 3, AH 4, AH 5, AH 6, AH 7 and AH 8 Objective: AAO 14
Effects on entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas	Policies: AH 1, AH 2, AH 3, AH 4, AH 5, AH 6, AH 7, AH 8, PS 1, PS 2, PS 3, PS 4, PS 5, PS 6, PS 7, PS 8, PS 9, PS 10, PS 11, PS 12, PS 13, PS 14, PS 15, PS 16, PS 17, VA 1, VA 2, VA 3, VA 4, VA 5, VA 6, VA 7, ACA 1 and ACA 2
	Objectives: AAO 1, AAO 2, AAO 5, AAO 6, AAO 7, AAO 8 and AAO 11
Visual impacts on the landscape or on 'views and prospects to be preserved'	Policies: LA 1, LA 2, LA 3, LA 4, LA 5 and SR 1 Objectives: LO 1, LO 2, LO 3, LO 4, LO 5, LO 6 and LO 8

Table 2.1 Mitigation Measures

Section 3 Environmental Report and Submissions & Observations

3.1 Introduction

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

3.2 SEA Scoping Submissions

As noted under Section 2.1:

- Written submissions on the scope of the SEA were received from the EPA, DEHLG, DCENR and Eastern and Southern Regional Fisheries Boards.
- Representatives from the Fisheries Boards, the EPA, the NPWS, the DAFF, Kildare County Council and CAAS attended an SEA Scoping Meeting on 4 September 2009.
- o Representatives from the Fisheries Boards, the EPA, the NPWS, Kildare County Council and CAAS attended a meeting to discuss assimilative capacities of the County's water budget in the context of the review of the County Development Plan on 17 December 2009.

The submissions and the information provided at the meetings - including that which relating to Appropriate Assessment (AA) - was taken into account during the formulation of the scope of the SEA.

The EPA's scoping submission covered a number of topics including:

- Water:
- Water Quality/Water Framework Directive;
- Drinking Water/Water Supply;
- Waste Water Treatment;
- Groundwater Protection;
- Bathing Water;
- Water Conservation;
- Water Services Act 2007;
- Flood Prevention and Management;

- Integration of infrastructure, zoning and development;
- Biodiversity;
- EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland:
- Management Plans;
- Fisheries;
- Buffer Zones:
- Appropriate Assessment;
- Non-Designated Habitats and Species;
- · Habitat Mapping;
- Alien species and Noxious Weeds;
- Annex I/ Annex II Habitats Directive:
- Air, Noise and Climatic Factors:
- Energy Conservation/Renewable Energy;
- Landscape Character Assessment;
- Human Health/Quality of Life;
- Transportation;
- Tourism;
- Infrastructure Planning;
- Urban Waste Water Discharge Licensing;
- Waste Management;
- Environmental Impact Assessment;
- Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Legislative Obligations;
- Main Environmental Challenges; and,
- Circular Letter issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government on Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans.

The submission was accompanied by an *SEA Pack* which comprised a combination of Guidance, Checklists and other information. Key topics covered included:

- Drinking Water;
- Urban Waste Water Discharges;
- Wetlands Conservation and Protection;
- Appropriate Assessment.

The DEHLG's scoping submission covered a number of topics including:

- Designated Sites;
- Circular Letter PD 2/07 and NPWS 1/07 Compliance Conditions in respect of Developments requiring Environmental Impact Assessment or having potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites;

- Circular Letter NPWS 2/07 Guidance on Compliance with Regulation 23 of the Habitats Regulations 1997;
- Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans;
- Circular Letter NPWS 2/08 Use of Herbicide Spray on Vegetated Road Verges
- Circular L8/08 Water Services Investment and Rural Water Programmes – Protection of Natural Heritage and National Monuments.
- Appropriate Assessment;
- Wildlife corridors:
- Non-Designated Habitats;
- Strategic Environmental Objectives; and,
- Potential Effects.

The DCENR's scoping submission covered a number of topics including:

- Water Issues;
- Water-based Habitats:
- Flooding;
- Implications for Development Plan Review; and,
- Strategic Environmental Objectives.

The Fisheries Board's scoping submissions covered a number of topics including:

- Water quality;
- Surface water hydrology;
- Fish spawning and nursery areas;
- Passage of migratory fish;
- Areas of natural heritage importance including geological heritage sites;
- Biological Diversity;
- Ecosystem structure and functioning;
- Sport and commercial fishing and angling; and.
- Amenity and recreational areas.

3.3 Submissions and Observations

3.3.1 Draft Plan and Environmental Report

The EPA, DEHLG, Liffey Valley Alliance, Celbridge Action Group and Jeanne Maldon made submissions on the Development Plan and Environmental Report while they were on public display. The information contained in these submissions was taken into account by the SEA as well as the Appropriate Assessment which was undertaken for the Plan.

The submissions resulted in the following updates being made to the Environmental Report which were identified as follows:

A) To insert a new sub-section 2.8.2 'Potential Monitoring Data Gaps' into the SEA ER:

The following identifies issues with regard to the availability of data for the monitoring of selected SEA indicators (see also Section 10 Monitoring):

Indicator B1 (Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive) is to be sourced from:

- the DEHLG report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive; and,
- Consultations with the NPWS.

Consultations with the NPWS may be essential should the aforementioned report be of insufficient detail or frequency.

Indicator B2 (Percentage loss of functional connectivity to macro-corridors and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a County level without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan – as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping) is to be sourced from:

- CORINE mapping;
- Consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service; and,
- Development Management Processes in the Council.

As noted in Section 4.2.2, important macro-corridors and contiguous areas of habitat include the County's rivers, lakes, uplands and peatlands. It is recommended that important macro-corridors and contiguous areas of habitat are identified as part of the monitoring programme and that time

resources are spent in the monitoring of these rather than in the monitoring of corridors or areas of habitat which are not important at County level.

Indicator W2 (Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC) is to be sourced from the EPA; however, as noted under Section 10.4, data may not be available for the preliminary monitoring evaluation as the groundwater threshold values to which this indicator relates have not yet been identified by the EPA.

B) To insert the following into Section 3.2 of the SEA ER:

It is noted that the cessation of turf cutting at Ballynafagh Bog came into effects in 2009.

C) To update the following sentence from Section 3.2.3 of the SEA ER:

Ecological networks are composed of linear features, such as treelines, hedgerows, rivers and streams, which provide corridors or stepping stones for wildlife species moving within their normal range.

D) To update the following sentence from Section 3.2.3 of the SEA ER:

Ecological networks are composed of linear features, such as treelines, hedgerows, rivers and streams, which provide corridors or stepping stones for wildlife species moving within their normal range.

E) To update the following sentence in Sections 3.2.5.4 and 4.2.1.6 of the SEA ER as follows:

In addition to the NHAs, a number of Pproposed NHAs were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated.

F) To insert the following sentence into Section 3.2.6 of the SEA ER:

The NPWS Site Synopsis for the River Barrow and River Nore SAC states that

Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), an introduced and invasive species, is abundant in places within the SAC. This species poses many threats to native species such as: out-competing native species; impeding flow at times of high rainfall where it grows in dense stands along river banks increasing the likelihood of flooding, and; die back of extensive stands over winter can leave river banks bare and exposed to erosion⁵. It is noted that other invasive species may occur in the County.

G) To insert the following into Section 3.4 of the SFA FR:

The Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/CE) enforces the Polluter Pays Principle, has been transposed and is now in force in Ireland. In many aspects of their work local authorities are considered 'operators' under the legislation and are now liable for any Environmental Damage (damage to water; soil; and species and habitats as defined in the legislation) which they commit.

H) To insert the following into Section 3.5.3.4 of the SEA ER:

The River Basin Management Plans include various data on waters within the river basins including that which relates to the status of water bodies.

I) To insert the following sentence into Section 3.5.7.3 of the SEA ER:

The inclusion of Objective WDO 9 in the Draft Plan, to prepare a countywide flood risk assessment and management strategy is noted.

J) To insert the following sentence into Section 3.5.7.4 of the SEA ER:

There are a number of recurring flood events particularly at Newbridge, Athy, Maynooth and Celbridge. Many flood events were recorded for the years 1954, 1993, 2000 and 2002.

⁵ Biodiversity Ireland (2010), *National Invasive* Species Database, Indian Balsam (Impatiens glandulifera) Datasheet Waterford: DEHLG

K) To insert the following under Section 3.6.1.2 of the SEA ER:

The Osberstown WWTP is currently operating at capacity.

L) To insert the following statement into Section 7.2 of the SEA ER:

With regard to the treatment and disposal of waste water, limitations in the assimilative capacity of water bodies can be dealt with by engineering solutions. However, the capacity of water bodies to allow abstractions of for human use without water compromising the ability of the water bodies to meet legislative requirements such as the Water Framework Directive - is limited and cannot be overcome by engineering solutions. Measures contributing to compliance with legislative requirements have been integrated into the Draft Plan (e.g. Water Quality Policy WQ 2: To ensure, through the implementation of the River Basin Management Plans and their associated Programmes of Measures and any other associated legislation, the protection and improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground waters throughout the County).

M) To insert the following into Section 7.2 of the SEA ER:

The Macro-Environmental Sensitivity Map (see Figure 3.45) was used in order to provide preliminary feedback on the alternatives for the draft Plan which were developed and then evaluated for environmental effects (see Sections 6 and 7). The Macro-Environmental Sensitivity Map and the other maps contained within Section 3 were used to evaluation of the alternatives and to inform the selection of the alternative which was developed for the Draft Plan.

N) To insert the following sentence into Section 9.1 of the SEA ER:

Section 11 includes a number a SEA Summary table which highlights how likely significant effects are mitigated against.

O) To update SEO B1 and Target B1 in the SEA ER as follows:

SEO B1: To ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and habitats and species listed under Annexes I and II of the Directive

Target B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under national and international legislation listed under Annexes I and II of the Directive.

P) Update SEO B2, Indicator B2 and Target B2 in the SEA ER as follows:

SEO B2: To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of macrocorridors, **stepping stones** and contiguous areas of habitat⁶ which are important on a County level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species

Indicator B2: Percentage loss functional connectivity to macrostepping corridors, stones and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a County level without remediation as а result implementation of the Plan - as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping

Target B2: No significant macrocorridors, **stepping stones** and contiguous areas of habitat or parts thereof which are important on a County level and which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan

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⁶ Important macro-corridors, **stepping stones** and contiguous areas of habitat include the County's rivers, lakes, uplands and peatlands. It is recommended that important macro-corridors and contiguous areas of habitat are identified as part of the monitoring programme and that time resources are spent in the monitoring of these rather than in the monitoring of corridors or areas of habitat which are not important at County level.

Q) To update SEO B3 in the SEA ER as follows:

SEO B3: Τo sustain existing sustainable rural management practices - and the communities who support them - to ensure the continuation of lona established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.

R) To update SEO W3 in the SEA ER as follows:

SEO W3: To manage areas that are currently at risk of flooding or are likely to pose a significant flood risk in the future in compliance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Foods Directive ultimately.

S) To update SEO M1 in the SEA ER as follows:

SEO M1: To serve new development with **adequate and** appropriate waste water treatment

T) To update SEO M2 in the SEA ER as follows:

SEO M2: To serve growth areas users of public water supplies with drinking water that is both wholesome and clean

- U) To include Figure and Table numbers as appropriate in the Non Technical Summary of the SEA ER.
- V) To insert the following sentences into Section 4.2.7 of the Non Technical Summary of the SEA FR:

Scenario 1 had 6 *probably conflicting* interactions and 13 *potentially conflicting* interactions with SEOs.

Scenario 2 had 10 *improving* and 6 *probably conflicting* interactions with SEOs.

Scenario 3 had 10 *improving* and 6 *potentially conflicting* interactions with SEOs.

Scenario 4 had 10 *improving* and 14 *potentially conflicting* interactions with SEOs.

W) To add the following text to Section 8.1 of the SEA ER:

- Strategic actions which have been used in the assessment when considering cumulative impacts include:
- The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020;
- The National Development Plan 2007-2013;
- The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area;
- River Basin Management Plans for the South Eastern and Eastern River Basin Districts;
- Higher level Environmental Protection Objectives and related Plans which have been identified in Sections 3 and 4 of this report;
- Strategic Actions and related Plans and Programmes which have been identified within Plan provisions; and,
- Lower tier land use plans within the County.
- X) Update Section 2.6 of the AA Screening Report as follows:

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 and the National Development Plan 2007-2013 set the planning framework within which the Draft Plan has been prepared with the objective of achieving an optimal balance of social, economic and physical development in the Plan area. The effects of higher level Strategies and Plans, including those listed in Section 2.5 above, are considered insofar as they inform the Draft Plan. Other plans considered include the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and the River Basin Management Plans for the South Eastern and Eastern River Basin Districts. Subsidiary plans and projects will be subject to separate assessment procedures in accordance with all applicable Regulations and Directives.

3.3.2 Proposed Amendments and Addendum II to Environmental Report

The EPA and DEHLG made submissions on the Proposed Amendments and Addendum to Environmental Report while they were on public display. The information contained in these submissions was taken into account by the SEA as well as the Appropriate Assessment which was undertaken for the Plan.

The EPA's submissions covered a number of topics including:

- Recommendations on changes to Proposed Amendments;
- Appropriate Assessment;
- Obligations with respect to National Plans and Policies and EU Environmental Legislation; and,
- SEA Statement.

The DEHLG's submissions covered a number of topics including:

- Architectural Heritage
- Nature Conservation
- Addendum to SEA environmental Report and Appropriate Assessment.

3.4 Environmental Report

The Environmental Report and the Draft Plan were placed on public display in April 2010.

Addendum I to the Environmental Report (which details responses to the submissions on the Environmental Report which were made during the period of public display of the Draft Plan and the Environmental Report) accompanied the Manager's Report circulated to Elected Members. Addendum I proposed updates to the Environmental Report as a result of submissions, as appropriate.

Proposed Amendments to the Draft Plan were evaluated for their environmental consequences and these were placed on public display alongside the Proposed Amendments in January 2011 the form of Addendum II to the Environmental Report.

Addendum III to the Environmental Report (which details responses to the submissions on Addendum I which were made during the period

of public display of the Proposed Amendments and Addendum I) and Addendum IV to the Environmental Report (which detailed potential updates to the Environmental Report arising from Manager's Recommendations included in the Manager's Report) accompanied the Manager's Report circulated to Elected Members.

On adoption of the Draft Plan, the Addenda were used to update the original Environmental Report into a final Environmental Report which is available alongside the adopted Plan.

At each stage of the process the Elected Members took into account the findings of the Environmental Report and/or the Addenda as appropriate.

Section 4 Alternatives and the Plan

4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the alternative scenarios for the Development Plan, the evaluation of these scenarios and the reasons for choosing the Plan, as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with.

4.2 Description of the Alternative Scenarios

The environmental consequences of 3 scenarios for the Plan were examined.

4.2.1 Alternative Scenario 1: Dispersed Development Strategy

The Dispersed Development Strategy (see Figure 4.1) is based on a laissez-faire approach to development, with rural dispersal and limited urban growth. The location and nature of development is completely dependent on market demand, with little consideration of strategic planning or environmental protection. The following are the key elements of this development strategy:

- No adherence to a settlement strategy based on RPGs, Town Plans, LAPs, etc.;
- No creation of critical mass at strategic locations within the County;
- Significant levels of suburbanisation around Leixlip, Maynooth, Celbridge, Kilcock, Naas, Newbridge and other commuter towns;
- Extensive low density greenfield development;
- Uncontrolled development of existing rural settlements and rural housing, particularly in the south of the County;
- Dispersed development in the rural settlements and rural countryside; and,
- Natural Resource enterprises (extractive industries, forestry and wind energy) are developed in an individual basis through out the County.

4.2.2 Alternative Scenario 2: *Structured Development Strategy*

The Structured Development Strategy (see Figure 4.2) follows a strong yet flexible approach to development, based on a well-developed urban structure supported by diverse rural areas. The following are the key elements of this development strategy:

- Emphasis is based on building critical mass in the Metropolitan area (Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge, Kilcock) and at key towns and villages along strategic development corridors (Naas, Newbridge, Athy, Kildare, Monasterevin, Kilcullen);
- Emphasis is based on improving public and private transport and other service infrastructure along these strategic development corridors;
- Continued support of the rural area through a sustainable, flexible approach to maintaining the rural economy and population, balanced against responsible environmental protection;
- Reasonable containment of development in the rural areas around the Metropolitan area and at key towns;
- Growth is distributed across the County Settlement structure generally following an adopted settlement strategy and is highly dispersed;
- The metropolitan area and key towns contain the majority of the population growth, infrastructure and enterprise.

4.2.3 Alternative Scenario 3: *Growth in the Metropolitan Area Strategy*

The Growth in the Metropolitan Area Strategy (see Figure 4.3) is based on focusing the vast majority of development in the Metropolitan area, with limited growth dispersed throughout the rest of the County.

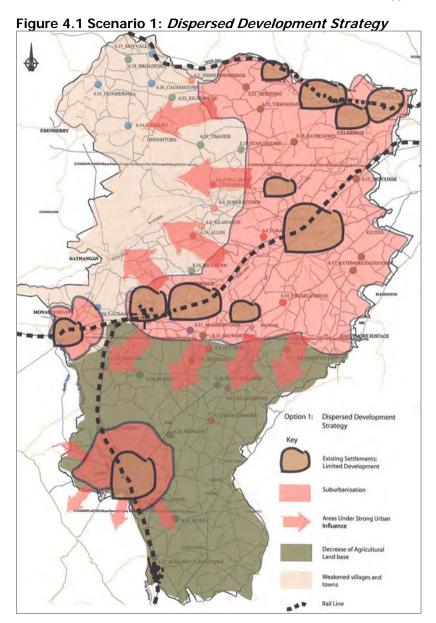
The following are the key elements of this development strategy:

- Emphasis is based on focusing the vast majority of development in the Metropolitan Area (Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge, Kilcock). Upgrade transport and other service infrastructure within this area. Quality of life is the priority;
- Natural growth levels for the key towns (Naas, Newbridge, Athy, Kildare, Monasterevin, Kilcullen) with strict control of development in their hinterlands;
- A hierarchy of rural settlements with limited and controlled growth in higher order settlements and no growth in the remaining settlements;
- Strict control of development in the rural areas outside of the Metropolitan area and the key towns:
- A strong environmental protection policy would be implemented with the identification of various environmental zones within the County; and,
- Natural Resource enterprises (Extractive industries, Forestry, wind energy) are developed in a controlled manner through out the County.

4.2.4 Alternative Scenario 4: Centred Development Strategy

The Centred Development Strategy (see Figure 4.4) is based on building strong urban centres and protecting the rural hinterlands. The focus is on achieving critical mass in the Metropolitan Area and at key towns and villages. The following are the key elements of this development strategy:

- Emphasis on achieving critical mass in the Metropolitan Area (Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge, Kilcock) through the strategic development of this area of the County;
- Further growth in key towns along strategic development corridors (Naas, Newbridge, Athy, Kildare, Monasterevin, Kilcullen). These settlements will act as focal points for their rural catchments;
- Strict control of development outside of the Metropolitan area and the key towns;
- A strong environmental protection policy would be implemented with the identification of various environmental zones within the County;
- Growth is distributed across the county following an adopted settlement strategy that reflects the RPGs for the Greater Dublin Area;
- Specific areas are designated for natural resource enterprise such as forestry, mineral extraction and wind farms (where viable);
- The south of the county supports rural enterprise based employment with the strengthening of villages and towns as well as some higher-level rural settlements;
- Quality of life is the priority in strong towns and villages; and,
- Rural settlements are planned and set out in a hierarchy in order to evolve into centres capable of providing a range of services and employment to their local population.



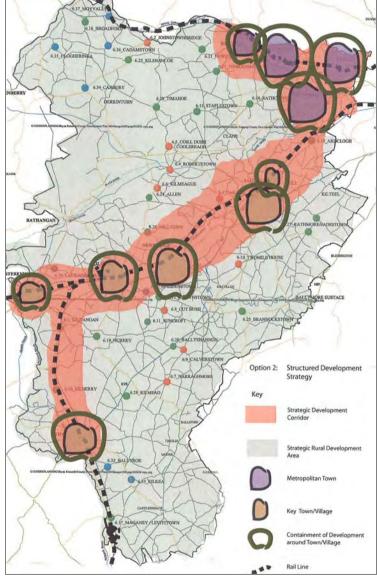
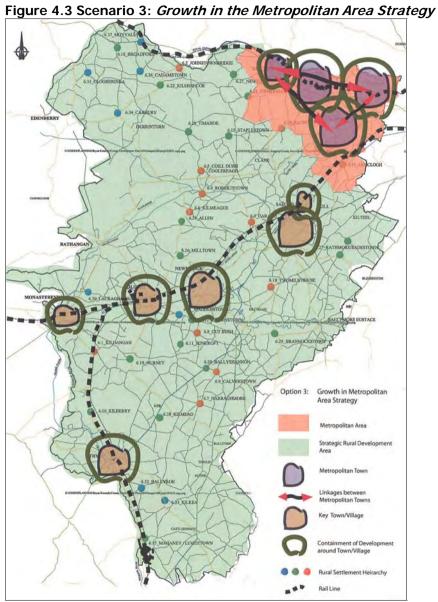


Figure 4.2 Scenario 2: Structured Development Strategy



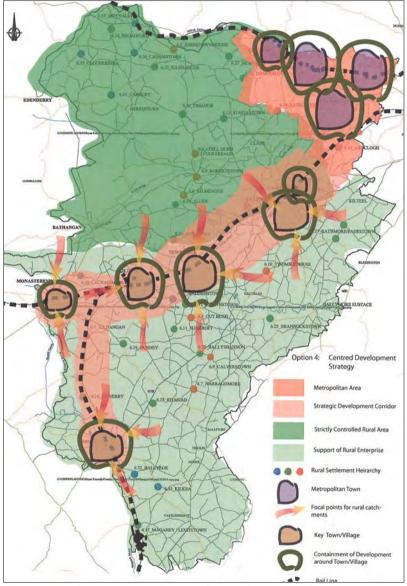


Figure 4.4 Scenario 4: Centred Development Strategy

4.3 Evaluation of the Alternative Scenarios

4.3.1 Methodology

This section summarises the evaluation of the Alternative Scenarios which is found in Section 7 of the Environmental Report. Scenarios are evaluated in a succinct and focused way for both planning and environmental impacts against both the existing environment - using, inter alia, the maps shown on Figure 2.1 to Figure 2.4 - and the Strategic Environmental Objectives.

4.3.2 Alternative Scenario 1: Dispersed Development Strategy

4.3.2.1 Environmental Effects

This scenario is likely to lead to significant increases on pressure on environmental resources in rural areas. In the north-east this pressure is likely to take the form of increasing pollution and drawdown of vulnerable groundwater resources; increased pollution of surface waters; loss of biodiversity and ecological corridors – due to uncontrolled suburbanisation; loss of air quality due to noise and emissions associated with increased levels of dispersed rural and suburban traffic – as well as an overall loss of a clear distinction between rural and suburban areas.

In the south of the county the rural environment is likely to deteriorate due to the gradual cessation of long-established land-use practices that sustain the landscape, habitats and cultural heritage of the County's rural areas.

Around urban areas this scenario is less likely to lead to the establishment of cost-effective provision of shared public infrastructure for transportation or water services – due to low levels of localised population concentration.

4.3.2.2 Critical Planning Evaluation

- Limited development within existing urban centres with instances of inappropriately scaled and designed developments commonplace in the larger towns
- Low density, greenfield development dominant creating low density extensions to urban areas and loss of identity, with urban centres merging together
- Extensive areas of un-controlled development in the rural settlements and rural housing, particularly in the south of the County, decrease the County's agricultural land base
- Villages and towns with lower population bases due to dispersed nature of development in the rural settlements and rural countryside
- Industrial and employment centres are created at inappropriate locations

4.3.2.3 Planning Effects

- The influence of Dublin City and its environs on growth within the commuter belt is dominant with significant expansion to the footprints of the four metropolitan towns
- The rural area experiences significant changes to its environmental quality, character and landscape
- Strategic development does not take place due to the dispersed nature of development that creates a car dependent population
- Lack of critical mass at strategic locations makes the implementation of both urban and rural physical and social infrastructure economically challenging

4.3.3 Alternative Scenario 2: Structured Development Strategy

4.3.3.1 Environmental Effects

This scenario is likely to concentrate development, population and demands for infrastructural capacity into the north-eastern part of the county that is most environmentally robust – both on

account of the relatively low density of environmental sensitivities as well as the relatively high concentrations in installed infrastructure with spare capacity – existing and planned. This concentration will contribute to the protection of the more sensitive areas within the County.

The central corridor where the majority of the rest of the population and development are likely to concentrate is also both environmentally robust as well as being already well served by road, rail, power and gas corridors.

The strategy lacks high-level strategic vision for the targeted enhancement and protection of rural areas.

4.3.3.2 Critical Planning Evaluation

- Critical mass is achieved in the at key towns and villages along strategic development corridors
- The Metropolitan towns develop strong physical and employment links with Dublin City and its environs
- Rural areas develop in a sustainable manner by balancing the development of rural area with the protection of the rural environment

4.3.3.3 Planning Effects

- Improved public and private transport and other service infrastructure provision is more economically viable in the at key towns and villages along strategic development corridors
- Rural economy and population is maintained and enhanced
- Environmental quality of the rural area is maintained and enhanced

4.3.4 Alternative Scenario 3: *Growth in the Metropolitan Area Strategy*

4.3.4.1 Environmental Effects

This scenario is likely to concentrate development, population and demands for infrastructural capacity into the north-eastern part of the county that is most environmentally robust – both on account of the relatively low density of environmental sensitivities as well as the relatively high concentrations in installed infrastructure with spare capacity – existing and planned. This concentration will contribute to the protection of the more sensitive areas within the County.

The central corridor where the majority of the rest of the population and development are likely to concentrate is also both environmentally robust as well as being already well served by road, rail, power and gas corridors.

This strategy also appears to envisage some level of rural development to continue to sustain the future viability of smaller more dispersed rural communities.

The strategy lacks high-level strategic vision for the targeted enhancement and protection of rural areas.

4.3.4.2 Critical Planning Evaluation

- Four Metropolitan town experience significant increased levels of urbanisation with higher density and higher quality physical and social infrastructure provision
- Industrial and employment centres are created at inappropriate locations
- The counties employment and physical infrastructure links with Dublin City and environs increase
- Key towns experience medium level of population growth
- The remaining towns and villages experience natural levels of growth with some smaller settlements experiencing population decline

• Environmental quality and character of rural areas is maintained with decreasing levels of population growth outside the designated urban settlements

4.3.4.3 Planning Effects

- Higher density development in the Metropolitan towns requires the implementation of more comprehensive land use and transportation strategies to ensure the efficient use of land and to guide their strategic development
- Rural economy and population base declines
- Environmental quality of the rural area is maintained and enhanced

4.3.5 Alternative Scenario 4: Centred Development Strategy

4.3.5.1 Environmental Effects

This scenario is likely to concentrate development, population and demands for infrastructural capacity into the north-eastern part of the county that is most environmentally robust – both on account of the relatively low density of environmental sensitivities as well as the relatively high concentrations in installed infrastructure with spare capacity – existing and planned. This concentration will contribute to the protection of the more sensitive areas within the County.

The central corridor where the majority of the rest of the population and development are likely to concentrate is also both environmentally robust as well as being already well served by road, rail, power and gas corridors.

Rural Settlements are generally well matched to those areas with lower sensitivities. This strategy also appears to envisage sufficient levels of continued rural development to sustain the future viability of smaller more dispersed rural communities. These are necessary for the continuity of the long established rural land-use patterns that are necessary for the continuity of the landscape, habitats and cultural heritage of the County's rural areas.

This scenario also offers specific and targeted strategies for rural areas that are carefully tailored and targeted to the specific environmental sensitivities and strengths of different rural areas.

4.3.5.2 Critical Planning Evaluation

- Critical mass is achieved in the at key towns and villages in line with the adopted settlement strategy for the County
- The Metropolitan towns develop stronger physical and employment links with Dublin City and its environs
- The population growth rates in the designated rural settlements allow the provision a range of services and employment to their local population
- Rural areas develop in a sustainable manner by balancing the development of rural area with the protection of the rural environment

4.3.5.3 Planning Effects

- Improved public and private transport and other service infrastructure provision are more economically viable in the Metropolitan towns and key towns;
- More focused planning strategies are required to guide the development of the metropolitan area as a whole;
- The population, economy and environmental quality of the rural area is maintained and enhanced by the implementation of a settlement strategy that allows for the development of a rural population in a sustainable manner and the provision of environmentally reasonable rural enterprises, particularly in the south of the County

4.3.6 Evaluation against SEOs

The Environmental Report describes an evaluation of the alternative scenarios against SEOs which is summarised as follows:

- o Scenario 1 had 6 *probably conflicting* interactions and 13 *potentially conflicting* interactions with SEOs.
- o Scenario 2 had 10 *improving* and 6 *probably conflicting* interactions with SEOs.
- Scenario 3 had 10 improving and 6 potentially conflicting interactions with SEOs.
- o Scenario 4 had 10 *improving* and 14 *potentially conflicting* interactions with SEOs.

4.4 Reasons for choosing the Plan in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with

The Alternatives that were examined were produced and evaluated at an earlier - more embryonic - stage to facilitate the evaluation and selection of a plan - having regard, *inter alia* to environmental consequences.

The Development Plan which emerged from the Plan preparation process and was adopted is Scenario 4 *Centred Development* – this Scenario achieves a good balance between potential environmental impact and conformance with relevant National and Regional planning objectives.

The Settlement Hierarchy Map from the County Development Plan is shown on Figure 4.5.

With the integration of appropriate mitigation measures (including those which are identified in Section 2.4 of this report) potential adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing this scenario would be likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.

Alternative Scenario 4 was chosen to be developed for the Development Plan by the plan-making team and adopted by the Elected Members having regard to both:

- 1. The environmental effects which were identified by the Strategic Environmental Assessment; and,
- 2. Planning including social and economic effects.

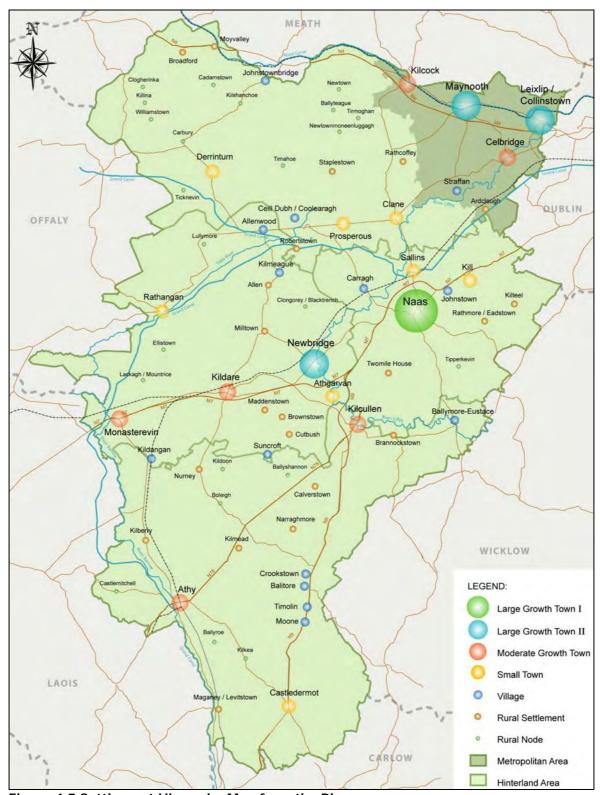


Figure 4.5 Settlement Hierarchy Map from the Plan

Section 5 Monitoring Measures

5.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. This section and Section 10 of the Environmental Report contain proposals for monitoring the likely significant effects of implementing the County Development Plan.

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

5.2 Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around the indicators which were chosen earlier in the process. These indicators allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives used in the evaluation. Focus will be given to indicators which are relevant to the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the County Development Plan and existing monitoring arrangements will be used in order to monitor the selected indicators. Each indicator to be monitored will be accompanied by the relevant target(s) which were identified with regard to the relevant legislation.

Table 5.1 shows the indicators and targets which have been selected with regard to the monitoring of the Plan.

It is noted that with regard to Indicator B2, important macro-corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat include the County's rivers, lakes, uplands and peatlands. It is recommended that important macro-corridors and contiguous areas of habitat are identified as part of the monitoring programme and that time resources are spent in the monitoring of these rather than in the monitoring of corridors or

areas of habitat which are not important at County level.

5.3 Sources

Measurements for indicators should come from existing monitoring sources in combination with the Development Management Process at the Council. Existing monitoring sources exist for each of the indicators and include those maintained by the Kildare County Council and other relevant authorities e.g. the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Central Statistics Office.

Where significant adverse environmental effects - including positive, negative, cumulative and indirect - are likely to occur as a result of implementing relevant lower-tier plans and programmes such instances should be identified and recorded and should feed into the monitoring evaluation.

5.4 Reporting

A preliminary monitoring evaluation report on the effects of implementing the County Development Plan will be prepared to coincide with the Manager's report to the Elected Members on the progress achieved in securing Plan objectives within two years of the making of the Plan (this Manager's report is required under Section 15 of the 2000 Planning Act).

5.5 Responsibility

Kildare County Council is responsible for collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of preliminary and final monitoring evaluation reports, the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action.

It is recommended that a Steering Committee be established within the Council to oversee the monitoring process.

5.6 Thresholds

Thresholds at which corrective action will be considered are as follows:

- boil notices on drinking water;
- fish kills;
- court cases taken by the DEHLG regarding impacts upon archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places; and,
- complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable environmental impacts resulting from development which is granted permission under the County Development Plan.

Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Source
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive	B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for habitats and species listed under Annexes I and II of the Directive	DEHLG report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive & Consultations with the NPWS
	B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity to macro-corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat which are important on a County level without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan – as evidenced from a resurvey of CORINE mapping	B2: No significant macro-corridors, stepping stones and contiguous areas of habitat or parts thereof which are important on a County level and which provide functional connectivity to be lost without remediation as a result of implementation of the Plan	CORINE mapping, Consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service & Development Management Processes in the Council
	B3: Population of the County involved in land management	B3: Sustain the population of the County involved in land management	Central Statistics Office
Population and Human Health	HH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency	HH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan	EPA and Health Service Executive
Soil	S1: Number of instances of pollution and/or contamination of soil	S1: No significant instances pollution and/or contamination of soil	EPA

Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Sources
Water	W1: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009)	W1: To achieve 'good status' in all bodies of surface waters by 2015 and not to knowingly allow deterioration in the status of any surface water	EPA
	W2: Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC	W2: Compliance with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC	EPA
	W3: Number of developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk	W3: Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk in compliance with <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i>	Development Management Process in the Council
Material Assets	M1i: Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan	M1i: All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan	Development Management Process in the Council
	M1ii: Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council	M1ii: For the Council to prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan in compliance with the Water Services Act	Kildare County Council

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⁷ Good status as defined by the WFD equates to approximately Q4 in the current national scheme of biological classification of rivers, as set out by the EPA. Good status as defined by the WFD equates to approximately mesotrophic in the current trophic classification of lakes, as set out by the EPA.

Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Sources
Material Assets cont.	M2i: Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health	M2i: No non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan	EPA, EPA Remedial Action List and the Council
	M2ii ⁸ : Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council	M2ii: For the Council to prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan in compliance with the Water Services Act	Kildare County Council
Air and Climatic Factors	C1i: Percentage of population within the County travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means C1ii: Average distance travelled to work or	C1i: An increase in the percentage of the population travelling to work or school by public transport or non-mechanical means C1ii: A decrease in the average distance travelled	Central Statistics Central Statistics Office
	school by the population of the County	to work or school by the population of the County	Office
Cultural Heritage	CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected		Development Management/ Enforcement Process in the Council; Complaints from statutory consultees

 $^{^{\}rm 8}$ Indicator and Target M2i are the same as Indicator and Target M1

Environmental Component	Selected Indicator(s)	Selected Target(s)	Sources
Component			
Cultural Heritage cont.	CH2i: Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected	CH2i: Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant)	Development Management/ Enforcement Process in the Council; Complaints from statutory consultees
	CH2ii: Number of additions to the Record of Protected Structures and the number of additional ACAs	CH2ii: Make Additions to the Record of Protected Structures and make additional ACAs, where appropriate	Kildare County Council
Landscape	L1: Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	L1: No developments permitted which result in avoidable impacts on the landscape resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan	Development Management/ Enforcement Process in the Council; Complaints from statutory consultees

Table 5.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources